



The Vedanta Kesari.

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The Vedanta Kesari

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that 'I am the Atman.'"

—*Swami Vivekananda.*

VOL. II.]

MAY, 1915.

[No. 1.]

SRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE GREAT MASTER.

BY

Swami Saradananda.

IV

A Friend in Need.

About three miles to the east of Dereypore, there stands a cluster of villages, known even to this day as Sripur, Kamarpukur and Mukandapur. The three lie in such close proximity to one another that for all practical purposes they may be regarded as one and are referred to generally by the name of Kamarpukur by the people of the surrounding neighbourhood. They cover an area of about four square miles and are on the latitude 87°-42' with a longitude of about 22°-54.' They stand at the crossing of four roads which lead to Burdwan about thirty miles to the north, to Arambagh about twelve miles to the east, to Midnapore and Puri on the south and to Raniganj on the west. The roads must have been made during the Pathan and Moghul rule of Bengal for military purposes—at least some of them. The big tanks or *dighis* at regular intervals, the ruins of a structure for keeping elephants, the battlefield of Mogulmari, the ruins of the old fort of Mandaron and the triumphal gateway with Persian inscriptions on it a few miles to the west of the same, bear witness to the fact.

Kamarpukur must have known better days and had a bigger population in old times than it has at present. The vast ruins of brick-built houses, temples and wall-enclosures that greet the eye of the traveller at every step in the village attest to the fact. The facility of communication with Burdwan, Midnapore and Calcutta on account of the well-built roads helped the place to carry on formerly a brisk local trade. Thus instead of being entirely a rural village, it supported a good number of artisans, traders and mechanics in former times. One can find signs of the same in the declining local industries of hookah-pipes made of ebony, Dhutis and napkins etc., which its people carry on even to this day with Calcutta and other remote parts of the country. The place had its regular fair twice a week from days primeval, when the people of the surrounding villages assembled in it to buy or sell food-grains, vegetables, clothes, medicines, ropes, mats, wicker baskets and all sorts of necessary household articles. The 'hat' or fair is still held on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

The presence of numerous temples dedicated to Siva and Vishnu bears testimony to the religious tendency of the people. Temples dedicated to Dharma or Buddha also are not rare, though the name has lost its former significance and the god is being looked upon by the people at present as one of the many incarnations of Vishnu. Less than a generation ago the car festival in honour of the god was usually celebrated in the village with great eclat. And the villagers still tell you the story how the wheels of the big car got stuck into the deep ruts of a muddy road and it capsized and broke on such an occasion, how the broken parts were then destroyed by the white ants in an incredibly short space of time and finally how the people looked upon it as the will of the god Dharma to discontinue the festival. Be that as it may, the three villages still have three separate places for the worship of Dharma, though the worship of Siva and Vishnu in the form of Sri Krishna seems to have grown much during later years.

Kamarpukur belonged formerly to the estate of the Rajah of Burdwan. The Rajah had made a grant of it to his spiritual preceptor sometime ago. Thus the people of the three villages acknowledged the Goswami family as their Zamindar in the time of which we are speaking. A scion of the family, Gopilal by name, had built a big temple near the market place and dedicated the same to Sri Krishna. Sukhlal, possibly a descendant of Gopilal, was the head of the family in 1814 A. D. Unlike the Zamindar of Dereypore this man was held in high respect by the villagers on account of his piety, charity and nobleness of mind. He had his

residence on the western extremity of the village. And the ruins of his house and his brick-built tomb (*Samadhi*) on the side of a big tank close by, are pointed out even to the present day. He died probably in 1824. His son Krishnalal then fell on evil days and had ultimately to sell his Zamindary rights on the village to the Laha family about thirty years after his father's death. The Goswami family must have retired from the village from that time elsewhere and the Lahas remain to this day the Zamindar of the place.

Sukhlal Goswami had a genuine friendship for Khudiram, the head of the Chatterjee family of Dereypore, and was sorely grieved to learn of the dire misfortune that had befallen him through his just quarrels with the wicked Ramananda. He immediately came forward to help his friend in trouble and invited him to come over and live with him at Kamarpukur. Khudiram saw the hand of God in the kind offer of his friend and accepted it with all gratefulness. Thus a few days after the sad event at Dereypore we find Khudiram settled in a thatched hut at Kamarpukur close by his friend's residence. And Sukhlal was not only content to let his friend have the cottage but made over to him about half an acre of the most fertile of his own fields known to this day as Lakshmi-jala, to enable him to support his little family in future.

THE MESSAGE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA.*

BY

G. Venkataranga Row, M.A.

Three or four thousand years ago, at a time when the foundations of our national religion were being laid, a Brahmana by the name of Vajasrawasa, desirous of heavenly rewards, surrendered at a sacrifice all that he possessed. Faith entered into the heart of his son, Nachiketas and he said, "Dear father, to whom wilt thou give me?" He said it a second and a third time. The father angrily replied, "I shall give thee unto Death." The rash promise had to be kept. Nachiketas goes to the abode of Yama, the regent of the dead, and finds there none to receive him. After three days Yama returns and by way of reparation for his want of hospitality

* Lecture delivered at the 80th Birth-day Celebration of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, at the Ramakrishna Home, Brodies Road, Mylapore, Madras.

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to "a venerable guest, a Brahmana," promises to grant him three boons, whatever he may choose. The third boon which Nachiketas demands is "a knowledge of what there is in the great Hereafter." Yama begs him to ask for something else. "On this point even the gods have formerly doubted. It is not easy to understand. The subject is subtle. Choose sons and grandsons who shall live a hundred years; choose the wide abode of earth, abundant harvests, fair maidens, with their chariots and musical instruments." "No," says Nachiketas, "these things last but till to-morrow, for they wear out the vigour of the senses. Keep thou thy horses: keep dance and song for thyself. No man can be made happy by wealth. Shall we possess wealth when we see thee? What mortal, slowly decaying here below, would delight in long life after he has duly weighed the pleasures which arise from beauty and love?" So he presses for his boon. And at last Yama unfolds in mystic language the supreme secret. "The good is one thing: the pleasant is another. The wise prefer the good to the pleasant. The fool chooses the pleasant through greed and avarice. Fools dwelling in darkness, wise in their own conceit, and puffed up with vain knowledge, go round and round, staggering to and fro, like blind men led by the blind. The Hereafter never rises before the eyes of the careless child, deluded by the delusion of wealth. This is the world, he thinks, there is no other. Thus he again and again falls under my sway." And then Yama expounds the doctrine of Self—*Atman*—infinite, eternal, everlasting, lite of the world and life of our life, of whom many are not able to hear, whom many, even when they hear of him, do not comprehend. This Self is not born; it dies not; it sprang from nothing, nothing sprang from it. It is not killed, though the body is killed. If the killer thinks that he kills, if the killed thinks that he is killed, they do not understand, for this one does not kill, nor is that one killed. Smaller than the small and greater than the great, the self is hidden in the heart of every living being. This the passionless sage beholds and his sorrows are left behind. The sage that finds in his heart the infinite, all-pervading self, no longer sorrows. There is, then, as the great teacher Death unfolds, the mystery, one reality and only one, and the highest wisdom is for a man to see that he is one with this reality. But how may a man put aside the veil of Maya, transcend the illusion of phenomena and attain to this intuition of the Self? "Not by the Vedas," Yama teaches, "nor by understanding, nor by much learning. He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be attained. But he who has not ceased from evil, who is not tranquil and subdued, or whose mind is not at rest can never reach the Self even by knowledge."

The great Hindu saint, whose blessed memory we are now assembled to reverence, was an incarnation of the Spirit of the Upanishadic teaching enshrined in the immortal story of Nachiketas. His whole life was an interpretation of the great spiritual truths therein proclaimed, which for ages have formed the backbone of Hindu Culture and Civilisation. In a country in which physical discovery and material well-being have usurped and almost absorbed the attention and admiration of mankind and the human mind, tossed in a sea of confused passions, hesitating ideals, tentative virtues and groping philanthropies, cut itself adrift from its ancient moorings, the appearance of a transcendent personality to call attention to the great truth that the whole fabric of human civilisation rests ultimately upon a spiritual basis and to lead humanity back to those central realities without which life can have no meaning or value, was a supreme necessity. In fulfilment of the celebrated utterance of Sri Krishna in the Gita—

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥

(Whenever there is decay of righteousness, O Bharata, and exaltation of unrighteousness, then do I manifest myself), the hour brought forth the man. On the 17th February 1836, in a remote corner of Bengal, Sri Ramakrishna was born. He came of orthodox Brahmana parents, who clung rigidly to every regulation enjoined upon them by the laws and customs of their caste and who were noted throughout their village for their simplicity, piety and benevolence. Though poor themselves, they would not hesitate to starve a whole day to help the poor around them. The young Ramakrishna inherited all the virtues of his parents, their piety, their hospitality and their loving disposition. He exhibited very marked characteristics from his childhood. There was something in him which attracted everybody and made people love him as if he was their own kith and kin, even at the first appearance. His face beamed with an intellectual glow which indicated that no ordinary thoughts kept the mind of this boy busy. He was precocious and possessed a memory which enabled him to retain and repeat anything he had heard once. Even at a very early age he became familiar with the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Srimad Bhagavata and other holy books by hearing them from the Pauranikas. As the village in which he lived was on the pilgrim road, he often found an opportunity to meet pilgrims and to converse with them on religious subjects. At the age of nine Ramakrishna was invested with the holy thread by his elder brother, his father being dead some two years before, and subsequently

he was taken to a school at Calcutta. He was hardly there for a few days when, to his disgust, he found that men with whom he came in contact, in spite of their high talk on being and non-being, on Brahman and Maya, on the redemption of the soul, on the realisation of the Atman and such other topics, would never think of making their teaching a reality in their own lives, but run after lust and gold, after name and fame. He continually longed to learn something which might raise him above all those things and lead him to God as the reward of all his struggles. So he stopped going to school anymore. He then betook himself to Dakshineswara, in the neighbourhood of Calcutta and became a priest in the temple of Kali. He entered into his work with characteristic zeal and devotion and looked upon the goddess as his mother and as the Mother of the universe. His worship was so fervent that he forgot everything in it. Here in the temple he prayed and meditated with all the depth and intensity that his soul was capable of, and strove for an answer to the momentous questions which continually agitated him—'Is there a God?' 'Does the soul live on after it withdraws from the body?' How to realise the Mother who, the sages say, lives in everything, in my own heart, in my own self,—this was the one idea that haunted him day and night. At times his abstraction was so intense that his temple service was altogether neglected, and even when forced to perform it, he did it mechanically. Sometimes he would weep for hours and would not be comforted, because he could not see his Mother as perfectly as he wished. In talking and praying to Her as a child to his mother, he often lost all consciousness of the outward world. His mother and brothers were greatly disconcerted by his condition and hoped that he might calm down if he had a wife and a family to protect and look after; and so they took him to his native village and married him to a girl of tender years, who was quite after his own heart, and who subsequently became the greatest devotee of her lord.

After his marriage he returned to the temple, but his mental condition became more strange and instead of toning down, his fervour and devotion increased a thousand fold. He often had visions and led almost a dreamlife. He could not conduct the formal worship of the temple any longer. He therefore gave it up, and entered the adjoining woods and lived there. For twelve years from this time, his life may be said to be one of intense struggle and yearning to realise truth, to see God. During this period he went through the various kinds of discipline recommended in our Sastras as requisite for an aspirant after spiritual realisation. Swami Vivekananda referring to this period of

Ramakrishna's life says—"About that part of his life he told me many times that he could not tell when the sun rose or set. Sometimes for weeks he had no other idea; only tears would trickle down his cheeks and that one prayer came out. 'Do thou manifest the Self in me, thou Mother of the Universe. See that I want thee and nothing else.'"—

न धनं न जने न कवितां सुन्दरीं वा जगदीश कामये ।

मम जन्मनि जन्मनीश्वर भवतात् भक्तिहेतुकी त्वयि ॥

(I do not want wealth nor progeny nor learning! O Lord! only grant me this, that I may have life after life love for thee and that for love's sake.)

By sternest and severest *tapasya*, he crushed within himself all worldly attachments—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, which stood between him and the realisation of the Mother. He so completely renounced the sex-idea that he looked upon every woman, of whatever age, rank or caste, as an incarnation of the Divine Mother. He cast aside all distinctions of race and colour and realised the inner meaning and unity of the great creeds of the world. He saw for himself, in his purified vision of reality, the profound significance of Sri Krishna's saying—

मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ।

(In me all this is strung like pearls in a thread). His communion with the reality and his consciousness of an Infinite Life and Love immanent in it, have rendered all conflict impossible and brought home to his soul the eternal harmony of things. After the attainment of this साक्षात्कार, Supreme Beatitude, his keen love for the self in all grew so intense that when anybody trod heavily on the grass in his presence, he felt as if he was trodden on his heart. He saw with the eye of a seer that as the creator manifested himself in each and all, no scorn of anything created was permissible. To his spiritual vision, the earth and every common sight did seem apparelled in celestial light. He emerged from this disciplinary period of his wonderful life, full of soul, full of the reality of religion, full of joy and full of blessed purity. Meanwhile Ramakrishna's fame had spread. "When the rose is blown, and sheds its fragrance all round, the bees come of themselves. The bees seek the full blown rose and not rose the bees." And so numbers of earnest men of all sects and creeds, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, began to flock to him to sit at his feet and drink the waters of life. His wonderful purity, his child-like simplicity, his rapturous love of God, and the simple language in which he propounded the highest truths of religion and philosophy

made a profound impression on the highly educated men and women who resorted to him for light and guidance. Day and night the Paramahansa was surrounded by visitors and he denied no one his stores of wisdom. To those who asked him to spare himself, he said "I would suffer any bodily pain, even death itself, a thousand times if I could thereby bring freedom and release to a single soul." Having fulfilled his mission and vindicated by his life the eternal truths of the Vedanta, he departed from this earthly phase of existence on the 16th of August 1886, leaving behind him a precious legacy in a noble band of Sannyasins to spread the universal gospel of love and light, of which he was an embodiment.

Regarding his life and teaching, the late Swami Vivekananda, by far the greatest of his disciples, bore the following testimony, "For years I lived with that man, but never did I hear those lips utter one word of condemnation for any sect. He had the same sympathy for all of them; he had found the harmony between them.....He condemned no one but found good in all. People came by thousands to see this wonderful man, to hear him speak in a *patois*—every word of which was forceful and instinct with light. I learnt this of him: 'Be spiritual first. Religion is not doctrines nor theories nor is it sectarianism—it consists in realisation.' This man was a triumphant example, a living realisation of the complete conquest of lust and desire for money and was beyond all ideas of either. The first part of my master's life was spent in acquiring spirituality, and the remaining years in distributing it. Men came in crowds to hear him—and he would talk twenty four hours in the twenty four; until at last his body broke down under the pressure of this tremendous strain."

(To be continued.)

On the tree of absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss (*Sat-chit-anandam*) there hang innumerable Ramas, Krishnas, Buddhas, Christs, etc., out of which one or two come down to this world now and then and produce mighty changes and revolutions.

Sri Ramakrishna.

SRUTI AND SMRITI.*

I.

LIFE AND THE SOUL.

Anantasmaraṇa Sastri—Eh, Prabhu! After a long time I see you! All well with you, I suppose?

Vijñānārām Prabhu—Yes, thank you. I was away from the country, so I could not come. Physically I am all right, yet no peace of mind I enjoy, and this has brought me here just now.

A.S.—What is the matter?

V.P.—My mind has been distracted by a number of doubts,—they are weighing very heavily even on my life. I tried my best to solve them myself, but I couldn't. The more I cogitate upon them, the more complex they grow,—the more I find myself hopelessly caught in the meshes of self-contradiction and absurdity. So I thought I should best come over here and seek your help for their final solution.

A.S.—It is very kind of you to come here and I shall feel a sincere pleasure to be of any service to you. Now, let me hear what your doubts are.

V.P.—They are chiefly regarding the main principles of life,—both individual and communal. And I shall give them out gradually in the course of our conversation. Now, first let me hear what you think of the present state of our society.

A.S.—Why, it is going on well as it could be.

V.P.—No fool is required to tell that! Every thing goes on as it could be. But my point is to know what it should be.

A.S.—Well, you may draw an imaginary line of demarcation between the 'should' and the 'could' and then set up a hard conflict between the two to rend your mind. But, for a truth, I see no two things as your 'should' and 'could.'

V.P.—What! You startle me. Is there no difference between 'thing as it is' and 'thing as it ought to be'? Don't you know that on this primary difference of the real and the ideal, of being and

* Under this head a series of articles will appear in dialogue form in these pages where an attempt will be made to comprehend Dharma in all its bearings, as discovered by the sages of ancient India.—Ed.

becoming, rest the entire ethics and the moral fabrics of the society?

A.S.—I do not wonder at your being startled, because you are trained to think otherwise. But for myself, I see the real only; it is the ideal if you choose to call it so. There is no other ideal besides the real. I see no becoming, but one being.

V.P.—But you forget, Sastri, you smash all Ethics by your assumption!

A.S.—Not at all, if you only understand it. Although your conventional Ethics might appear to get a shifting.

V.P.—Well, will you please explain yourself then?

A.S.—It will be quite plain to you if you would only understand the fact that there is only one reality and not two. Essentially there are not two things as 'being' and 'becoming.'

V.P.—Stop! Are there no modes of the real? Does not the seed gradually unfold into a tree? By 'becoming' we mean nothing but this unfoldment of the possibilities in the world of the actual.

A.S.—Certainly there are modes of the real, but you err grievously when you call the modes, the expressional changes, as 'becoming' of one thing from another. For in truth, the seed has never become the tree, although conventionally you believe it to be so. What was in the form of a seed before, is now appearing as a tree; that's all.

V.P.—You don't believe in causality then?

A.S.—Yes, I do believe in causality, but not in your sense of the term. By causality I understand the sequential change of expressions of the real, the Substance.

V.P.—Now I see, you first try to abstract the substance from its modes and then attempt to posit, that model change does not mean mutation of the substance. But is it not a mere abstraction of thought? Can substance be really comprehended apart from its modes? Modes are the attributes of the substance and you know गुणिगुणयोरभेदः (the attribute and the substance are identical). So how can you deny that model changes are really the same as the substantial modifications?

A.S.—What a self-contradiction! You hold that mode is an attribute of the substance and again you say that the substance can change its modes, which comes practically to mean that the substance can express one attribute one time and another attribute

another time,—i.e., the seed-substance expresses sometime in the seed-form, and sometime in the form of a tree. But at the same time you postulate that the substance and attributes are the same, which means, the seed-form and seed-substance are one. How can then the seed-substance become a tree? We see practically the seed-form perishes in the expression of the tree, and so you have to admit, according to your own assumption, that the seed-substance must also perish with it, and yet you say what was once a seed has now become the tree. But I know why you say so, for you actually see a continuity of existence from the seed to the tree. Do you see now how fallacious and self-contradictory is your conception of causality?

V.P.—Yes, I have begun to perceive it. But how do you maintain about causality?

A.S.—Why, I have told you already my idea of causality. I hold there is a Substance which is cognised in its different expressions, and there is a sequential order in the expressions, which is known as causality. But, you should remember that these expressions, or rather the qualities that set up the expressions, do not inhere in the Substance, otherwise its change of modes would not be possible. And it is not an abstraction of thought,—the very fact that in spite of the changes of the modes, we perceive a continuity of existence, proves my statement that the Substance is quite different and separate from its modes. It is the soul of the expressions, yet not instinct with them. You have seen the cinematograph, there each picture is separate from the other, yet, as they are arranged in a consecutive order and thrown in rapid succession over the screen, they present a completely connected panorama of pictures. And what the little cinema-man does before his small number of spectators, Nature is doing exactly the same in her grand cosmic scale around us all: She is throwing her different pictures on the common screen of the Substance and as these are arranged in sequential order, they rouse in us the comprehension of the Law of Causality. And like the screen again the Substance is ever innocent of all the phenomena you behold around you. This Substance only is the real and all its passing expressions are ephemeral. So you see, how foolish it is to say that the ideal is in the making from the real. It is ever 'being' and can never be 'becoming.'

V.P.—Well, now I understand what you mean, and it may sound well as a philosophical disquisition, but you know that life is something more than dialectic. What are the expressions, I ask, have they no value? To us, we see, they are all in all; we live

only in and for the world of expressions. Your Substance is transcendental—an absolute, and so safely can be banished from the field of practical life. We have to deal with the expressions alone. They constitute our life. It is their evolution that we seek.

A.S.—Indeed, you live in and for the expressions,—they constitute your life! But, I say, can you banish your soul, can you really? No doubt, the expressions are all in all to you now, but they retain their value so long as you do not realise that there is an absolute behind, which alone is the real.

V.P.—Very well, let it be as you say. But can you deny that man or society evolves? and if so, what then constitutes this evolution? Is there no progress in life?

A.S.—You are merely bandying with words. I have already said that there is no evolution or involution of the real—the Soul—in man, though its expressions vary, and in common parlance we term these changes of expressions as progress or retardation of life, and they are without beginning or end. The Soul is the fixed centre of a circle whose circumference is that series of expressions you call life, revolving around it, as it were. Now if you take a particular point of the circumference, then certain points will appear as lying before it and certain points behind it, and so from its stand-point, a backward or forward motion is quite possible. But if you take the whole circle, you find there is no evolution or involution, but a revolution. Again if you shift from the circumference to the centre, there is no motion, no revolution even. So when we look from a particular phase of life, it appears to us as if we are going forward or backward; but if we take life as a whole, it will appear as a revolving cycle. But again when we station ourselves on the Soul we find no motion there. When the modern evolutionist speaks of the eternal progress of man, he does not really understand what he says. Can there be any eternal motion in a straight line? A straight line when stretched to infinity becomes a circle. But I know why he says so: Instinctively he feels the eternity of his *being* and at the same time he sees a progress, a motion in Life from its particular phase; so connecting the two, he erroneously conceives the eternal progress of life. Ordinarily our attention is fixed on this circumference, the life-expression, so we feel ourselves dragged on from eternity to eternity, as if we are whipped to run an endless race,—no peace, no respite,—all running madly after an ever receding phantom of a goal. But all the jostling and jolting of the life-race comes to a sudden stop, the moment our consciousness is gathered in the centre. We feel

there all peace, all joy—and ah, Prabhu, the blessedness of that Peace! So you see, there is no 'becoming,' but 'being' all the while, past, present and future; and my ethics do not lie in running along the circumference, but in going to the centre. It is constantly crying 'halt' to our marching life and trying to drive us in to the centre. And I needlessly say what is true of an individual, is true also of a society. There is also the soul of the communal life or the life-aggregate, and the social ethics lie in the awakening of the social consciousness to this soul. For the social soul is *the* reality of the social life.

V.P.—Now I think I have somewhat understood your position. But it is getting late for me. I shall come to-morrow and discuss further on this Social Soul and the Social Life. Namaskar.

THE ETHICAL ASPECT OF THE VEDANTA.

BY

Professor K. Sundararama Iyer, M. A.

PART V.

KARMA AND SERVICE.

All modern explanations of the phenomena of religion and ethics, and all claims to superiority among them are based upon the utilitarian, humanistic, or pragmatic conception of value. A European writer voices this tendency when he says, "The fundamental axiom of religion, that which expresses the innermost tendency of all religions, is the axiom of the conservation of value." The same writer explains value as "the property possessed by a thing either of conferring immediate satisfaction or serving as a means of procuring it." Value thus is mediate or immediate, and different religions differ chiefly in preferring particular forms of mediate value to others. Even those that have realised fully the conception of immediate value differ widely in the content or meaning which they attach to the idea. The Vedic religion not only takes its stand on the postulate of value in its most ultimate, fundamental and comprehensive form, but differentiates between the various aspects of mediate value and assigns to them the stages or steps at which they take hold of the living soul while on its continued march towards the goal of existence. Sri Sankaracharya says:—

अद्वैतं सुखरूपं दुःसहदुःखं सदा भवेद्भूतम् ।

यत्र प्रयोजनं स्यात्प्रतिपाद्यते भुक्तिरद्वैतसौ ॥

"The One Existence without a second is essentially of the nature of Bliss. Duality ever brings misery which is unendurable. The purpose of the Veda is to teach only that which has value for man."

Prayojana—Value—loudly and persistently proclaimed in this age as the test of truth,—is also the test of truth proclaimed by the Veda. "द्वितीयाद्वै भयं भवति," says the Brihad-Aranyaka-Upanishad. Differentiation implies fear, i.e., misery and pain. What pleasure we derive from the world of material objects is really due to the rise to the surface of a particle of the bliss of the Atman when the agitation which usually pervades the ocean of Chitta (mind-stuff) temporarily subsides in consequence of the momentary satisfaction of one of life's unnumbered aims and pursuits. Hence the one ultimate—or immediate, as contrasted with mediate—experience of value is the Innermost Bliss of Love (*Ananda*) constituting the Noumenal Atman. All else has its source in the unsatisfying, transient phenomenal world of matter. The Indian spiritual ideals and activities which are known by the names of Karma, Bhakti, Dhyana, Jnana, &c., are all simply successively higher stages or steps towards the attaining to the realisation of transcendent bliss known as the Atman, and so form varieties of the conception of mediate value.

Has, then, the conception of service no place in the Vedanta? If it has its place, what is its exact import and value for man, and what is its relation to the ideal and conception of Karma, and to the still higher ideal and conception of Jnana? Wherein lies the difference in the significance which it has for the individual and the society in communities so differently constituted as the militant, aggressive, active, competitive, and progressive nationalities and national empires of the West and the simple, passive, quiet, resigned, unchanging, unprogressive, customary society of India?

In proceeding to answer these questions, it is worthwhile to point out at the outset that the conception of service or philanthropy is not unknown to the thought and life of India. The following oft-quoted Sanskrit verse places this beyond doubt:—

श्लोकार्धेन प्रवक्ष्यामि यदुक्तं ग्रन्थकोटिभिः ।

परोपकारः पुण्याय पापाय परपीडनम् ॥

"I shall state in half a stanza what has been dwelt on (at length) in millions of books. Religious merit consists in rendering help to others in need, and sin in causing injury."

The conception of disinterested service to others so as to lessen the misery of the struggle of life is not—and cannot be—unknown to a people who have, prior to all other people of the civilised world, discovered and developed every possible idea and notion which has a religious or ethical significance. Also, as a matter of unquestionable fact, the people of India are known to be the most charitable in the

the world and relieve more human and animal suffering than any other. Furthermore, all castes of Hindus have in large numbers always abstained from flesh-eating, and the Brahmins—except a few inconsiderable sections or sects—have been and are, as Ouida the novelist has handsomely complimented them in one of her essays, unbending in their adherence to what she calls "the gospel of mercy" and altogether abstained from flesh-foods and given no encouragement to the wanton and sinful killing of animals. The influence of our matchless Manu in the morning-time of the world has been most effective and beneficent in this regard. In the following incomparable verses—all of them pure gold—he shows himself the very incarnation of love and mercy, and Hindus owe to him all their noble record of unwavering tenderness to animal life. (Manu V-51-54):—

अनुमन्ता विशसिना निहन्ता क्रयविक्रयी ।

संस्कर्ता चोपहर्ता च खादकश्चेति घातकाः ॥

स्वमांसं परमांसेन यो वर्धयितुमिच्छति ।

अनभ्यर्च्य पितृन्देवांस्ततोऽन्यो नास्त्यपुण्यकृत् ॥

वर्षे वर्षेऽश्वमेधेन यो यजेत शतं समाः ।

मांसानि च न खादेद्यस्तयोः पुण्यफलं समम् ॥

फलमूलाशनैर्मध्येऽमुन्यन्नानां च भोजनैः ।

न तत्फलमवाप्नोति यन्मांसपरिवर्जनात् ॥

"He who permits (the slaughter of an animal), he who cuts it up, he who kills it, he who buys or sells (meat), he who cooks it, he who serves it up, and he who eats it (must all be considered as) the slayers of the animal."

"There is no greater sinner than that man who, though not worshipping the Devas or Pitris, seeks to increase (the bulk of) his own flesh by the flesh of other (beings)."

"He who during a hundred years annually performs the sacrifice of Asvamedha (horse-sacrifice) and he who entirely abstains from meat have the same spiritual result from their respective virtuous conduct." "By subsisting on pure fruit and roots, and by eating food fit for ascetics who live a life of meditation (in the forest) one does not gain so great a spiritual result as by entirely avoiding the use of flesh."

The ideal of Ahimsa taught in the Mahabharata is understood by some merely as negative beneficence, and others even question its Shastraic efficiency or acceptance in view of the fact that the Sruti sanctions animal sacrifices for the satisfaction of the gods. But these objections are futile,—for we have already explained that sacrifices and sacrificial rituals are gone through for the benefit of both gods and men and so are meant to preserve the wheel of law whose turning sustains the order of the universe and so form the

greatest service of all to mankind. We have also to remember that the basis of morality in Hinduism is not the impotent, unstable, and impossible one of reason, but the eternal and irrefragable distinction of Dharma and Adharma as established by the Sruti and Smriti. Sri Sankaracharya says :—“अयं धर्मोऽयमधर्म इति शास्त्रमेष विज्ञाने कारणं । अतीन्द्रियत्वात्तयोः अनियतदेशकालनिमित्तत्वाच्च । यस्मिंश्च काले निमित्ते च यो धर्मोऽनुष्ठीयते स एव देशकालनिमित्तान्तरेऽप्यधर्मो भवति । तेन शास्त्रादने धर्मोऽधर्मविषयं विज्ञानं न कस्यचिदस्ति । शास्त्राच्च हिंसानुग्रहाद्यात्मको ज्योतिष्टोमो धर्म इत्यवधारितः स कथमशुद्ध इति शक्यते वक्तुम् ”

“The knowledge of one action being Dharma and another Adharma is based on Sastra only ; for they lie beyond the reach of the senses, and they are not the same for all times, places, and occasions. What is performed as Dharma in one place, time, and occasion becomes Adharma in another place, time, and occasion. Therefore none can have knowledge concerning Dharma and Adharma without Sastra. From Sastra we derive the certain knowledge that Jyotishthoma-sacrifice is a Dharma involving harm (to animals) which is of a beneficent nature. How, then, can it be called impure (i.e., sinful) ? ”

And again :—“विशुद्धं कर्म वैदिकं शिष्टैरनुष्ठीयमानत्वादन्यमानत्वाच्च । ”

“The karma (i.e., sacrifice) enjoined by the Veda is pure, as it is performed by men recognised as eminent in the practice of Dharma and cannot be disregarded.” The highest ideal of positive beneficence is certainly at least as much of a reality to the Indian sages and Sastras as to the rest of the world's greatest teachers. No sloka can be more familiar to the reader of the Bhagavad-Gita than the following (XII. 13) :—

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।

निर्मेमो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥

“He is no hater of any living thing (even though it may cause him pain) ; he is the (universal) friend, and feels compassion (for all in distress) ; he is never conscious of the feeling ‘this is mine,’ and without the feeling of egotism, the same in grief and in joy nor apt to lose his self-control (even in the most trying circumstances)”.

A character so attuned to the highest and noblest impulses of humanity is what is expected of the man who is a true Sannyasin—devotee of the undifferentiated and indestructible Atman (*Akshara*), who is fixed in the effort to attain to a direct perceptive knowledge of the Atman, and who is free from all the selfish desires and longings of ordinary mortals. To such a one the attributes above mentioned and the earnest endeavours to attain to them are taught, as Sankaracharya explains, by the blessed Bhagavan as “साक्षादमृतत्वकारणम्,” “the direct means to immortality.” The Karma-yogin, on the other hand, is in the lower stage of complete dependence on the Personal God who directs and controls the

universe ; and he is far below the man who can abandon all desires, longings, and aspirations after personal betterment and is able to fix his thoughts steadily on the Indestructible Self (the *Akshara*). Much more is this true of the *Karmi* who cannot even attempt to do his duties in life without a personal interest of some kind in their fruits. To such a person the highest ideal of positive beneficence or philanthropic service with or without a personal interest in the fruit is difficult or impossible of attainment. Even such a person, however, is quite capable of what might seem unselfish social service, but which is really a form of what, in Swami Vivekananda's happy phrase, is known as “social scavenging”—the effort to relieve misery and destitution among those who form an integral part of a society which has to maintain itself, by providing for wise secular social progress, against its rivals in the modern competitive struggle for ascendancy among the world's communities. Such lower forms of activity as are determined by purely secular and worldly motives have, however, no spiritual or religious significance. We think that they have not even a truly ethical significance,—for the motive of a truly ethical act which aims at the service of a fellow-man in his hour of tribulation and trial lies, in our view, quite as much within the depth of the heart of man as that of a truly spiritual act which is the means to the attainment of what is known as *Atma-sakshatkara*, self-realisation. The giving of wealth for the promotion of the interests of a state-organisation or of any part of it—necessary and desirable as it is—is dictated by national, political, and secular considerations, and has no ethical or religious motive associated with it. Dr. Hoffding says :—

“The task of estimating all forms of spiritual development falls to the share of ethics.” The converse proposition, however, may be shown to be true,—viz., “the task of estimating all forms of ethical development falls to the share of religion.” For, purely ethical values and ideas have only a preparatory educative value for the disciplining of the mind so as to be free from all sense of longing and craving for sense-pleasures and thus pave the way for the realisation of the self. It is thus that we should understand the true significance of Mr. Benjamin Kidd's famous dictum, “There is no rational sanction for moral progress.” So long as mere reason guides men's activities, so long as the sense of longing for personal life and for personal gratification in some form or other remains,—we may be sure that almost every man we meet has some aim or other which will, or may, collide with the ideal of absolutely disinterested service to country, society, or humanity.

There is also much truth in what Lord Acton, writing on the “Life of the late Lord Houghton,” calls “one of his gravest and probably most sincere utterances,” viz.,—“As one gets on in life, one of the most annoying reflections is the little good one has done by what people call benevolence ; in fact how little man can be benefited by others.” And, yet Lord Houghton is described by Lord Acton as

"one who, having gifts and opportunities above almost all other men employed them throughout a long life in personal service, striving far less for his own ends than for the happiness of others." It is certainly wrong to hold, as Pestalozzi did, that "no man can help another." For, we know from the Sruti that, in spiritual matters, there can be no progress towards, and no attainment of, the realisation of the self without the loving aid and tender watchfulness of an Acharya. But we have to carefully consider the question of method in the attainment of the goal we have in view,—the question whether the help and service we require from outside are to take the form of a continuing gift and forced accumulation of the world's blessings from outside, or the development of the latencies and potencies of the soul from within. The Indian sages and teachers have always adopted the latter as the most efficacious means for the attainment of the destined perfection of all living souls, and it is also nature's method of growth and evolution. The Western method of forcible external conversion and transformation can only lead in the long run to extravagant hopes and unrealisable illusions, and only this consideration can account for the denunciatory and pessimistic declarations like those (above quoted) of Pestalozzi and Lord Houghton.

We have next to give heed to the undoubted fact—one demonstrated by all history—that where man has been bent solely and wholly on the accumulation, by hook or by crook, of the merely external signs or fruits of progress, a time comes when the reckless ebullition of the evil human passions of envy and greed takes the shape of a breaking out of hostilities on a frightful scale and nothing can be more efficacious than war—even more so than any other of what since Malthus has become known as positive checks—as an engine for the wholesale destruction of the accumulated resources of art and industry. Time and again, we have seen how civilised people expatiate on the unique blessing of uninterrupted peace as the most serviceable instrument and agency for the service of man and the achievement of the future destiny of our race. Time and again, we have seen that when the crisis comes on and the passions of men come to a head, the supreme and striking dignity of a great sacrifice appeal to the human imagination, and then the common place concept and the humdrum ideal of service goes down inevitably to its doom; the cause of right and duty is trampled under foot and the claims of humanity are forgotten in the universal glorification of force and the fascinating pursuit of the crimes and aggressions of rampant and powerful militarism. The greatest literary genius of modern France once said:—"Man is a wild beast, carnivorous by nature, and delighting in blood." Is not this fateful, but nevertheless flimsy and hasty, pronouncement confirmed quite as much by the din of passing events pelting our ears like a storm of stunning hail as by the entire course of the authentic history of civilised man in this Kali age of sin, sensualism, and strife?

Furthermore, the sense of weariness is an undoubted fact of human nature and applies to all pursuits of the human mind and all departments of human activity. Men are known to tire of the good as well as of the bad side of life,—to be weary of pleasure quite as much as of pain, of well-doing quite as much as of ill-doing. It is absurd to suppose that, because one has secured the power of discriminating Dharma from Adharma, one can never tire of the former. Matter, in all its forms, is subject to this inborn and congenital peculiarity of weariness or fatigue. In our daily experience, we find that machinery requires rest quite as much as man and beast. The entire world of matter is subject to the law of growth and decline, and fatigue or weariness is an incident in the course of the Jiva's conditions of life while working out the accumulated load of the fruits of Karma. When this state of world-weariness is experienced, when the Jiva feels that even the life of Dharma—even the life of philanthropic service—is as much a state of weariness and brings as much of fret and fever as a life of selfishness and sin,—when even one who leads the life of a Guru and saviour of souls tires of having to bear the brunt and load of the Karma of those who are his disciples,—“*शिष्य-पापं गुरुं ब्रजेत्*” “the sins of the disciple pass on to the Guru”—it is only then that the status of *Vidval Sannyasa*, the renunciation of the man who has attained to the knowledge of the Atman, is reached,—the state which is to lead to what is known as *Jivanmukti* liberation even while the physical frame is still living here. There are numerous ill-instructed people around us who are known to persist in the idea that none ought to, or can, pass beyond the world of Samsara until all the Jivas who suffer from its fetters are helped to break their chains and pass into the bliss of freedom. They hold that there is such a thing as “selfish mukti or liberation” and that it is not worth having. The truth is that helpers will never be wanting to those who truly need or deserve help. If some jnanis like Yajnavalkya leave their home and society to devote themselves constantly to that *Asamprajnata Samadhi*, non-cognitive trance, from which there is to be no return to the world of conscious life, there are others who have yet to pass the stage of a Guru helping others to attain to a realisation of the one Existence and whose services will be available to those who feel the need of them. How can any one insist on the untenable and impossible supposition that a person who is ripe for Mukti and whose Vasanas are extinguished must continue to remain possessed of the same Vasanas and, through them, of the physical gifts of mind and body, simply because there are others who are in a lower stage of spiritual evolution and *not unable* to find teachers who can help them onwards? It is as reasonable to insist that no one who is a hundred years of age, or so physically enfeebled as to find life a burden, should be permitted to die simply because there are others who have not reached the same stage of senility or weakness. It is also as unreasonable to insist that

a man who has attained to the highest culture of our university should not endeavour after further improvement till all the rest of its alumni who are now inferior to him should have been helped to rise to his own level of culture. As in the former example the exhaustion of vitality must necessarily lead to death, so the destruction of the Vasanas which necessarily bring on the Jiva's life of worldly desires and activities, *must* lead to the state of Kaivalya, or the realisation of the Oneness of existence and the loss of all sense of duality. The following sloka of *Upadesa-Sahasri* is worth pondering over in this connexion :—

देहात्मज्ञानवज्ज्ञानं देहात्मज्ञानबाधकम् ।
आत्मन्येव भवेद्यस्य स नेच्छन्नपि मुच्यते ॥

"As (in the worldly-minded man) the knowledge that (only) the body is Atman (is clearly seen), so he in whom there is that knowledge of the Atman which stultifies the knowledge that (only) the body is Atman is (compulsorily) freed from bondage, even though he does not desire it."

The idea, too, of a "selfish Mukti" entertained in some quarters is altogether meaningless. For when Mukti—whether the state of liberation while living or when life ceases—is reached, there is for the Mukta, for him who is free from the fetter of the life of Samsara, no world of matter, no life either of sense or mind, and no Jiva to help. The idea of selfishness and unselfishness can only attach to him who possesses a mind which is conscious of duality, of passing through a life of sense-experience and is actuated by motives of one kind or another. For the Mukta there is but the One Existence or Reality whose nature is Ananda, the Innermost Bliss of Love, and he is one with it.

What has been said so far goes to show that the ideal of service, beneficence, philanthropy or Paropakara, is certainly one necessary for the welfare of man in society and has also been advocated by Indian sages and sacred authorities. At the same time we must not ignore the fact that, in the individual Jiva's life and progress, it has its appropriate place, but that it cannot be insisted on even when, by the disappearance of personality, the time has come for the realisation of the Noumenal Atman.

बीजान्यग्न्युपदग्धानि नरोहन्ति यथा पुनः ।
ज्ञानदग्धैस्तथा त्रैशैर्नात्मासंबध्यते पुनः ॥

"Just as the seeds burned by fire cannot again be made to sprout, so the Atman cannot again get related to the sorrows (of association with the body) which are destroyed by self-realisation."

The doing of Karma is not possible for him whose Atman does not get related to his mind. What is known as *आत्ममनस्संयोगम्* (the union of the Atman and mind) is the essential foundation and

indispensable preliminary to the Atman's being placed in a position to pass into the outer world through the gateways or windows of the senses and live its life of Karma. When this relatedness to the mind ceases through the uninterrupted experience of Brahma-Knowledge, all contact with the outer world through the senses is cut off without the possibility of recovery. Hence it is absurd to insist that the Atman should continue to perform what then would be an impossible miracle, viz., of being a worker. Sri Sankaracharya says.

कर्तुं च कर्म च यस्य स्फुरति ब्रह्मैव तन्नजानाति ।
यस्य न कर्तुं न कर्म स्फुटतरमयमेव वेदितुं क्रमते ॥

"He who still has the consciousness of being a worker and of working has not (yet) realised the Brahman. He for whom there is neither worker nor work, he only has a clear realisation of it."

Before this state is reached, there are various stages of development in the effort to make the realisation of the Atman once obtained a continuing and uninterrupted state. While engaged in such effort, these jnanis are also expected to have simultaneously in their view the duty of seeing that all members of society behave in such a way as to maintain unimpaired the solidarity of society and its steady and faithful adherence to Dharma. The Gita calls this *loka-sangraha* and Sankara explains it to mean "उन्मार्गप्रवृत्तिनिवारणम्," "the preventing of men from swerving into the path of undesirable activity." In order to secure this, the influence of the personal example of the faithful and devout observance of Dharma by those members of the society who hold the highest place in men's esteem is necessary as the most potent and effective source of influence, inspiration, and encouragement to others. Hence the blessed Bhagavan says in the Gita—

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥

"Whatever the highest man (in a society) does, that only the other men do ; whatever he regards as the source of true knowledge, that the world follows (as their authority)."

TO THE LAND OF THE SNOWS.

BY

Mr. A. K. D.

It is rightly believed that he, who has not seen a dense forest, a high snow-clad mountain and the vast ocean, is very unfortunate, for he has not witnessed the most sublime grandeurs of Nature. In fact these awaken in the mind of man an idea of the infinitude of nature and fill his heart with a feeling of unutterable awe and reverence for the Being whose transcendence they radiate. I had already enjoyed the sweet sylvan glory of the woods, and the sea had more than once unfolded its terrific grandeur to me. But that I had not still a vision of the snows was weighing heavily on me. Away to the north, at a distance of a day-and-a-half's journey by railway train lay the biggest mountain of the world, the Himalayas—the abode of the Snows. It is the glory of the land and the people look at it with a pious reverence. For in the olden days the gods came in there to manifest themselves to the holy men. In the sacredness of its eternal and peaceful quiet was born the *Sanatana Dharma* of the Aryas. From its acclivities the ancient seers sang the holy Vedic mantrams and lifted the land to the high pitch of spiritual glory it occupies. The holy Ganges, the Jumna, the Brahmaputra and the Indus issuing forth from its perennial snows invest the land with a productivity almost unknown anywhere. In the days of yore kings and great men after retiring from the world entered its caves to commune with the Lord of the creation, and who can count even to-day how many *Sadhus* and devotees live in spirit in its lonely cells and recesses. Indeed language is too poor to describe the glories of this paradise of *Aryavarta*. The thought that I was so near to it and still I have not seen it troubled me all the more. I resolved several times to venture out, but God disposed otherwise. At last an opportunity presented itself in May, 1913 and I failed not to seize it. Four of my friends were on a visit to the shrines of Kedarnath and Badrinath seated far into the heart of the Himalayas on the snow range, and I joined them.

In the West one goes to see other lands with a view to study their political, social and economic conditions, to see the various sights of different places, to cultivate friendship with the people there and to learn from them the arts and sciences they know in particular. In short the sole aim of a Westerner in such travels is to develop his material side. But in India it is done generally with a

different motive. Here the people go out to see different places not to mark their material development, but to see the holy spots that are there; to have a glimpse of a *Sadhu*, who perchance would be there, and receive his blessing. Thus it is wholly with a spiritual purpose in view that a man here takes to travelling. If he goes at all he goes to grow in spirit.

A devout Hindu performs three kinds of *tapasya* (austerity) for his spiritual advancement. One relates to the body, the second to speech and the third to the mind. To go out to visit holy shrines and saints is a bodily *tapasya*, and is regarded by him as a necessity. Thus what is an excursion to a Westerner is a pilgrimage to a Hindu. This outing brings in a threefold blessing. The hallowed glory of the sacred shrines, the holy sight of a *Sadhu* and his blessing conduce to the spiritual development; the travel on foot and a coarse plain living (which must naturally happen to a life spent out of doors) add stamina to the physique; while contact with men of different tastes and tendencies wears away many deep-seated prejudices and offensive superstitions and teaches one toleration, creating at the same time a longing in him to learn the arts peculiar to their country. It is truly said that the running water and the wandering monk are never infected with impurity. Of course in the higher order of religious life, when the soul is in frequent communion with the Universal Spirit, constant roaming about is harmful.

I was not alone in this pilgrimage but was accompanied by four of my friends. It was at 3 P.M. on Sunday the 18th of May, 1913 that we left home. Perilous, rugged and long was our way. Four hundred miles had to be trodden on foot and we had to cut through more than three-fourths of the depth of the Himalayas. Friends, relatives and acquaintances gathered round us at the parting hour. Misgiving was in the look of every one, for scarcely one in thousand in our part of the country ever embarked on such an adventure. Afflictive was the good-bye bidden and our hearts heaved with many an opposite feeling. Thus we parted.

It was previously arranged that on our way we should pay a visit to Lucknow—the capital of ancient Oudh. On the afternoon of the 19th we reached the town and remained there for full twenty-four hours. Every minute of our stay there was utilized to its utmost. That very evening we visited the Aminabad park. The large and gorgeous buildings all around it made us think that we were in the metropolis of India. Next morning, long before the sun peeped through the horizon, we were out into the street to see the ancient edifices of the Nawabs. We saw the pleasure-gardens,

the mosque, the picture-palace, the dancing-halls, the bath, the cool cellars, the *Hawa-Mahal* (airing palace) and various other mansions. All these showed that the Nawabs of Oudh were men of very highly refined taste and lived the most stately lives. We saw also the relics of the buildings which served as the Residency quarters before the memorable Sepoy-Mutiny of 1857. At the time of the mutiny all the local English people took refuge within them, which the infuriated Sepoys besieged and bombarded. The past seemed to be living to us and we all stood there agape for some time. We were as if seeing the picture of struggle and violence. Many of the large buildings here, both antique and modern, are decorated with slender domes and minarets. These lend an elegant grace to the town. The river Gomati passes by it, but the water is so thick and muddy that no gentleman uses it even for bathing purposes. A few years back Lucknow was famous for cheap living. But those good old days are no more.

The same afternoon we left Lucknow and reached Hardwar the next day. This place is regarded as the gateway to the holy tract called the *Uttarakhanda* (northern part)—the pleasure-ground of the gods, the place of the ascetics. The Vaishnavites call it *Haridwar* (entrance to Vishnu's land) and the Saivaites call it *Haradwar* (entrance to Siva's land). Tradition mentions it as *Gangadwar* (gate of the Ganges) or *Mayapur*. The Mahomedan historians of the seventh century called it as *Gangadwar*. The famous Chinese traveller Houen T'sang referred to it as *Mo-yu-lo* (possibly Mayapur) in the account of his travels. In the narrations of Abul Fazl it is recorded as *Maya* or *Haridwar*. At one time it was called *Kapila*. It is in the Saharanpur district and is about 1,045 feet above the sea-level.

It was still dark when our train got into the station of Hardwar. The air was quite chill on account of the profuse rain that had fallen during the previous two days, and we were shivering. We took shelter under our blankets and did not leave the station till the twilight was over. At day-break we went to the *Ashrama* of a Brahmachari who was known to one of us and put up there for the day. The hermitage, if it could be so called, was located in a nice, secluded spot on the bank of the Ganges. The Brahmachari—Swami Keshavananda—appeared to be a very affable man. He had many of his disciples around him in the ashrama. He was spoken of as an adept in curing certain diseases, and we found there a few patients who were gradually recovering under his empirical skill. He was very hospitable to us and helped us a great deal in making arrangements for our journey. With his help we chose out our

priests for Kedarnath and Badrinarayan, who conjointly appointed a guide for us.

We were tired and so did not stir out in the morning. After taking our bath and breakfast we took rest till four in the afternoon, and then went out to see the town of Kankhal the capital of Daksha—the son of the creator. It stands about a mile south of Hardwar and wears a picturesque appearance, with numerous houses and temples decorated with fantastic paintings and good gardens approached through handsome door-ways. According to the traditional belief, it was here that the notorious sacrifice of Daksha Raja was spoiled by the Lord Mahadeva in the primitive days. The principal temples of the place are those of Daksheswara Mahadeva and Satikunda. There are many monasteries belonging to the Udasi, Nirmala, Nirbani, Niranjani and other Sannyasin sects. All priests of Hardwar generally live here. Great damage was done to the town by floods some time ago, which destroyed many fine gardens and houses on the river bank. The crying need of such a place where pilgrims pour in by thousands every day is a well-equipped charitable hospital. One cannot dream to what a wretched state a pilgrim falls when he is ill! He may receive a little help for two or three days from his fellow travellers and then is left to himself. What does await him then? He dies helpless and uncared for. This desideratum has however been met, to a great extent, by a *Sevasrama* established a few years ago by the well-known philanthropic body—the Ramakrishna Mission. The Mission seems now to be the moving spirit of India and its charitable deeds cannot be extolled too much. The neat and tidy state in which the Ashrama was kept pleased us much and we were moved to see the loving care that was bestowed on the patients. The Ashrama is held in great respect by the locality. On the opposite side at about three miles down the river stands the *Gurukula*—the famous University of the Arya Samaj. It is both a university and a college, and forms an entire village by itself. The students are boarded and taught in the old Aryan model free of any charges. Indeed India needs many such institutions to-day.

The sun was fading fast, and we directed our steps towards the town of Hardwar. It is beautifully situated at the foot of the Siwalik range on the right bank of the Ganges. The range is here, about a mile above the town, pierced by a great gorge through which the river debouches on the plains where it branches out into several main streams which meet again somewhere at four miles down the point. Hardwar stands on the right bank of the westernmost branch. The right bank of this channel is decked with a

succession of ghats and temples and the left bank is a craggy island. This is extremely picturesque. The first of the sacred sites is the *Bhimghora*—a tank made out of a hollow in the rock formed by a kick from the horse of Bhimasena the second of the five Pandava brothers. Close by is the big temple of *Gouri Sankar*. These are on the north of the pass. On the south, *Brahmakunda* comes first, adjoining which is the *Vishnupadaghat*, so called from the imprint of Vishnu's feet on a stone built into the wall. This ghat is the most sacred of all the holy places in Hardwar. Pilgrims must bathe here, and during Kumbha-mela he is honoured most who performs his ablutions here first. Formerly it was very small, being 34 feet in width at the top, in consequence of which horrible casualties often occurred during *melas*. To obviate such occurrences, Government widened the ghat to 100 feet and added several flights of steps to it. On the ghat there is a temple dedicated to the deity of the river. The bank adjoining to it on the south is nearly paved with cement to some distance and thus affords a very nice promenade. At evening this place assumes a peculiar aspect. A large concourse of men of various shades gather, some perform worship, uttering loudly the holy mantrams; some chant hymns or holy songs; a few explain the texts from the shastras; some are engaged in religious controversies; while others stroll about from one end to the other in a pleasant mood. In short the whole atmosphere seems then to be surcharged with intense spiritual fervour and all present appear to be floating in a stream of etherial bliss.

South of this paved bank lies the *Kushabarth ghat*, where one offers food and water to his dead fore-fathers. This is followed by the temple of *Sarvanath*. Proceeding southwards we saw two old temples dedicated to *Bhairava* and *Maya Devi*. At the entrance of the latter temple there are inscriptions of olden times on the walls. The piece of land stretching from this temple little towards the south is now called Mayapur. According to tradition it is a very sacred place and any one who dies here attains Nirvana. Just below *Ganesh ghat* on the south are the head-works of the Ganges canal. On the opposite side of the bridge over the regulator are the canal offices and the inspection bungalow which affords a magnificent view of the town, the gorge and the hills beyond. Further to the south on the west bank of the canal is an old temple *Narayanabali* built of very large bricks, and beyond there is the large mound about 750 square feet which marks the fort of Raja *Bena* of the pouranic times. On the opposite bank of the stream there are a few temples.

It grew dark and we had to give up sight-seeing for the day and returned to the ashrama. The branch of the river on the bank of which it is situated is called *Nildhara* and is on the east of the branch mentioned above. Opposite the Ashrama rose a hill named *Chandi* about 1,950 feet high, where exist three temples, namely of *Chandi Devi*, of *Nilakeswar Siva* and of *Pichasanath Siva*. We were tired and no sooner had we our supper than we were buried in deep sleep.

Next morning we took leave of our generous host and came to the house of our priest near *Brahmakund* to go through the necessary religious rites. In many places we have seen the priests to be very exacting; but it was not so here. Priests of holy places are generally called *Pandas* in Northern India. I have often seen people commenting disparagingly against the Panda system. Of course in certain cases this remark is true; but that is not due to the system itself, rather to the abuse that has crept into it. These *Pandas* serve us in various ways: they are our guides, hosts, men to shop, financiers, protectors, etc.; one would be at a terrible fix in such places of pilgrimage if they did not exist. And I may boldly say that in spite of the present defects in the system we cannot do away with it. That day we boarded ourselves in a hotel. There are more than a dozen of hotels in Hardwar, but they are very small and not at all tidy. The keepers are all very hard-working men, but they are perfectly innocent of cleanliness. And I felt all this was due to the want of the redeeming light of education. Poor souls! They were never taught to look on cleanliness as one of the essential virtues.

However, making a few purchases we took a little rest and as soon as the sun disappeared behind the hills we repaired to the river bank to enjoy the scene we saw yesterday. Long did we remain there watching the spectacle. The vast assemblage of *Sadhus* and devout men, the atmosphere serene with holy joy, the cool mountain breeze, the sweet babble of the rippling stream—all those were so enrapturous that we were very reluctant to part with them. But it was getting late and we hastened to our residence. Considering all sides there is perhaps no holy place equal to Hardwar in India. I have forgotten to tell my readers that there was a mint for copper coins here in the days of Akbar and the great Moghul used to have his drinking water supplied from here. Next day very early in the morning we were to leave Hardwar, but the coolies to carry our things through the journey were not available yet. Our Panda for *Badri* and the guide tried their utmost but to no effect. At last the Panda proffered to go along

with us up to Rishikesh where a large number of coolies was procurable and settle everything there. Rishikesh is about 15 miles up from Hardwar and half of the distance can be covered by train. Before we left Hardwar we were joined by a Brahmacharin and a lady—both disciples of Swami Keshavananda. Thus we were seven in all when we started to go up the hill.

(To be continued.)

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Through the grace of Providence and the good will of our readers and constituents, the Vedanta Kesari has been enabled with the present number to enter into the second year of its career. It was our sole endeavour last year to point out to our readers the singular superiority of the principles of the Sanatana Dharma as discovered by the ancient sages of our land. But the principles were mostly dealt with in abstract and general forms. Henceforth it should be our object to show also their practical bearing on life.

We fervently believe that if the regeneration of India and the spiritualisation of the world are to come, they can come only through the revival of the Sanatana Dharma throughout the length and breadth of the land. Thousand times has it been told, and let us reiterate it once more with all the force that we can command, that vain and futile will be our effort if we attempt to resuscitate the prestine glory of our nation merely by following the light and lead of an ideal that is not essentially indigenous.

We have to grow our *national* life by assimilation and not by imitation. The seed develops into a tree by assimilating heat, light, air, earth and water, that mother Nature places around it, but it does so never by departing from its own life-principle, because that would only defeat the plan of its own existence. So, like every other nation, we too have our own definite and distinct principle of life, which has been in the process of unfoldment through so many centuries in the past, and it now lies with us to further or arrest its development. The whole of India's past history holds up with the brightness of a noon-day sun before the thoughtful mind what that life-principle of our nation is.

While other nations hold other views and hug other principles in life, it has been given to India, through some unscrutable dispensation of the divine will, to hold an ideal which is nothing shorter than the attainment of the highest goal in life, the perfection of man

—which is only synonymous with the realisation of the infinite bliss in life—and teach the same to the whole world. From time immemorial she has been the custodian of all that is called spiritual and holy with which she has been enriching the religious life of the other parts of the world. Modern world stands now in sore need, perhaps more so than what it was ever before, to have its spiritual life fertilized again by the efflux of spirituality from India.

When we look to the present mental state of the West, we find what a conflict of passions, an aberration of ideals, a storm of unsatiated desires and ambitions, and above all the mad fury of an uncontrolled brute-force which like the proverbial demon, is eating away its own intestine; in short, it contains all that we may term *Asuric* and has stirred up such a huge commotion of despondency and dissatisfaction which is rending the very soul of the West. There are undoubtedly some good traits also but they are too incipient and weak to make good their claims on life against the opposing forces. Eighteen years ago, Swami Vivekananda remarked after seeing the West with almost a prophetic vision, "Modern Europe stands on the crater of a huge volcano and is in constant danger to be blown up by the eruption of the subterranean fire which is now rumbling audibly within its bowels." And to-day that eruption of the volcano has really taken place.

When future Europe will emerge from the appalling catastrophe of the present war, lacerated beyond compare by its own violence and folly, who else can embalm her scars, repair her mutilations, and sooth her agonising spirit, but India with her ambrosia of spirituality? At least this should be our sacred ambition, to humanise and spiritualise future Europe and thus to prevent her from lapsing back into her former folly. When her bitter experience of the present torment cannot but make her turn her eyes in future to look for a redeeming light from the East, should not India then discharge once more her life-mission by radiating the light spiritual on the West at that requisite hour? And what ambition can be nobler, what duty can be more divine, what task can be more worthwhile the exertion than this effort of old India to make brute a *man*, man a *god*?

But to restore this divine alchemy to the spiritual civilisation of India, we must have to repair, head and heart, to the Sanatana Dharma of yore. The Dharma alone can rejuvenate the old spiritual life of our nation and enliven through it the whole world with that elixir of life. And then and then alone India shall be great,—India the spiritual teacher, the greatest benefactress of the human race. By following Dharma only can we make our future life a fulfilment of the past. So we say once again that any attempt on our part to cut the national life away from the sacred and ancient moorings of

the Dharma is fraught with danger, nay is doomed to utter failure, for such an attempt will court on its rebelled head the curses of the holy past.

THE LATE SWAMI TRIGUNATITA.

It is with profound sorrow that we have to announce the passing away of the Swami Trigunatita, one of the most favourite Sannyasin disciples of Sri Ramakrishna at the University Hospital, San Francisco, U.S.A., on the 10th of January last. On the 27th December 1914, while the Swami was conducting the afternoon service at the Hindu Temple, a man entered the Hall and coming up to the dais exploded a bomb that he had brought under the cover of his hat, at the feet of the Swami. The man himself was instantly blown to pieces, and the Swami and some others of the audience were severely wounded. The wound of the Swami proved fatal two weeks later. The man who threw the bomb was named Lous Vavra and no reason could be attached to his nefarious act except lunacy. According to the account of him in the San Francisco papers, he was a student of the occultism, and had been driven mad by his failure to master the secrets of the esoteric writings of the adepts. The late Swami was one of the ablest lieutenants that the Swami Vivekanandaji left behind him to carry on his august work. He had literary capacity of a superior order and while in India he was highly revered by many for his austere religious life and deep oriental culture. He was also prominent among the philanthropic workers, and in the course of the work, he had to come across Government officials who admired him a good deal. He started the Bengali monthly magazine, "Udbodhan" devoted to Hindu culture and religion, and published for the first time the Bengali books of the Swami Vivekananda dealing with the Hindu philosophy. In America he worked hard for the propagation of Vedanta philosophy and was the first to establish a Hindu Temple there. In the death of the revered Swami, the Ramakrishna Mission has lost one of its most able workers and spiritual teachers whom Sri Ramakrishna left as a sacred legacy to the world.

recognised त्वत्प्रसृष्टं sent back by thee मा मे अभिवदेत् may welcome एतत् this त्रयणी of the three (boons) प्रथमं the first वरं the boon वृत्ते I choose.

(Nachiketas then said :)

"O Death, as the first of the three boons, I choose that Goutama (my father) be free from anxiety, cheerful and may have his anger pacified; and that he may recognise and welcome me when I shall be sent back home by thee."

यथापुरस्ताद्भविता प्रतीत औद्दालकिरारुणिर्मत्प्रसृष्टः । सुखं रात्रीः शयिता वीतमन्युस्त्वां ददृशिवान्मृत्युमुखात्प्रमुक्तम् ॥ ११ ॥

आरुणिः the son of Aruna, औद्दालकिः Uddalaka (or the adopted son of Uddalaka) पुरस्तात् even before (त्वयि towards thee) यथा as मत्प्रसृष्टः by my command (तथैव so) भविता shall become. प्रतीतः shall recognise (literally, one who has recognised) सः he त्वां thee मृत्यु-मुखात् from the jaws of Death प्रमुक्तं released ददृशिवान् having seen वीतमन्युः free from anger (स्यात् shall be) रात्रीः (in) the night सुखं peacefully शयिता shall sleep (lit. sleeping).

(Yama said :)

By my command, Auddalaki Aruni (thy father) shall recognise thee, and be again towards thee even as he was before. Seen thee released from the jaws of Death he shall sleep peacefully in the night and be free from anger.

स्वर्गे लोके न भयं किंचनास्ति न तत्र त्वं न जरया विभेति ।

उभे तीर्त्वाशनायापिपासे शोकातिगो मोदते स्वर्गलोके ॥ १२ ॥

स्वर्गे in the Heaven लोके world किञ्चन whatever भयं fear न अस्ति does not exist तत्र there त्वं you (death) (न असि do not exist) न न च and जरया of old age विभेति (one) is afraid. उभे both अशनायापिपासे hunger and thirst तीर्त्वा having crossed, शोकातिगः getting beyond sorrow स्वर्गलोके in the Heaven-world मोदते rejoice.

(Nachiketas next said :)

In Heaven there is no fear. Thou art not there (O Death), nor one is afraid of old age. In that Heaven-world they rejoice, having crossed both hunger and thirst, and getting beyond all sorrow.

[In heaven etc.—It is believed that the inhabitants of heaven, the Devas, have only three stages of life (दशा) viz. birth, childhood and youth; the other two stages, i.e. old age and death, from which man suffers, they have not got; so they are called त्रिदशा: i.e. those who have only three states of life. Moreover, it is believed that they never suffer from thirst or hunger, because they drink the eternal nectar of the Soma world, and all men that go to the Soma heaven or Chandra Loka through the performance of certain sacrifices, become food to these Devas, i.e. are enjoyed by them.]

स त्वमग्निं स्वर्ग्यमध्येषि मृत्यो प्रब्रूहि त्वं श्रद्धधानाय मह्यम् ।
स्वर्गलोका अमृतत्वं भजन्त एतद्द्वितीयेन वृणे वरेण ॥ १३ ॥

मृत्यो O Death, स: that त्वं thou स्वर्ग्य that leads to heaven अग्निं fire (the sacrifice) अध्येषि knowest, त्वं that (sacrifice) श्रद्धधानाय full of faith मह्यं to me प्रब्रूहि tell (instruct) स्वर्गलोका: those who aim at the attainment of heaven (i.e. the performers of sacrifices) अमृतत्वं the immortality (of the Devas) भजन्ते attain. एतत् this (the secret of that sacrificial fire) द्वितीयेन by the second वरेण boon वृणे I choose.

Thou knowest, O Death, that fire (sacrifice) which leads to heaven; tell it to me for I am full of faith. (By that) the heaven-seekers attain immortality.—This I choose for my second boon.

[The heaven-seekers...immortality—Here, the immortality does not imply the absolute immortality that a Jnanin attains, but it means the long life of the Devas who enjoy their positions till the end of the Kalpa (the one cycle of creation.)]

प्र ते ब्रवीमि तदु मे निबोध स्वर्ग्यमग्निं नचिकेतः प्रजानन् ।
अनन्तलोकाग्निमथो प्रतिष्ठां विद्धि त्वमेतं निहितं गुहायाम् ॥ १४ ॥

(अहं I) स्वर्ग्य that leads to heaven अग्निं the fire (sacrifice) प्रजानन् knowing ते to thee प्रब्रवीमि tell, तत् that उ verily मे from me निबोध learn. नचिकेतः O Nachiketas, त्वं thou एतं this अनन्त-लोकाग्निं as a means to the attainment of the eternal heaven, अथो and प्रतिष्ठां the support (of the world), गुहायां in the cavity (i.e. in the heart of the learned) निहितं dwelling, विद्धि know.

(Death replied :)

"I know well the fire, O Nachiketas, which leads to heaven, and I tell it to thee,—learn it from me. Know this as the means of attaining the eternal heaven, the support of the world and dwelling in the heart of the learned."

[The support of the world—in the form of Viraj, the macrocosmic physical life.]

लोकादिमग्निं तमुवाच तस्मै या इष्टका यावतीर्वा यथा वा ।
स चापि तत्प्रत्यवदद्यथोक्तमथास्य मृत्युः पुनरेवाह तुष्टः ॥ १५ ॥

(यमः Yama) तस्मै to him (Nachiketas) लोकादिं the source of the world तं that अग्निं fire (sacrifice) उवाच told. या: what kind यावती: how many वा or इष्टका: bricks यथा how (the sacrificial fire is to be lit) वा or स: he (Nachiketas) च and अपि also तत् that (what Yama told) यथोक्तं as told प्रत्यवदत् repeated. अथ then मृत्युः Death अस्य at this (repetition) तुष्टः (सन्) being pleased पुनः again एव even आह said.

Then Yama told him that fire (sacrifice) which is the source of the world, and also what kind of bricks and how many are required (for the altar) and how (the sacrificial fire is to be lit). And he repeated all as it has been told to him. Then Death, being pleased at this, said again :

तमब्रवीत्प्रीयमाणो महात्मा वरं तवेहाद्य ददामि भूयः । तवैव नाम्ना भवितायमग्निः सङ्कां चेमापनेकरूपां गृहाण ॥ १६ ॥

महात्मा the high-souled (Death) प्रीयमाणः well satisfied तं him (Nachiketas) अब्रवीत् said, इह here, एव even अद्य now तव to thee भूयः again वरं boons ददामि give. अयं this अग्निः fire (sacrifice) तव thy एवं verily नाम्ना by name भविता shall be. इमां this अनेकरूपां of various hues सङ्कां garland गृहाण accept.

The high-souled (Death), being well satisfied, said to him (Nachiketas): I give thee now one more boon ;— (henceforth) this fire (sacrifice) shall be named after thee ; and accept also this garland of various hues.

[This garland . hues—अनेकरूपां सुकुं which may also mean, according to Sankaracharya, 'the Path of Karma, (sacrifices etc.) that leads to various good results.' Then the last line of the Mantram would imply that Yama taught Nachiketas another secret of ritual work leading to some other good results.]

त्रिणाचिकेतास्त्रिभिरेत्य संधिं त्रिकर्मकृत्तरति जन्ममृत्यू । ब्रह्म-
जज्ञं देवमीड्यं विदित्वा निचाय्येमां शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति ॥ १७ ॥

त्रिभिः with the three संधिं union एत्य having attained त्रिणाचिकेतः one who has thrice performed the Nachiketa rites त्रिकर्मकृत् one who has done his three duties जन्ममृत्यू birth and death तरति crosses. ईड्यं worshipful ब्रह्मजज्ञं born of Brahman and omniscient देवं the resplendent विदित्वा having learnt निचाय्य realising इमां this अत्यन्तं the supreme शान्तिं peace एति attains.

He who has thrice performed the Nachiketa-fire-sacrifice, and has been united with the three, and also has done his three kinds of duties, overcomes birth and death ; and having learnt and realised that worshipful and omniscient resplendent one (Agni) born of Brahman, he attains the supreme peace.

[Who has thrice performed, etc.—त्रिणाचिकेतः of the text, may also mean 'one who has heard, studied and performed the Nachiketa sacrifice.'

United with the Three—i.e. one who has been duly instructed by father, mother and preceptor, or by the Vedas, Smritis (religious books besides the Vedas) and the virtuous men, or one who has acquired knowledge from the three Pramanas (sources of right knowledge), viz.—Perception (प्रत्यक्षं), Inference (अनुमानं) and the Scriptures (शब्दः).

Three kinds of duties—i.e., the study of the Vedas, performance of sacrifice, and giving alms.]



Vedanta Kesari

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that 'I am the Atman.'"

—Swami Vivekananda.

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE GREAT MASTER.

By

Swami Saradananda.

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V

Life at Kamarpukur.

The feelings of Sriji Khudiram can better be imagined than described when at the age of thirty-nine he came to settle at Kamarpukur. Fate had indeed been hard with him to take away at one stroke all that he possessed and leave him entirely at the mercy of others—and that, for no fault of his own, but for his scruples to become an instrument in the hand of the wicked to bring undeserved wrong on the heads of his simple and weak neighbours. Yet through all the bitterness and despair that well-nigh overwhelmed him during the dark days of persecution, and of sorrow for separation from those whom he held near and dear, he felt from time to time the calm and unwavering assurance of the inner man in him that he had done well in not yielding to the tempter. The good had been looking up to him with admiration and a feeling akin to awe, and the selfish, the worldly and the bad, holding his conduct to ridicule and he heeded not their praise or blame; but had it not been for that

assurance within he could hardly have been able to hold himself firmly to the path that he chose for himself. And yet he felt for the time being too stunned by the blow when it came. But he blamed none, not even the wicked Ramananda, for all that had befallen him, when he recovered himself from the effects of the same. For, had he not heard from the scriptures that man reaps in his present incarnation what he had but sown in the past? And had not the Deity whom he worshipped, the pure and immaculate Sri Ramachandra, suffered more than any man has done ever, while He made his sojourn through this 'Vale of tears', to bring home to men that sufferings and miseries are sure to visit all here below and are the best of all teachers? Then, when he thought of the unaccountable way in which help had come to him in his darkest moment, his heart became full of thankfulness towards his God and he felt that he would never be left forsaken, come whatsoever to make his cup of misery fuller than ever; and along with that came the determination in him never to swerve from the path of righteousness in future. Thus we find him living at present at Kamarpukur from day to day without making any plans for the future and passing his days in company with his wife like a "Vanaprastha" or recluse of old, in worship and devotion. He kept a little hut separate for the purpose and passed many hours of the day within the same in practising exercises helpful to concentration, in prayers and in deep contemplation of and communion with his *Ishtam* or that expression of the Deity to which he had been directed by his spiritual preceptor as being especially helpful to quicken and stimulate his spiritual impulses.

The wants of the family were few and Khudiram, who had a sort of practicality peculiar to himself though regarded by many as a visionary, made up his mind never to increase them. The little plot of land which his friend Sukhlal had given him, began to produce rice more than sufficient to support the family throughout the year; and it was customary with him during the seed-times to offer especial prayers to the Deity and sow a few paddy plants with his own hands in the field uttering the words "Glory to the heroic Scion of Raghu", before he engaged hired labour to finish its cultivation. And strange as it may appear, the story runs in the family that the field had never failed him even at times when drought and scarcity prevailed throughout the land! The plot of land is called even to this day, as *Lakshmi-jala* or the land belonging to the goddess of wealth, for that very reason.

Secure of the produce of his field Khudiram found that he could devote himself henceforth to plain living and high thinking

towards which he felt himself drawn strongly by the present state of his mind. The climate of Bengal in which so little is needed to keep body and soul together and the old custom of India which made society responsible for providing the necessities of life to the real spiritual aspirant, helped him much to do so. For his neighbours who had enough to spare would send to him unasked, what they thought might be wanted for his little family. But here also Khudiram had set up strong barriers in the way of accepting presents, so that he might not lose his self-respect and independence of mind and above all, that he could teach himself the lesson of looking to God, and never to men, for help and comfort even in little things. And the rules that governed his conduct in this direction were *firstly*, that he would never accept anything from one who was not his equal in society as regards the circumstances of birth; *secondly*, that he would never accept anything even from such a person, in case he disregarded the open injunctions of the Scriptures in order to earn the creature comforts in life; and *thirdly*, that he would never accept anything even from one equal to him in birth, in case that person took money from one to whom he gave his daughter in marriage; for, that he regarded as tantamount to selling one's daughter. Strange as the last of the above conditions may sound to the reader, it will appear in a new light when he considers the fact that the custom of marrying one's daughter to the party who paid the most, had prevailed in this part of Bengal until it had become a regular evil, and Khudiram and others of his opinion had to set their faces against it in this manner to rouse self-respect in the mind of the misguided fathers and make it peremptory in them to correct themselves.

Impressed by his recent misfortune with the idea of the transitory nature of prosperity which wealth brings one in society, Khudiram gave up for ever the idea of struggling to regain his former position and devoted himself entirely to the leading of the higher life in the light of the Scriptures. Things transpired as if guided by some higher power to confirm him in that decision. It was at this time that he gained the image of his tutelary Deity *Raghubira*, in a wonderful way. Happening to return, one day, to Kamarpukur after visiting a distant village on business, he felt tired and began to rest a while underneath a tree on the side of the road, which lay across a wide field. Overcome by fatigue and slumber he now dreamt as if his own *Ishtam*, the divine Ramachandra, was standing before him and telling him that he would like to go to his house and bless him and his family always with his benign presence there. Overjoyed at this unexpected turn

of events he was overwhelmed with sorrow the next moment to think of his poverty, and beseeched him with tears in his eyes, not to do so, for he had not the means to serve him properly. At this the Deity seemed to be very pleased and insisted on going with him, assuring him that he would never feel offended for he knew that he would serve him to the best of his ability. Khudiram then awoke to wonder at this extraordinary dream. The spot where he saw his own *Ishtam* in his dream seemed to be the one close to the place where he was lying, and on going to make a closer inspection of it his eyes fell on what seemed to be a little stone image lying by the side of a venomous cobra. But undaunted he went to the spot and found the cobra gone and the image lying as he had seen before. But Oh the wonder, when he found the image turn out on examination to be really of the divine Ramachandra, of whom he had dreamt a little while ago ! The devotee in him believed from that moment, that it was indeed Sri Ramachandra whom he had seen, and believed also in the promise that, he would henceforth bless his home and remain with and protect him in a special sense ! With a heart full of the ecstasy of devotion and awe he hastened to his home with the image and placing it in the hut in which he performed his meditations, told the event to his faithful wife.

Khudiram seemed to have made rapid strides towards spiritual realisations at this period of his life. The accounts which we have found of him, state that his noble figure used to glow literally with the fervour of devotion when he repeated his invocation to *Gayatri* in his daily prayers in the morning and at night. He frequently saw the vision of Mother *Sitala* as a sweet girl leading and helping him while he busied himself daily with his task of gathering flowers for his worship at break of dawn. And he practised truthfulness so strictly in every thought, word and deed that people came to the belief that no untruth could cross his mind or pass out of his lips even in jest ; and such was the loving reverence they felt for the man whose ways of life were so different from theirs, who welcomed poverty and rejoiced to see others happy, who blessed and helped all who came to him for advice and guidance, and settled all disputes among them with justice tempered with kindness—that they gradually came to look upon him as a veritable seer whose every word could not but be true. They stood up in respect whenever he would pass by their houses, never allowed themselves to talk foolish things before him and would wait to take their plunge into the waters of the big tank, Haldarpukur, as long as he would be bathing in it.

If Khudiram made such a wonderful impression on the minds of his neighbours, his wife, the sweet and graceful Chandra did none the less. But the impression that she made was of a different nature altogether. For they found in her the mother, who was ever careful to look after the comforts of even the lowest of them, and would sacrifice her time and what little she had to feed and clothe them whensoever they were ill or in want. The children of the neighbourhood engaged her especial attention and their mothers found in her always such ready sympathy, that they would assemble in her hut in their leisure moments and would seek her advice and help in their troubles. Thus her great mother's heart made her the centre of a large family as it were, in the village. The elderly ladies of the neighbourhood felt themselves attracted towards her as to their own daughters ; and for those who were equal to her in years she had in reserve such genuine friendship that they longed to be in her company always.

All those and more came to Chandra naturally as she became accustomed to her new mode of living and environments. But inured to plenty it was hard for her at first to face life thus with nothing else but a stock of deep trust in God. And had it not been for her brave and truly devoted husband she would most surely have broken down in the attempt. For days there were when such dire want stared her in the face that she knew not how she would be able to cook her next meal for her husband and children, in spite of her observing the strictest economy and depriving herself even of the bare necessities of life. And Khudiram knowing by her looks what was in her heart would encourage her by saying " Are we not under the protection of the all-powerful *Raghuvira* and ought we not to observe fast on the day on which we are not able to offer Him anything ? So be of good cheer and make up your mind to starve with Him as your companion if such be His will." Chandra, who had perfect trust in her noble husband, felt then as if the burden had been taken away from her and went about joyfully in her daily round of duties. And strangely enough presents in the shape of food grains and vegetables would always reach her on such occasions from unexpected quarters and she found that *Raghuvira* was indeed looking after her !

The faithful heart of Chandra and her simple devotion raised her sometimes to mental planes where she would see visions of gods and goddesses. It must be a subjective affair with her, as all visions are in which the intense fullness of concentration of the mind on a single train of thought finds relief, as it were, in projecting

it outwards. Yet it showed none the less that she had been advancing unconsciously towards the habit of thinking deeply on a subject, a habit which in its culmination leads one to the goal of realising the highest spiritual truth of the oneness of Being. It is stated that she had such a vision once, of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, at this period of her life. Her boy Ramkumar who had become about fifteen years of age at present had been receiving his education in Sanskrit grammar and literature generally and in Smriti or the Hindu Laws, by joining the *tola* or *chatuspathi* after becoming familiar with the three R's under the village pedagogue, and had been helping the family also, by earning something by conducting the *puja* or worship of the tutelary gods in the vocation of a priest, in a few private families of the neighbourhood.

It is stated that Ramkumar went one day to perform the worship of the goddess Lakshmi to the village of Bhursuba a mile to the north of Kamarpukur. It was a full-moon night and as the goddess was being worshipped at an advanced hour in the evening he was rather late in returning home. Chandra getting anxious for the safe return of her boy waited as long as she could on the threshold of her hut, then went slowly to the crossing of the road leading to Bhursuba with the intention of asking anyone who might chance to come from that direction about him. She scanned with eager eyes the meadow through which the road lay, but finding none approaching waited and fell to musing. She awoke suddenly from her reverie by the sound of footsteps of one coming from the direction of Bhursuba to find a beautiful lady dressed gaily as if, for some festive occasion and having curious ornaments and jewelry on her of great value, approaching her all alone! On her drawing near she accosted her with the inquiry of her boy and the lady replied that she had met him a little while ago and that he would be returning shortly. The simple-hearted Chandra thanked her heartily and then getting anxious for the safety of the lady in turn asked her not to travel all alone, at this late hour and invited her to become her guest for the night. The lady replied that she could not accept her kind offer as she had to visit certain people that night, but promised to come to her sometime. She then wended her way by the side of Chandra's home and entered a by-path that led to the house of her wealthy neighbours, the Laha family. Chandra thinking within herself that she had lost her way hastened to the spot to help her with directions about the road but could not find her again though she searched for her everywhere round the place. And even as she was engaged in this fruitless task a

strong feeling suddenly took possession of her that she had seen and spoken ere long to none else but to the Mother Lakshmi herself,—and that she had deigned to visit her thus to offer her consolation about her boy! When Chandra was repeating this vision to her husband with a heart full of grateful devotion, her boy Ramkumar entered the threshold of her home.

Thus passed ten years at Kamarpukur and a few were the events that disturbed the even tenor of the life of this little family during the time. The betrothal of Katyayani, the daughter of Khudiram, to Kenaram Banerje of Anur, a village about two miles to the north, and the marriage of Ramkumar with the sister of the same person (Kenaram) may be cited as examples of such. Then there was the sad event of the death of Sukhlal sometime during the period,—the friend who had been so faithful to Khudiram up to the last. But at this time, the family met a slight turn of fortune in the betterment of its financial condition, partly by the earnings of Ramkumar, who had finished his education by this time, and also by the monthly help that began to come to the family regularly from Ramchand, son of Ramsila, the sister of Khudiram, who had become a *mukhtiar* (lawyer) and joined the bar of Midnapur. Khudiram, as we have told already, was very fond of Ramchand and used to pay visits to him and his family at Salempur from time to time. And the story runs in the family how after starting once for that place on such a visit, he travelled actually more than half the distance and then postponing it returned to Kamarpukur with a basket-full of fresh young leaves of the Bel tree that grew by the side of the road, solely for the purpose of offering them to Siva, as he could not find such fresh leaves to offer to Him for some days past, it being the month of February when that kind of trees shed their old leaves.

The management of the affairs of the family having fallen on Ramkumar, Khudiram was able to turn his attention at present to other directions. He felt a strong inclination within to roam freely now for sometime, leaving all cares behind and planned a pilgrimage on foot to Ramesvara, in the southern-most part of India. He started early in the year 1824 for this purpose and did not return to Kamarpukur until sometime during the next year. It is said that the *linga* image of Siva named Ramesvara that is still to be seen at the house of Khudiram was brought by him during this pilgrimage. The year following saw the birth of the second son of Khudiram, and the new-born babe was named Ramesvara in remembrance of the event of his birth a little after the return of his father from the pilgrimage to the sacred shrine of that name,

THE MESSAGE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA.

BY

G. Venkataranga Row, M. A.

(Continued from page 8)

To a superficial observer Sri Ramakrishna is a mere dreamer of dreamers. To those who study him deeply he is the very ideal of sanity. He belongs to a rare and beautiful type of souls—a type which refuses to be satisfied with that which other men call worldly experience, and dedicates itself to a life of self-denial and self-sacrifice in order that it may explore the mystery of existence and see into the life of things. We meet these persons in the East and the West. Their one passion appears to be the prosecution of a certain spiritual and intangible quest, the finding of a way out to some desirable state of existence in which alone they can satisfy their craving for absolute truth. This quest has for them constituted the whole meaning of life : they have made for it sacrifices which have appeared phenomenal to other men. They assure us that they have achieved a passionate communion with deeper levels of life than those with which we usually deal, and seen face to face the Reality behind the veil. All men at one time or other, have fallen in love with Truth. With most, however, this has been but a passing passion. But the class of men I am speaking of remain all their lives devout lovers of reality. They claim to have succeeded in establishing immediate communication between the spirit of man and the unknown world which lies outside the boundaries of sense. The practical man with his inveterate habit of taking the visible world for granted and the philosophic skeptic with his cocksure assumption that science is real and metaphysics is not, may contemptuously reject all this as pretentious nonsense. But no serious lover of truth should talk of the unreal world of these dreamers, until he has discovered, if he can, a real world with which it may be compared.

This involves a criticism of reality and a comprehension of first principles. It is to first principles that we should go, if we really wish to understand the true significance of the type of men like Sri Ramakrishna and find a justification for their spiritual experiences and perceptions. Let us then begin at the beginning and remind ourselves of a few primary facts. That beginning, for

human thought, is, of course, the *I*, the Ego, the self-conscious subject, which declares, in the teeth of all arguments, *I am*. Here is a point as to which we all feel quite sure. It is not possible to doubt it and in the very act of doubting, we affirm its existence. *Cogito ergo sum*. The uncertainties only begin for most of us when we ask what else *is*. To this *I*, this conscious self, come a constant stream of messages, experiences, through the senses. What do these experiences mean ? The unsophisticated self, of course, identifies its own sensations with qualities inherent in the objects of the external world. It sorts, accepts, rejects and combines them and constructs from them a concept which *is*, it says, the external world. Very slight investigation will, however, show that the relation of sensations to reality is, at best, symbolic and approximate. When a sensation of pain arises in us by a prick of the pin, we do not say that pain exists as a quality in the pin and the prick communicates it to us by means of the sense of touch. The subjective character of sensations is proved by the fact that they depend not on the nature of the stimulus but on the sense organ that is stimulated and its central connection with the nervous system. For example, however the organ of vision may be stimulated, if any sensation follows, it is always one of light or colour. A blow on the eye makes us see sparks. When a limb has been amputated, sensations due to irritation of the skin of the stump are referred by the patient to a limb which is no longer there, that is, to an imaginary foot and toes. It is apparent that the seemingly real external universe of the average human mind, cannot be the real external world, but only the self's projected picture of it. It can have no meaning for selves whose senses or channels of communication happen to be arranged on a different plan. The unknown world would still be sending the same messages to these selves but they should have interpreted them differently and built up a world of their own quite unlike the world of common sense. Further, there are aspects of the world which the senses can never know. It is an established fact that our senses, as at present constituted, cannot respond to vibrations above and below a certain intensity. Evidence of the senses cannot therefore be safely accepted as the only standard of ultimate reality.

The next question we have to consider is—Is there any reality behind the shadow show of things in which most of us are content "at ease for eye to dwell"; if there is, how can we know it ? We have three great classic theories concerning the nature of reality. In them, we see crystallized the best that the human intellect, left to itself, has been able to achieve.

The most obvious and most generally accepted explanation of the world is of course that of *Naturalism or Realism*: the point of view at once of the plain man and of physical science. Naturalism states simply that we see the real world, though we may not see it very well. It rests itself on the concrete and accepts the material things as real. The most elementary criticism, applied to any ordinary object of perception, tends to invalidate this simple and comfortable creed of common sense. When I say, for instance that I 'see' a house, I can only mean by this that my vision is affected in a certain way and arouses in me the idea of 'house.' The idea of 'house' is now treated by me as a real house and my further observations will be an unfolding, enriching and defining this image. But what the external reality which evoked the image that I call 'house' is, I do not know and never can know. Evidence of other senses which may be called in to corroborate the evidence of the eye likewise consists purely of perceptions which my mind constructs and externalises, and carries no higher objective validity. It requires not merely faith but gross credulity to accept these perceptions as real. In fact they belong to the human mind, not to the physical universe. Even the sense that the object of perception is outside yourself may be a fancy; since we as easily attribute this external quality to images seen in the dreams and to waking hallucinations as we do to those objects which, as we say, are "really there." It is no argument to say that most men see the world in much the same way. For as a matter of fact no two men see the same thing alike. As Blake says, "a fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees." We see and hear all things through a temperament and our preconceptions more or less shape the character of our universe. In one and the same sky the poet may discover the veritable embodiment of beauty, while the sailor sees only a promise of dirty weather ahead. Moreover, even this unique world of the individual is not permanent. Our personality limits and conditions our perception of things and it undergoes, as we are all aware, many readjustments in the course of its passage from birth through maturity to death. The attitude of naturalism may be a counsel of prudence in view of our ignorance of all that lies beyond, but it can never satisfy the hunger for reality. Only a reality which exists *for all* and exists *in itself*, unconditioned by the perceiving mind, can satisfy that mind's most vital instinct, most sacred passion—its instinct for the Absolute, its passion for Truth.

The second great conception of Being is *Idealism*. It approaches the question from another stand-point. Whilst the

naturalist's world is constructed from an observation of the evidence offered by the senses, the idealist's world is constructed from an observation of the processes of thought. There are but two things, he says, in effect about which we are sure; the existence of a thinking subject, a conscious self and of an object, an Idea, with which that subject deals. What we call the universe is really a collection of ideas, more or less distorted by the individual thinker in the process of thinking. We do not think all there is to be thought, conceive all that there is to be conceived; neither do we necessarily combine in right order or proportion those ideas which we are capable of grasping. Reality is the complete, undistorted object, the absolute thought, of which we pick up these fragmentary hints, the world of phenomena which treat as real being merely its shadow show or manifestation in space and time. All life, all phenomena are the endless modifications and expressions of the one Transcendent Object, the mighty thought of one Absolute Thinker, in which we live and move and have our being. This Object is interpreted by the senses and conceived by the mind under limitations which we are accustomed to call matter, space and time. But we have no reason to suppose that matter, space and time are necessarily parts of reality, of the ultimate idea. As our vision, our idea of things, tends to approximate more and more to that of the Eternal Idea, we get nearer and nearer to reality. This is the supreme unity at which all the illusory appearances of sense-experience dimly hint. While there is much that can be said in favour of Idealism, in that it asserts the supremacy of spirit, it breaks down when we seek its help to attain communion with the eternal world of reality which it postulates. On examination we find it but a diagram of the heavens, not a ladder to the stars. The thing that mattered, the living thing, has somehow escaped it; and its dialectic bears the same relation to the reality as the art of the anatomist bears to the mystery of life. This failure of Idealism to find in practice the reality of which it thinks so much is due to the exclusive intellectualism of its methods, its fatal trust in the fancies of the brain, instead of the vision of the heart.

There is yet another theory of Being which may be loosely defined as *Philosophic skepticism*. This is the attitude of those who refuse to accept either the realistic or the idealistic answer to the external question. Confronted in their turn with the riddle of reality, they reply that there is no riddle at all to solve. The external world, says the skeptic, is, so far as I know it, a concept present in my mind. If my mind cease to exist, so far as I know, the concept

which I call the world, would cease to exist too. The one thing, which for me *is*, is the self's experience, its whole consciousness. Outside this circle of consciousness, I have no warrant to indulge in guesses as to what may or may not be. In the completion and perfection of the set of ideas with which our consciousness is furnished, lies the only reality which we can ever hope to know. The absolute is a meaningless jargon, a superfluous complication of thought. This is the position in which pure reason, if left to itself, is bound to end. Pushed to its logical extreme, this conception of Being will make the existence of other men outside our consciousness a mere figment of our imagination and altogether illusory. Even the existence of the mind which conceives consciousness becomes hypothetical. Though we may feel all this as absurd, we can never prove it to be so. The fatal defect of this theory is that it fails to satisfy the instinct for that absolute, that Real, towards which our spirit is perpetually straining.

We thus see that the intellectual quest of reality leads us down one of three blind alleys : (1) To an acceptance of the symbolic world of appearance as the real ; (2) to the elaboration of a theory—also of necessity symbolic—which, beautiful in itself, cannot help us to attain the absolute which it describes ; (3) to a hopeless but strictly logical skepticism. Is there then no possible escape from this soul-strangling deadlock ? Is there then no answer to "those obstinate questionings of sense and outward things before which our mortal nature doth tremble like a guilty thing surprised ?" Is there, then, no justification for our inborn conviction in the existence of

"An ever-enduring power,
And central peace, subsisting at the heart,
Of endless agitation ?"

Are all the teachings of the mighty prophets and seers of old concerning the spiritual world, the world of Absolute Life, Absolute Beauty, Absolute Truth, beyond the bounds of time and place, to be rejected as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal ? The human soul refuses to be satisfied with a hopeless situation like this and presses forward to approach and see, face to face, the Isis behind the veil. Can it realise this aspiration ? Yes, if we accept the testimony of the great saints and sages of the world, but not by purely intellectual means. The mind which thinks it knows Reality because it has formed an intellectual representation of it, is but the dupe of its own categories. The intellect is a specialized form of self, a form of consciousness ; but specialized for very different purposes than those of metaphysical speculation. Life has evolved it in the interests of life, and has made it capable

of dealing only with concrete things. With these it is at home. Outside of them, it becomes dazed, uncertain of itself, for it is no longer doing its natural work, which is to *help* life, and not to *know* it. As Schopenhauer has put it, the intellect is merely a tool in the service of the Will. In the interests of experience, and in order to grasp perceptions, the intellect breaks up experience, which is in reality a continuous stream, an incessant process of change and response with no parts, into purely conventional 'moments,' 'periods,' 'psychic states' and so on. It picks out from the flow of reality those bits which are significant for human life, which interest it, and catch its attention. From these it makes up a mechanical world in which it dwells and which seems quite real until it is subjected to criticism. It does, as Bergson has pointed out, in a happy simile, the work of cinematograph : takes snapshots of something which is always moving and by means of these successive static representations—none of which are real, because Life, the object photographed, never was at rest—and recreates a picture of life, of motion. This picture is very useful for practical purposes, but it is not reality, because it is not alive. This so-called real world is a world of imagination and a construction which the mind has made from the materials at its disposal. Unless we empty ourselves of the false images of the intellect, neglect the cinematograph of sense, we can never be capable of transcending the merely intellectual levels of consciousness and perceive that reality "which hath no image." The universe of the natural man is ego-centric,—has a meaning only in relation to his own needs, moods and preferences. It is but a fragmentary and partial representation of the Totality and Reality of things. It is thus clear that from its very constitution the human intellect can never lead us to the Absolute. The master-key to unlock the mystery of the Universe is to be sought not in logic but in the living experience of the soul. We must retire into ourselves and seek the secret of the Universe in those depths of our heart where the distractions of our senses and intellect reach not. It is only then that the soul lies open to the inflowing tide of the Infinite Life and reflects a clear image of the one Transcendent Reality and grasps it as it is. This capacity to turn to the innermost depths of our being for direct illumination and to perceive and know the truth at first hand, is generally known as spiritual vision or intuition. Its existence as a real and vital fact in the human being is undoubted and deep-seated in our mystic frames, it throws out occasional hints, little flashes of the living power within and behind the phenomena. It is the faculty by which genius perceives the light "that never was on sea or land" and bodies

forth the forms of things unknown. It is an inner spiritual sense through which man is opened to direct revelation and knowledge of Reality, the secret of nature and life, and brought into union with the principle of which they are a manifestation. As Tennyson's *Ancient sage* says :

"If thou would'st hear the Nameless and descend
Into the temple-cave of thine own self,
There, brooding by the central altar, thou
May'st haply learn the Nameless hath a voice,
By which thou wilt abide, if thou be wise ;
For knowledge is the swallow on the lake,
That sees and stirs the surface shadow there,
But never yet dipt into the Abysm."

One of the finest analysis of intuition in literature is that given by Lowell, the great American poet. He writes—

"As blind nestlings, unafraid,
Stretch up wide-mouthed to every shade,
By which their downy dream is stirred,
Taking it for the mother bird ;
So, when God's shadow, which is light,
My wakening instincts falls across,
Silent as sunbeams over moss,
In my heart's nest half-conscious things,
Stir with a helpless sense of wings,
Lift themselves up, and tremble long
With premonitions sweet of songs."

The late Professor James compared it to a tune that was always in the back of his mind, but which he could never identify, nor whistle, nor get rid of. "It is," he says "very vague and impossible to describe or put into words.....Especially at times of moral crisis it comes to me, as the sense of an unknown something backing me up. It is most indefinite and rather faint. And yet I know that if it should cease there would be a great hush, a great void in my life." When fully developed, and sustained, it becomes a definite faculty of vision. In times of spiritual exaltation, it produces in us that serene and blessed mood

"In which.....the breath of this corporal frame,
And even the motion of our human blood,
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep,
In body, and become a living soul :
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things."

This is the faculty by which the Yogi seated within the heart of the thousand-petalled-lotus apprehends supra-sensible realities which form the very kernel of nature. This is the Light spoken of in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* : the light within the heart which, when the sun has sunk and the moon has set, and all sounds are hushed, still illumines man, the light of the self which is other than the body and the senses. It is by the awakening of this divine faculty, which in most of us has been overlaid and lost amid the dross of sensuous life, that we can hope to find a path-way to Reality. This demands a rigorous discipline—a purging of the intellect, a deliberate withdrawal of attention from the bewildering illusions of multiplicity, a simplification of our tangled character, an emancipation from the fetters of the unreal, and a gathering of the forces of the soul into the spirit. Purification is here the gate of knowledge. When with the help of *Sadhana Chatushtaya*—नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः, the discrimination of the eternal from the transitory, इहामुत्रफलभोगविरागः, renunciation of the desire to enjoy the fruits of action here and hereafter, शमदमादिषट्कसंपत्तिः, the possession of the six qualities of शम (tranquillity of the mind), दम, (restraint of the senses), उपरति, (cessation from all desires), तितिक्षा, (resignation and patience) समाधान, (equanimity), and श्रद्धा, (faith), and lastly मुमुक्षुत्वं, (the aspiration for liberation),—we clear our minds of all egotism, prejudice and convention and overcome the obscurations of our lower nature, the Truth shines in our souls in its full effulgence and we know and see ourselves, as we truly are—free, immortal, infinite, omnipotent and identical with the Atman or universal soul. शान्तो दान्त उपरतस्तितिक्षस्समाहितोभूत्वाऽऽत्मन्येवात्मानं पश्येत् ॥ (Tranquilled in mind with the senses restrained, having given up desires, resigned and patient, and absorbed in intense meditation, let a man see the Self in the self.) This supreme spiritual realisation raises us to a new and higher plane of life in which, if we may avail ourselves of the lofty description of Hegel, "the spirit rids itself of its finiteness, relates itself to that which is unlimited and infinite—where its attitude is no longer that of dependence but of freedom, and where the individual has no longer to do with himself, his interests, his vanity, but only with absolute truth. All anxiety and doubt, all petty cares and troubles, all narrow and selfish interests are left behind on the sand-bank of time. In this pure region we penetrate beyond the outward deceitful shows and semblances of the world, and behold all things revealed to us, transfigured in the pure light of truth and softened in its halo of eternal rest and peace." In the language of the *Mundakopanishad*

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिरिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः । क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे ॥
(When He who is the highest and lowest is seen, the knot of the heart is broken, doubts are all shattered and his karma perishes.)

Such a one is a mahatma, who, in Plato's magnificent words, is the spectator of all time and of all existence. He has attained the supreme goal of existence. His soul has passed beyond the sphere of the manifold and become one with the Absolute Reality, which is at once *Sat*, pure truth, *Chit*, pure intelligence and *Ananda*, pure bliss. He has cut all the thousand cords of egoism which hold us bound to the world and its illusions, and is filled with an inward blessedness and joy which time and fate can never disturb. He has realized his unity with the whole universe and dwells in perfect peace and harmony with it, shining like a sunbeam in the gloom around.

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि । ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥

(The Self harmonised by yoga seeth the Self abiding in all beings, all beings in the Self ; everywhere he seeth the same.)

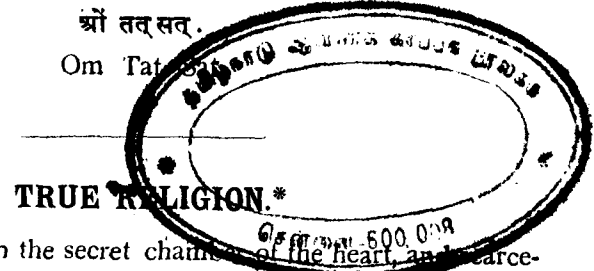
He never becomes entangled in verbal disputations. To him the language is but noise. As Sri Ramakrishna has said, "so long as the bee is outside the petals of the flower, it buzzes and emits sounds; but when it is inside the flower, the sweetness thereof silences and overpowers the bee. Forgetful of sounds and of itself, it drinks the nectar in quiet. Men of learning, you too are making a noise in the world; but know the moment you get the slightest enjoyment of the sweetness of the love of God, you will be like the bee in the flower, inebriated by the nectar of divine love."

Filled with an abounding sense of the Divine Life, of ultimate and adorable reality, sustaining and urging him on, he is ever inspired by a deep and ardent passion to communicate to his less fortunate brethren the illumination, the more abundant life, he has received. As Sankara says शान्तो महान्तो निवसन्ति सन्तो वसंतवल्लोक-हितं चरन्तः । तीर्थास्त्रयं भीमभवाण्येवं जनानहेतुनाऽन्यान्पि तीरयन्तः ॥ (The great and peaceful ones live regenerating the world like the coming of the spring, and after having themselves crossed the ocean of *Samsara* help those who try to do the same thing, from purely disinterested motives.)

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa belonged to this exalted class of souls who, by their purity of life and vision, have consummated their union with Reality and seen God as their true Self. His mission was to reaffirm from the burning depths of his heart, the eternal truths of the Vedanta and to establish their universality and

their infinite capacity to satisfy the highest needs of man. His message to this distracted and divided world, immersed, fold upon fold, in the persistent illusions of sense, may be summed up in the following words of Swami Vivekananda—

Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest the divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work or worship or psychic control or philosophy. This is all of religion. Doctrines and dogmas, rituals and books, temples and forms, these are but secondary details.



Religion dwells in the secret chambers of the heart, and scarcely does it betray itself in the mere regularity of church-going or in any such kind of outward show. It is in inverse ratio to outward grandeur.

The sentient and the insentient things of the world can be brought under the broad category of subject or object. That which sees is the subject and that which is seen, the object. In other words the self is the subject and the universe of phenomena is the object. The characteristic nature of every object is ever-changeableness. The moment an object is subjected to an ultimate scrutiny, it eludes our grasp. We do not know what the object really is, yet we all run to it for happiness.

The happiness which we are all seeking to attain we find ultimately, is not in the object but in our own mind. A story is told of a king who was suffering from a peculiar disease of the eyes. The best of the doctors opined that the disease could be cured if the glare of the sun was shut out from the eyes and everything around made to put on greenish appearance. The king began to use his treasure in painting all things around him green, and even went the length of erecting green *Pandals* throughout the length and breadth of his territories. A sage passing by his dominions was struck with the foolishness of the king and having secured an audience with him prevented the enormous waste of money by advising him to put on green spectacles. The king adopted the advice and achieved his object at the cheapest cost. Colouring his own sight green, by

*Adapted from a class talk of the late Swami Ramakrishnananda,

wearing green spectacles he was able to see all things green. Just so if we want external objects to give us happiness we should make our mind happy—the mind by which alone they are cognized.

How to colour the mind with happiness then, that we may see every object instinct with bliss? It could be done only by realising that in self we are *Satchidananda* (eternal Existence-Knowledge-Bliss). Then would we cast an indifferent glance to all objects that evade our grasp and avoid all fascination for them. Then would we be true Bhaktas or devotees. Then would we be *givers* and not *takers*, for we would then be in need of nothing, having realized that we are perfect. God who is the giver and who in fact is the world itself would not then be worshipped by us for a gift of worldly advancement or of bodily pleasures. The only desire that we would then cherish should be the desire to be desireless, wantless,—to be unconditioned. This desire to be desireless will take its firm root in us in proportion to the intensity of feeling with which we realize that in us self alone is real and all else evanescent. True religious life commences only after this. Religion thus becomes the realisation of the self and not mere parading of knowledge of religious books or the vigorous and mechanical observance of rituals and religious formalities.

TO THE LAND OF THE SNOWS.

BY

A. K. D.

(Continued from page 28.)

We reached the Reshikesh Road Station before the sun was up. It was the 23rd of May, and our hill journey practically began from that day. Four hundred long miles were before us and the way was not plain and smooth. It was very rugged—up hills and down dales all through. And we wanted to cross it on foot; in fact we left our homes with that idea. Of course one can avoid walking if one would so desire, for *dandies* and *jhampons* are always available, and that at a cost of about Rs. 120 or so only, and ponies at a still lesser cost.

Reshikesh is about 8 miles from the station and it took us three hours to reach the place. We were in the Dehra Dun district and were passing through a nice glade. The fresh morning breeze whispered its tale of joy into our ears; the cuckoos and the peacocks poured forth their sweet melodies, and the whole forest seemed to be ringing with their sonorous songs. Indeed

this preliminary portion of our excursion impressed us much and made us feel very hopeful of the future. It was about fore-noon when we reached Reshikesh.

It is neither a village nor a town, but between the two. It is developing rapidly at present, especially since the construction of the new bridge over the Sone river, and the re-alignment of the road from Hardwar to Reshikesh. It stands on a high cliff overlooking the Ganges. The principal temple is that of Bharata, the brother of Rama, who performed, according to tradition, severe austerities here. There are several other minor temples and shrines. A fair in honour of Bharata is annually held here on the Vasanta Panchami, and is chiefly attended by pilgrims from Hardwar and adjoining places. Another religious gathering also takes place on the occasion of Holi.

At Reshikesh we lodged ourselves in the Panchayati Dharma-sala, popularly known as Kali Kamliwala's Dharmasala. This remarkable man was a sannyasin named Ram Nath Kali Kamliwala, better known as Nathji. To his exertions are due (1) the construction of the Sone bridge, which cost nearly a lakh of rupees, (2) the improvement and re-alignment of the pilgrim road between Hardwar and Reshikesh, and (3) the construction of numerous small dharmasalas that punctuate the way to the Gharwal shrines. In these dharmasalas all kinds of pilgrims can find a free lodging, and the Sadhus obtain, in addition, provision for themselves. The Reshikesh Dharmasala is a very big one, and one would be astonished to see the huge quantity of food cooked and uncooked that is distributed amongst Sadhus and vagrants. Wealth could not be better spent! These Sadhus are really like dynamos that send out thought-currents silently from their meditation cells to uplift and spiritualise the world. Can money be more nobly spent than in supplying them with a morsel of food?

It was left for India to conceive the importance and grandeur of such gifts. Where would these Sadhus—the veritable soldiers of religion and piety—have been if such free kitchens were not provided for them? This dharmasala also furnishes a pilgrim, if asked for, with a good quantity of antidote for diarrhoea, which is a very common disease amongst the pilgrims. We procured a large quantity of it and it did us and some of our fellow-pilgrims indeed much good. I have forgotten to say that these dharmasalas in addition to free lodging supply every pilgrim with cooking utensils if required. There is another dharmasala of equal note called the Punjab Kshetra, which is managed in a much better way. It has a fine big building, which has been erected by subscriptions from the

charitable Punjab Sikhs. Besides the numerous apartments for the residence of the pilgrims and the kitchen rooms there are in the premises a spacious temple with a full complement of priests, readers, and singers for the performance of Sikh religious services, and a well-equipped dispensary with a trained hospital assistant for affording medical treatment to pilgrims. I was so pleased to see these well-organised institutions that I could not help offering a prayer from my heart of hearts for the welfare of the organizers. To me, however, the institutions appeared to be defective in not having a library of religious books for the use of the sadhus and the resident pilgrims. The expense in getting up such a library is of course not great and I believe the attention of the managing committees will soon be drawn towards this desideratum. I found the buildings of dharmasalas and temples are proceeding apace. These dharmasalas and free kitchens remain open all through the year, and as a consequence this place swarms with sadhus. The number increases during the winter when owing to the snowfall many sadhus come down from the higher northern hills to stay here. There anchorites and recluses live for the most part alone in little conical-shaped, frail grass huts (called *Jhupris*) on the sandy shore of the Ganges. The sight of the river is very beautiful at Reshikesh. Like the Brahmakund at Hardwar the river in this part also abounds in the finny race. The calm audacity with which the large fishes take food from the hands of men is really astounding. If you throw on the waters a few pills made of flour, you will see no water but is covered with the heads and fins of fish. This is a right merry scene, and one would behold always a crowd on the bank to see their play. It should, however, be borne in mind that in Hardwar as well as in Reshikesh catching or killing of fish is prohibited by law; and so fish are found in plentiful abundance in these places.

During the rains Reshikesh is full of pilgrims. Most of them reside there for a period of 3 or 4 months to perform *Chaturmasya vrata*. At those times the pilgrims in opulent circumstances make large gifts of food and money to the sadhus. It is then a sight to see. These people would go to each grass hut of the sadhus, and if they find the door closed they would not molest the one inside in his meditation, but would place handfuls of almonds, dates, sugar-candy and such other things with a small purse on the door-sills, prostrate themselves there and then go silently away. Verily one sees here the right hand to give what the left hand knows not.

From this day forward we had to cook our own food, and our fare was as simple as could be imagined; in fact one might say that

we were following the old Spartan law. Rice, boiled potato, and *dal* formed our morning meal. In the evening it consisted of potato-curry and *chapati*. Milk was often added to the menu when available. We had a quantity of mango jelly with us. A little of this helped us a great deal to remove the occasional distaste. Before we had our breakfast we met a friend of ours who had renounced the world some times ago and was leading the life of a religious recluse in the forest of Tapoban—a village close by. He came to beg for food in the dharmasala where we put up. Our joy knew no bounds to see him and we requested him to come to us in the afternoon before we left Reshikesh. True to his words he came at the appointed hour. We were ready with our baggages to depart. Two coolies were chosen to carry them, but as yet no terms were settled with them. About a mile up from here there is a sort of cooly depot, the head man of which is authorized to settle every thing about cooly and no one can carry anything against his orders or without a pass granted by him.

The Brahmachari friend was astonished to see the hugeness of our baggage and impressed upon us the necessity of lessening it. We did so under his direction. Many people have no idea whatsoever as to the clothes, etc., they should take with them in such a journey. They are apt naturally to take too many, as they think that they have to penetrate the snow range. And so I think it would not be quite out of place to mention here the articles that are necessary for such a pilgrimage. Each one must provide himself with the following: 4 pieces of cloth, 2 cotton guernseys, 1 tweed coat, 1 flannel coat, 3 pairs of socks, 2 blankets (one for bed and the other for covering), one small pillow, a good and strong pair of leather shoes (boots preferable), 2 or 3 cakes of soap for washing clothes, an umbrella, a hill stick, a knife, a lantern (wind-proof), a fan (to drive away flies which are very troublesome during the day), needle and thread for occasional repairing, a piece of rain-proof to cover the baggage, a phial each of eucalyptus oil and spirit of camphor, a little of soda bicarb, some pickles and a few spices (for spices other than chillies are very rare.)

With our reduced baggage we proceeded to the cooly depot with the Brahmachari. A little way up we saw a big and well-managed monastery named Kailash math, established by the monks of the Sankaracharya's order. There were many Sadhus in the math and we found them all very quiet and unassuming. The great Swami Vivekananda remained here for a few days while he came to Reshikesh—so the *Mohanta* of the

Math said with great admiration. We reached the depot in the afternoon. Our baggages were weighed and terms were settled and it was found that each *seer* of the load cost us 15 anras. We were then free to pursue our way.

Our Brahmachari friend requested us to see the village of Tapoban where he was residing. So we sent the coolies in advance with the guide and our two companions to Lachmanjhula to await us there. And we with the Brahmachari crossed the Ganges on boat. The boat-man refused to take anything from us as we were going with a Sadhu—they are so simple and god-fearing. In a few minutes we crossed the river. Just in front of the spot we got down, on the opposite bank, was a library of religious literature for the use of the local hermits and anchorites. This was put up only lately and we never expected to see such an institution in such a place.

Tapoban or the "grove of penance" is a small village about 3 miles off from Resikesh. Lakshmana, the brother of Rama, is said to have done penance here to remove his sins for killing the demons of Lanka (Ceylon), and hence the name. The village possesses an ancient temple of Vishnu managed by a Mohant of the Ramanuji Vairagi order and is held revenue-free by him. It is noted for producing a very good and fragrant variety of rice called *Bansmati*.

Our Brahmachari friend showed us very particularly the spot where the ascetics lived. Above the hillocks on the banks of the river stand some 50 cells, covering about 10 or 12 acres of land, each at a great distance from the other. They were erected by a sannyasin named Atmaprakash through the help of rich pilgrims. He has also organised an *annachattra* from which cooked food is distributed every morning to the sadhus that live in these cells. One of these cells was given to our friend, and as soon as we reached it a few young hermits who lived in the adjoining cells approached us. They all showed their hospitality to us by giving us some food. Their faces beaming with resignation and contentment roused in me a feeling of joy mixed with despair. Their holy association and their hopeful words filled me with joy; and the wide gulf that lay between them and me threw me into despair. In fact I felt greatly moved, and I was half inclined to give up the project of going to Badrinath and pass a month or two in high thinking and plain-living amidst these young devotees. The evenings seemed to be very pleasant here. Most of the ascetics came out of their cells and sat on

blocks of stones on the river bank, some were enjoying the scene before them, while others were reading holy books. Here also they were all alone, sitting like painted pictures. A spiritual calm reigned over the place, making it very much suitable for meditation and devout penance. We were then taken to show the *Math-bati* of Swami Atmaprakash. He is a very affable man and treated and talked with us very courteously. He requested us to have our supper and pass the night there. He was so eager that we could not refuse to act accordingly. Then we went to the river-side to perform the evening service. Returning to the house which was fixed for us we found Swamiji's servants had kept food and bed ready for us. We all ate together, and then the Brahmachari left us to retire to his cell.

We got up no sooner than the day broke and saw our Brahmachari in his cell. He led us to that famous bridge on the Ganges, named Luchmanjhula, where we found our companions and coolies waiting for us in an inn. This bridge is the striking feature of the village. It is a suspension bridge made of stout wire ropes and wood, and was erected at the cost of a munificent Bengali millionaire. Formerly there had been a crude and frail bridge made of jute or hemp-ropes and sticks in its place. Whenever the wind was strong it would rock like a cradle, and a pilgrim would off and on drop down into the river below never to come up to the land of the living again. Years ago, such dangerous bridges existed in many places in our track. They are now all replaced by substantial and safe bridges like the present Luchmanjhula bridge. The old kind however is still in existence in a few places which is used by the local villagers alone.

Near the bridge-head is the Lakshmana temple which is the chief place of worship in the village. Close by, there is a group of small shrines. A short way up the bridge there is a big rock in the middle of the river with various markings on it and is held sacred by the Hindus. We bowed down to Lakshmanji and got ourselves ready to march. It was Saturday, the 24th of May when we entered the Garhwal district which contains the four most important shrines of India. Indeed no other district in India can claim to contain so many places of interest as it does. And I think it worth while to give a short description of the general features of the place on whose rugged breast we had to remain for some weeks that followed thence.

(To be continued).

VEDA AND CASTE.

(A criticism of Mr. A Mahadeva Sastri's views.)

By

R. Krishnaswami Sastri, B.A.

I

It is a belief shared by the extreme school of Social Reformers in Modern India that "the caste system, which like a deep-rooted cancer is eating up the very life-blood of the Hindu Society is the greatest curse of the nation." (1) Consequently one of the chief planks of the extreme Social Reform platform is the abolition of the Caste Sytem. However, they differ among themselves as to the methods to be employed to bring about their cherished end. One section of them appeals to the dry light of reason and the so-called higher principles of humanity and nationality. With this section we have nothing to do here. Another section appeals from the "moderately sacred to the undoubtedly sacred books of Hinduism". (2) The latest attempt of the latter to present their case is continued in Mr. A. Mahadeva Sastri's articles on "Caste" which appeared in "The Commonweal" for 1914. (3) These articles are written in the lucid style which, we have learnt to expect from the author. Mr. Sastri has endeavoured to make out his case by an interpretation of textual authorities which on impartial investigation, cannot but appear unusual, forced beyond all precedent and indefensible. If assumptions of infallibility, reiterated assertions and contempt for those who differ from him could be allowed to pass for positive proof, then Mr. Sastri must be deemed to have succeeded all along the line. As such procedure is out of place in a controversy carried on in the interests of truth, it is the duty of every thinking person to submit Mr. Sastri's theory to searching scrutiny. To that task we propose to address ourselves in this essay.

Before proceeding to summarise Mr. Sastri's views, we may be allowed to point out that the articles now subjected to criticism do but reproduce the arguments contained in the author's pamphlet on "Vedic Religion and Caste" published in 1908. The latter work did not attract much attention of the members of the orthodox community. With the single exception of Professor K. Sundararama Aiyer's booklet published in 1910, we have not come across any systematic criticism of that pamphlet. Mr. Sastri has not however attempted,

(1) Presidential address at the Indian Social Conference 1913.

(2) Sir C. Sankaran Nair.

(3) These articles were reproduced in a Magazine called "Dharma Prachar" edited by Mr. Mahadeva Sastri himself.

to meet the Professor's well-argued and exhaustive criticism; nay he has practically ignored it and has simply reproduced his old arguments in his "Commonweal" articles. Having some acquaintance with Mr. Sastri's controversial methods, we are not at all surprised at Mr. Sastri's persistent evasion of hostile criticism. The object of our essay will be amply fulfilled if it opens the eyes of all impartial persons to the utter vacuity of Mr. Sastri's novel speculations.

Mr. Sastri's position may be summed up as follows:—The original community of the Indo-Aryans was of one *Varna* and out of this one *Varna*, the different *Varnas* were organised as the need arose for their special services to the community. This fourfold division has no sanction in the primary *Varna Dharma*. Spiritually the individuals were all on the same level and had equal opportunities for progress and continued to be called by the comprehensive names of *Brahmana*, *Arya* and *Varna*, though they might also have been spoken of as *Brahmanas*, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaisyas* and *Sudras* according to their respective civic functions. In its origin this original fourfold *Varna* does not involve that system of hereditary profession, those restrictions as to intermarriages and those religious and social disabilities which constitute the essential features of the modern system of caste. This theory which he seeks to support by an elaborate discussion of textual authorities, Mr. Sastri shares with many other social reformers. What is peculiar to Mr. Sastri's version of it consists in his novel interpretations of the terms, *Vedic Religion*, *Dharma*, *Varna* and *Brahmana*. Before discussing Mr. Sastri's main thesis, it is necessary that we should deal with the interpretations which he places on these terms.

(a) In the first place, what does Mr. Sastri mean by "Vedic Religion"? Nowhere is a clear definition forthcoming. In his original pamphlet he speaks of the Gita as containing "the quintessence of the Vedic Religion." In the articles under discussion he speaks of "the holy Bhagavad Gita which has restored to us the true ancient Dharma that had long been lost to the world." In one place he speaks contemptuously of the ritualistic section of the Veda "as involving among other things animal sacrifice and liquor-drinking." Here he is evidently referring to the *Brahmana* portion of the Veda. Yet, whenever it suits his purposes, he quotes them as an integral part of the Veda—a position about which no one has, or is entitled to have, any manner of doubt. We may mention for example his references to the *Satapatha* and *Aitareya Brahmanas*. Again, does he or does he not regard the Upanishads as forming part of the Veda? If by the term *Veda*, the *mantra* portion alone is meant, passages innumerable can be quoted which fall under Mr. Sastri's condemnation, "as involving among other things animal sacrifice and liquor-drinking." It was Mr. Sastri's bounden duty to have given a clear

definition of what he meant by the term "Vedic Religion," before he proceeded to build upon its basis, a theory of his own on any matter of importance. Until such definitions are forthcoming we cannot but regard Mr. Sastri as simply "floundering about in the quagmire of catchwords." The use of such catchwords, while it must necessarily fail in its usually intended polemical effect of gaining the uncritical reader's approbation in advance, invariably recoils in the end upon its author after a searching discussion of the theory or hypothesis has taken place.

(b) Mr. Sastri divides Dharmas into two classes—Prakriti Dharmas and Samayacharika Dharmas. In his view the former "are based solely on the authority of the Veda or Sruti or Revelation as relating to matters which lie beyond the ken of the ordinary human intellect." What are the materials which Mr. Sastri proposes to use to arrive at a correct interpretation of the Veda? We suppose he will reject with scorn, the aids furnished by tradition—the Vedangas, Smritis, Itihasas and Puranas. He will have also, as he frequently avers, nothing to do with commentators, hitherto always recognised as authoritative by the discernment of the community. Where then is the guarantee that his interpretation of the Veda is the correct one? There are scholars who choose to treat the Vedic Mantras as Nature-poetry and nothing else; others there are who look upon the Vedic deities as geological phenomena and the whole of the Veda as a text book of antic geology. Some even go the length of branding the Vedas as "the babblings of a child humanity." Mr. Sastri's claim for preference as an interpreter of the Veda to the theorists just mentioned must first be established before we can follow his guidance in all matters. This is a plain issue which he cannot at all evade. Until he produces his credentials for preference as an interpreter of the Veda, he has no right to cast unmerited scorn on those who are content to abide by the established conclusions based on the long accepted—and the only rational—sources of Vedic exegesis, (*viz.*) the recognised *Upabrimhanas* of those difficult, and to the untrained not easily comprehensible, Vedas—the eternal sources of Arya Dharma.

(To be continued.)

SUBJECTS FOR REFLECTION.*

BY

Swami Vivekananda.

Lucknow is bestirred to a high pitch of excitement for the festivity of Mohurum. The chief mosque of the city presents to-day the most gorgeous spectacle of thousand charms and mingling hues to the streams of innumerable human forms that are pouring in from all sides! Hindus, Mahomedans, Christians, Jews—men, women and children, of thousand castes, colours, and creeds,—all have assembled in huge concourse to see the Mohurum! Lucknow is the capital of the Shiah, so the sky is rent to day by the piteous cry for the Hozrat Imam Hassen Hossen and the air is made leaden with the grievous sighs of the devotees. Ah, which heart is not moved to behold those devout bemoaners beating their pious breasts and listen to their passionate wail of woe! The whole thing looks, as if the old event has been resurrected again from its grave of thousand years. Among that huge crowd, have come also two Rajputs of gentle birth from a far off distant village to enjoy the show. Our two Thakur Sahebs are, as it is usual with the rural life, perfectly innocent of every thing that is even akin to learning. And it appears that the Muslim civilisation, the courtly Persian tongue with all its exuberant but chaste display of euphonic dentals like *kafs* and *gafs*, the fashionable costumes of long coats, flowing togas, tight trousers and crown-turbans, and all such other polish of city life could not penetrate as yet into that far off village to count our Thakur Sahebs among their votaries. Hence the Thakurs are naturally plain and simple, with strong frame and iron will, and of a manly demeanour that is developed by the unstinted devotion to hunting.

When the Thakur Sahebs are about to enter the mosque after crossing the main gate, they are stopped by the sentinels there; on enquiring the reason for their prevention they reply, "You see that effigy standing by the side of the door, first beat it five times with your shoes and then only will you be allowed to go in." When questioned again, "Whose is that effigy?" they answer "It is the effigy of the most sinful Iyezid. Thousand years ago it was he who killed Hazrat Hassen Hossen, and so you notice so much weeping and wailing, so much effusion of grief." Then the sentinels muse that after so much of explanation the effigy is sure to get the shoe-beating ten times instead of five. But lo, the irony of fate, things turn otherwise,—no sooner than they hear this, both the

* A free translation of the original in Bengali.

Thakurs throw themselves down with all humility at the feet of Iyeczid and begin to exclaim, "What's the need of our going inside any more? What other god should we behold? Bravo, my Hero Azid, thyself is the only god; thou hast so drubbed the rascals that they are weeping still!"

Kissing the heaven, high towers the temple of Sanatana Dharma of the Hindus! Innumerable are the paths laid out to reach it! And as for its *locum tenens*, ah! who can presume what is not there?—Beginning from the Nirguna Brahman of the Vedantins down to Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Sakti, the Sun, the rat-rider Ganesha, and ever so many more petty deities such as Sasthi, Makal, etc.,—all you would find in there. And again, what an inexhaustible store of knowledge afford the Vedas, the Vedanta, the Puranas, the Tantras, whose one word is enough to break all bondages of the soul! I find also a huge crowd thronging around the temple,—three hundred and thirty millions of men all running breathlessly towards it! Curiosity made me also run to it; but coming there, my goodness, what I see—none is going inside the temple; there is a huge figure standing at the gate, it has fifty heads, hundred hands, two hundred stomachs and five hundred legs, and all men are prostrating only at the feet of this monster! When I ask the reason of their such strange behaviour, they tell me: "Those deities, you see inside the temple, it is enough if you make only a bow or throw a few flowers at them from a distance,—that will be a sufficient worship for them; but to all reality and purpose you will have to worship *this* who is at the gate. And what you see all those Vedas, Vedantas, Puranas, Darsanas and other scriptures,—they are good in their own way and there is no harm even in your hearing them now and then, but for a truth, obey you must the command of this god alone!" When again I ask "Who is this god of gods?" then clear rings the answer: "His name is *Lokachara*."* It reminds me of the words of those two Thakur Sahibs of Lucknow, and I almost mutter within myself, "Bravo, my god, *Lokachara*, thou hast so drubbed them, etc."

* Popular local customs.

त्रिणाचिकेतस्त्रयमेतद्विदित्वा य एवं विद्वांश्चिनुते नाचिकेतम् ।

सं मृत्युपाशान्पुरतः प्रणोद्य शोकातिगो मोदते स्वर्गलोके ॥ १८ ॥

यः He त्रिणाचिकेतः who has thrice performed the Nachiketa sacrifice, विद्वान् the knower एतत् these त्रयं three विदित्वा knowing नाचिकेतं the Nachiketa fire (sacrifice) चिनुते performs. सः he पुरतः before (death) मृत्युपाशान् the bondage of death प्रणोद्य destroying शोकातिगः transcending grief स्वर्गलोके in the heaven-world मोदते enjoys.

The wise who has done the Nachiketa rite three times, performs it having known the three; he, having first destroyed the chains of death, enjoys in the heaven-world transcending grief.

[Having known the three—the three i.e., what kind of bricks are required for the altar of the sacrifice, how many bricks, and how the fire of the sacrifice is to be lighted.

Chains of death—in the form of vice, avarice, attachment, ignorance, hatred, etc.

Heaven-world—i.e., he enjoys the bliss of the universal life, having realised *Viraj* in his own self. It is a particular plane of conscious life, hence it is called *Loka*.]

एष तेऽग्निर्नाचिकेतः स्वर्ग्यो यमवृणीथा द्वितीयेन वरेण ।

एतमग्निं तवैव प्रवक्ष्यन्ति जनास्तृतीयं वरं नचिकेतो वृणीष्व ॥ १९ ॥

नचिकेतः O Nachiketas, ते to thee (or thy) एषः this स्वर्ग्यः which leads to heaven अग्निः the fire-sacrifice यम् which (त्वं you) द्वितीयेन by the second वरेण boon अवृणीथाः chose. जनासः people एतं this अग्निं fire (sacrifice) तव एव thy alone (नाम्ना by name) प्रवक्ष्यन्ति will call. नचिकेतः O Nachiketas, (अथ now) तृतीयं the third वरं boon वृणीष्व choose.

This is thy fire, O Nachiketas, which leads to heaven, and which thou hast chosen as thy second boon. People shall call this fire after thy name alone. Now choose, O Nachiketas, thy third boon.

[Thy fire—i.e., the fire-sacrifice that has been just told to thee.]

येयं प्रेते विचिकित्सा मनुष्येऽस्तीत्येके नायमस्तीति चैके ।

एतद्विद्यामनुशिष्टस्त्रयाऽहं वराणामेष वरस्तृतीयः ॥ २० ॥

मनुष्ये in man प्रेते being dead या what इयं this विचिकित्सा doubt (अस्ति is) एके some अस्ति exists इति thus, एके some च again न not अयम् this अस्ति exists इति thus (वदन्ति say). त्वया by thee अनु-शिष्टः being taught एतत् this विद्याम् (I shall) know. वराणां of the boons एषः this तृतीयः the third वरः boon. (Nachiketas said :)

“When man dies, there is this doubt, some say ‘he exists’; some again, ‘he does not’. This I should like to know, being taught by thee. This is the third of my boons.”

[Note—Nachiketas here wants to know if there is any real entity called soul that survives even bodily death, the popular notion on this point being divided.]

देवैरत्रापि विचिकित्सितं पुरा न हि सुज्ञेयमणुरेष धर्मः ।

अन्यं वरं नचिकेतो वृणीष्व मा मोपरोत्सीरति मा सृजैनम् ॥ २१ ॥

देवैः by the Devas अपि even अत्र on this (point) पुरा before विचिकित्सितं doubted. हि because (इदं it) न not सुज्ञेयं easy to understand. एषः this धर्मः subject अणुः subtle. नचिकेतः O Nachiketas, अन्यं other (than this) वरं boon वृणीष्व choose. मा me मा do not उपरोत्सीः entreat ; मा me एतं this (boon) अतिसृज give up. (Death said :)

On this point even the gods had doubted before. Very subtle is the subject and hard indeed to be comprehended. Choose therefore, O Nachiketas, some other boon ; press me not for this,—let me off the boon.

देवैरत्रापि विचिकित्सितं किल त्वं च मृत्यो यन्न सुज्ञेयमास्थ ।

वक्ता चास्य लाहगन्यो न लभ्यो नान्यो वरस्तुल्य एतस्य कश्चित् ॥ २२ ॥

अत्र on this subject किल indeed देवैः the gods पुरा formerly विचिकित्सितं doubted यत् which त्वं thou च also, मृत्यो O Death, न not सुज्ञेयं easy to understand आस्थ sayest. अस्य of this (subject) वक्ता teacher च and त्वाङ्क् like thee अन्यः another न not लभ्यः to be found (अतः therefore) एतस्य of this (boon) तुल्यः equal अन्यः other कश्चित् any वरः boon न not (अस्ति is.)

(Nachiketas said :)

“Even the gods had doubted here indeed, and thou also sayest, O Death, that it is not easy to understand; and of this subject no other teacher like thee can be found ; so I deem surely no other boon equal to this.”

[Of this subject, etc.—Yama being the god of death and prime controller of human destiny hereafter, who can be a better instructor of the *post-mortem* condition of man than him? The story apart, death indeed holds the secret of life ; when tapped judicially, it never fails to reveal the truth of the transcendental Self. Meditation on death helps us to realise most forcibly, the ephemerality of the physical life and its absolute distinction from the permanent element of consciousness that constitutes our real being. Moreover even from the very ancient times of human history the idea of death has ever been one of the strongest motive-powers of religion and the religious life. So मृत्युचिन्ता (thought of death) is specially enjoined for the सुमुञ्च (aspirant for the final emancipation.)]

शतायुषः पुत्रपौत्रान्वृणीष्व बहून्पशून्हस्तिहिरण्यमश्वान् ।

भूमेर्महदायतनं वृणीष्व स्वयं च जीव शरदो यावदिच्छसि ॥ २३ ॥

शतायुषः of hundred year's duration of life पुत्रपौत्रान् sons and grandsons वृणीष्व choose बहून् many पशून् cattle हस्तिहिरण्यं elephants and gold अश्वान् horses भूमेः on earth महत् vast आयतनं territory (kingdom) वृणीष्व choose च and also स्वयं yourself यावत् as long शरदः years (जीवितुम् to live) इच्छसि desirest (तावत् as) जीव live.

(Death said :)

“Choose sons and grandsons who shall live a hundred years, herds of cattle, elephants, horses and gold ; choose a vast territory on earth, and live thyself as many years as thou desirest.”

एतत्तुल्यं यदि मन्यसे वरं वृणीष्व वित्तं चिरजीविकां च ।

महाभूमौ नचिकेतस्त्वमेधि कामानां ता कामभाजं करोमि ॥ २४ ॥

यदि if वरं (other) boons एतत् तुल्यं equal to this मन्यसे thinkest (यथा as) वित्तं wealth च and चिरजीविकां long life. वृणीष्व ask. नचिकेतः O Nachiketas महाभूमौ on the wide earth (kingdom) त्वं thou

(राजा king) एधि be. अहं I त्वा thee कामानां of (all) desires कामभाजं enjoyer करोमि will make.

“Ask for some other boons that you think equal to this, (such as) wealth and long life. O Nachiketas, be (a king) of the wide earth. I will make thee the enjoyer of all desires.”

ये ये कामा दुर्लभा मर्त्यलोके सर्वान्कामाश्छन्दतः प्रार्थयस्व ।
इमा रायाः सरथाः सत्तूया न हीदृशा लम्बनीया मनुष्यैः ।
आभिर्मत्पत्ताभिः परिवारयस्व नचिकेतो मरणं मानुषाक्षीः ॥ २६ ॥

ये ये which which (whatever) कामाः (objects of) desires मर्त्य-
लोके in the mortal world दुर्लभाः difficult to get. (तान् those) सर्वान्
all छन्दतः according to thy choice प्रार्थयस्व ask for. इमाः these
सरथाः with chariots सत्तूयाः with musical instruments रायाः fair
damsels हीदृशाः such (damsels) मनुष्यैः by men न हि not indeed
लम्बनीयाः obtainable. मत्पत्ताभिः given by me आभिः by these
मा idens) परिवारयस्व be attended on. नचिकेतः O Nachiketas मरणं
(about) death मा do not अनुप्राक्षीः request.

“Whatever objects of desire that are difficult to get in this world of the mortal, let thee ask for them all according to thy choice ;—these fair nymphs with their chariots and musical instruments—such are indeed not obtainable by man—let thee be attended on by them whom I give to thee. But ask not anything about death.”

श्रोभावा मर्त्यस्य यदन्तकैतत्सर्वेन्द्रियाणां जरयन्ति तेजः ।
अपि सर्वं जीवितमल्पमेव तवैव वाहास्तव नृत्यगीते ॥ २६ ॥

अन्तक O Death (स्वदुक्ताः भोगाः the enjoyments enumerated by
thee) श्रोभावाः ephemeral (lit. which is uncertain in its existence even
till to-morrow), (किञ्च moreover) मर्त्यस्य of the mortal सर्वेन्द्रियाणां
of all the senses यद् what तेजः vigour एतद् this जरयन्ति wear out
अपि also सर्वं all जीवितं life अल्पं short एव verily. तव thy वाहाः
horses, नृत्यगीते (नृत्यं and गीतं) dance and song, तव एव for thyself
(तिष्ठन्तु let be).

The Vedanta Kesari

“Let the lion of Vedanta roar.”
“Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that ‘I am the Atman.’”

—Swami Vivekananda.

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NYAYA PHILOSOPHY.*

BY

Professor N. Ramanujacharya, M. A.

Gentlemen, in compliance with the request of the Secretary to your Philosophical Association, I have undertaken to speak to you, this evening, on the Philosophical aspect of Gautama's Nyaya system. The Nyaya is one of well-known systems of Hindu Orthodox Philosophy commonly known as the *Shad-darsanas*. It was first presented to the world by Gautama, one of the great sages of ancient India, who is also known by two other names, Akshapada and Dirghatapas. Of Gautama's life and parentage we know very little. Scholars identify him with the author of 'the Gautama Dharma Sutra' which is considered as the earliest authoritative work on Hindu Sacred Law. His date is generally fixed at about 500 B. C., the beginning of the Sutra period of Sanskrit Literature, which makes him almost a contemporary of Mahaveera and Buddha, the founders of two great religions of ancient India, Jainism and Buddhism. The Vayupurana refers to both Akshapada and Kanada as disciples of a Brahmin sage, Somasarma, supposed to be an incarnation of Siva who, it is said, lived at the sacred shrine of

* Lecture delivered before the Philosophical Association of the Pachaiyappa's College.

Prabhasa during the time of one Jatukarniya-Vyasa. If this be true, then the founders of the Nyaya and the Vaisheshika systems should have been not only contemporaries but fellow-pupils who sat at the feet of the same Guru. This perhaps accounts for the fact that the systems of Gautama and Kanada so largely resemble each other in all their essential features, differing only with regard to a few minor tenets.

In Sanskrit, the word Nyaya is used to denote the science of logic. Logic is also designated by various other names which, more or less indicate its different aspects. It is called *Hetu Vidya*—science of causes; *Anviksiki*—the science of enquiry; *Tarka Vidya*—science of reasoning and so on. The Nyaya Sūtras of Gautama is undoubtedly the earliest work that has come down to us on the science of logic. About the antiquity and popularity of the Nyaya system there can be no reasonable doubt. We find plenty of references to Gautama and his system in the Itihāsas, Purānas and other undoubtedly ancient works in Sanskrit Literature, which bear ample testimony not only to its antiquity, but also to the wide popularity, which the system seems to have enjoyed at one time. Even at the present time the Nyaya together with the Vaisheshika of Kanada with which it is closely allied largely moulds the critical spirit of the Pundits and their disciples alike, and the study of the Tarkika School is considered among Pundits as a *sine qua non* for a proper understanding of other systems of Philosophy and especially the Vedānta which is rightly considered as the most orthodox on account of its highly philosophical character and its complete harmony with the teachings of the Vedas and the Upanishads.

The Nyaya Sūtras of Gautama is divided into five books each containing two *Anvikas* or daily lectures. In the first book Gautama lays down the plan of the whole system which he effects in 60 sūtras. Books 2, 3, 4, & 5 are devoted to a full and detailed discussion of the topics briefly indicated in the first, and also to criticisms on rival schools of thought. The procedure adopted by Gautama is what the Hindu writers usually follow in the treatment of their subjects. Vatsyayana, one of the earliest commentators on the Nyaya Sūtras, tells us that the method followed by the Nyaya Sastra is three-fold:—Enunciation, definition and critical examination. The First Book of the Nyaya Sūtras has to do only with the former two, while the remaining books are devoted to a critical examination and discussion of the topics briefly dealt with in Book I. It is therefore erroneous to suppose that the first book only of the Nyaya Sūtras which contains a brief explanation of the sixteen topics, was the work of Gautama and that the remaining books are

later additions by his followers. But Mahamahopādya Satish Chandra Vidyabhushana, the learned Principal of the Sanskrit College of Calcutta, seems to think otherwise. In his introduction to the translation of the Nyaya Sūtras he writes "It seems to me that it is only the first Book of the Nyaya Sūtras containing a brief explanation of the sixteen Categories that we are justified in ascribing to Akshapada, while the 2nd, 3rd and 4th books which discuss particular doctrines of the Vaisheshika, Yoga, Mimamsa, Vedānta and Buddhist philosophy bear marks of different hands and ages. In these Books there are passages quoted almost verbatim from the Lunkavatara Sūtra, a Sanskrit work on the Yogachara Buddhist philosophy, from the Madhyamika Sūtra of Nagarjuna and from the Sāthakas of Arya Deva, works which were composed in the early centuries of Christ".

These arguments of the learned gentleman are not convincing and do not appear to me to be quite conclusive. An enumeration and mere definition of the topics necessarily presupposes a wider and critical examination of the topics by the author himself. Especially if we take into consideration the method of treatment usually followed by the Hindu writers on Sastras, we have every reason to expect a wider and fuller discussion of the subject from Gautama himself. Moreover the Buddhist and other later systems which the learned scholar thinks are referred to in the Gautama Sūtras are not mentioned by their names anywhere in the Sūtras themselves. It is of course true that these systems appeared later than the Nyaya. But we have ample reasons to believe that the germs of their speculations certainly existed long before their appearance as systems, even so early as the Upanishads themselves. As to the charge of plagiarism the tables may be easily turned. It is quite possible that the later Buddhist writers might have taken these passages verbatim from the Sūtras of Gautama. I do not see any reason in support of the view that the Gautama's followers borrowed them from these later writings. For these reasons it seems to me that we have no conclusive arguments to reject the traditional belief that the authorship of the whole book belongs to only one person and that person is the well-known Gautama of the ancient tradition.

There are also critics who cannot appreciate the value of Gautama's methods of exposition and speak of it as "tedious, loose and unmethodical". This is again another misconception based on the fact that these critics do not and could not place themselves in the view-point of Gautama. If they had done so, there could have been certainly no reason for any such complaint. The

procedure adopted by Gautama is, from his own point of view, undoubtedly justified. It is natural and logical throughout. Dr. Ballantyne's analysis of the subject matter of the First Book of 'the Nyaya Sutras given in his Vidyabrinda, "Synopsis of Science," will convince all unprejudiced minds of the naturalness of the method of exposition adapted by the founder of the Nyaya Philosophy. "He (Gautama) starts with the grand question of questions—the enquiry as to how we shall attain the summum bonum—the 'chief end of man.' This, he declares in his first aphorism, can be reached only through knowledge of the Truth. But have we instruments adapted to the acquisition of a knowledge of the Truth? We have our senses, etc., and these Gautama enumerates and describes in Aph. 3-8. But, if we have instruments, let us know what are the objects to which these are appropriate. Gautama replies to this in Aph. 9-22. But the bare enumeration and definition of objects does not ensure a correct and believing knowledge of them. The state intermediate between hearing and believing—Doubt—he defines in Aph. 23. But how is a man to get out of Doubt? He will be content to remain in doubt if there be no *motive* for enquiring further. Here, in Aph. 24 he takes occasion to explain what constitutes a Motive. But in every enquiry, to reach the unknown, we must start from the *known*;—there must be *data*. These he describes and classifies in Aph. 25-31. The data being determined, it is proper to determine the order of procedure in demonstrating thereby something not granted. This he sets forth in Aph. 32-38. But, thus far, we have been shown an arrangement for hearing only one side of a question, and how can we be sure that the opposite side is not the right one? The propriety of hearing both sides of a question before making up our minds, Gautama suggests in Aph. 39-40, but an honest enquirer may have heard both sides and still be in perplexity. Is he to be turned adrift? Not at all. Candid discussion with one who holds the same first principles is open to him; Aph. 41. There are yet others, besides honest enquirers, that are not utterly to be rejected. A person not hopelessly irreclaimable, may *wrangle* for the sake of seeming victory. In Aph. 42, therefore, he defines wrangling. A person still perhaps not hopelessly irreclaimable, may descend lower than the former by carping at others without undertaking to settle anything himself. In Aph. 43, therefore, he defines *cavilling*. Wranglers and cavillers, in default of good reasons, must make use of *fallacies*. The various forms of Fallacy, therefore, he defines in Aph. 44-49. But whilst there are fallacies by which a man may deceive himself as well as others, there are *frauds* which are employed only dishonestly for the deception of others. These he describes in Aph. 50-57,

Descending a stage lower, an opponent may employ objections so futile as to be capable of deceiving no one. It is well to know in what consists the futility of such objections. This he shows in Aph. 59. Finally an opponent, sinking even below the former one (who knew what he was opposing, though he could make none but a futile opposition), may be unable to understand the proposition;—Aph. 59-60. Here Gautama's patience is exhausted *but not before*. Against everything but the invincible combination of the spirit of contradiction with *stupidity*, he seems to arm himself at all points. An objection the most frivolous—or even futile—provided it be tendered by one who understands the proposition—he does not refuse to deal with. The objection might perplex some honest enquirer, and therefore Gautama, or the follower who has imbibed his spirit does not consider himself at liberty to consult his own case by scouting it, though he himself may see its futility plainly enough. It is fair to remember this when we meet with ludicrously frivolous objections gravely treated in a Nyaya work. The author is not to be supposed to have *invented* the objection. It was offered to him—offered very possibly for the purpose of vexatiously puzzling and perplexing him—and the Naiyayika will not allow himself to be puzzled and perplexed. The most cavilling opponent is not to be allowed even the semblance of a victory; he shall not be allowed to boast even of having put the philosopher out of temper. This single triumph—such as it is—is reserved only for the absolute blockhead."

Before proceeding to the philosophical aspect of Gautama's Nyaya system, allow me to make a few general observations on the nature and scope of the six Darsanas, which we should bear in mind, before we are able to understand the exact position and significance of the Nyaya in Hindu orthodox thought. Some of these Darsanas are not systems of philosophy at all in the real sense of the term, nor were they intended to be regarded as such by the founders themselves. A system of philosophy is properly supposed to comprise a body of truths connected with Cosmology, Epistemology and Ontology. It must have a theory of the Cosmos, a theory of knowledge and a theory of the highest reality. In its Metaphysical or Ontological aspect it must attempt to solve the problem of reality as to enable us to apprehend the essential nature of "Being as Being," and also to solve the problem of the ultimate nature of man, the world and God and their relations to one another. Judged from this stand-point I fear that some of these Darsanas are not entitled to that dignified appellation of system of philosophy. The Purva Mimamsa is professedly not a system of philosophy at all. It is but an attempt to describe, explain and

systematise the ritualistic teachings of the Vedas. The epistemological and other problems which it discusses are but secondary and incidental. It does not directly concern itself with any of the fundamental philosophical problems. The Yoga is not also an independent system. It accepts in its entirety the Cosmology, Psychology and Ontology of the Sankhya. It is only with regard to the question of the existence of God that it differs from the Sankhya. Its direct object as it is put forth in the first aphorism is to expound the science and art of meditation; and thereby to enable the human mind, trained in accordance with its processes and methods to transcend the limitations of sense and to develop the power of spiritual intuition which, it considers as necessary to the attainment of ultimate salvation. The Vaisheshika also, properly speaking, is an adjunct to the Nyaya system. The Nyaya and the Vaisheshika do not fundamentally differ in their teachings except with regard to certain unimportant particulars; though in the presentation and treatment of the subject they have adopted different points of view. We are therefore justified in reducing the so-called six systems to three only; three leading ones, the Nyaya of Gautama, the Sankhya of Kapila and the Vedanta of Badarayana; and it is these three only that deserve, if at all, the name of independent systems of orthodox Hindu philosophy.

It is well to remember also one more fact in connection with these Darsanas. None of these systems is claimed to be purely rationalistic and in this respect the orthodox Darsanas stand widely contrasted with the purely rationalistic schools of Buddhism and Jainism. The orthodox Hindu thinkers, with one voice, proclaim that it is impossible for the human intellect to apprehend the nature of the highest reality and its relation to the human mind, unless with the help afforded by Revelation and Yoga. They all hold that it is the Veda and particularly the Upanishads which can enable us to intellectually apprehend the nature of Brahman and its relation to the human soul, and that it is the practice of the Yoga and Yoga alone which can help us to directly realise the eternal reality both in ourselves and in the universe. Badarayana, the author of the Brahma Sutras takes care to point out at the very outset that the Vedanta is not purely rationalistic and that it is based entirely on the authority of the Upanishads. Of course Badarayana too makes an attempt to reconcile Revelation with Reason; and in the Tarka Pada of the Brahma Sutras where he exposes all the rival systems to the fire of his criticism he tries to show that the Vedanta philosophy is, so far as reason has any voice in the matter, more rational than the so-called rationalistic systems of the Jain and the Buddhist and more in conformity with the Vedas

and the Upanishads than the Sankhya and the Vaisheshika systems which profess to accept the authority of Revelation.

It should also be remembered that each of these Darsanas has its own essential topic and its own peculiar point of view from which it approaches its subject-matter. The Vedanta has for its main subject the Brahman, the highest reality whose nature and relations to the other subordinate realities of existence, man and the universe, it attempts to investigate in the light of Revelation aided by Reason. Its stand-point is therefore purely philosophical in the most comprehensive sense of the term. In this respect the Vedanta system stands out widely contrasted with other systems of orthodox philosophy. The Sankhya has for its direct object the enquiry into the principles, primary and secondary, which go to make up the totality of cosmic existence, physical as well as spiritual. Its stand-point is obviously cosmological. The very term Sankhya means enumeration or counting. It attempts to enumerate so to speak the principles which constitute the cosmic totality; and by their definition and critical investigation it attempts to produce discriminative knowledge, that is, knowledge of Parusha as contrasted with Prakriti and its evolutions, which knowledge it considers as an essential preliminary to the attainment of Kaivalya, the highest end of life. The stand-point of the logical schools the Nyaya and the Vaisheshika, is neither metaphysical like that of the Vedanta nor cosmological like that of the Sankhya. Their stand-point on the other hand is, as everyone who is acquainted with these systems will testify, purely epistemological and logical. The essential topic of the Vaisheshika system is the determination of the highest categories of nameable things by means of the Pramanas, in other words by the process of reasoning; and it does not profess to go beyond that. With regard to the Nyaya the essential topic is investigation into the nature and validity of the Pramanas—instruments of right knowledge—and also analysis of the process of reasoning or argumentation, without which it is impossible for the human mind to discriminate between true knowledge and error. This is the obvious aim of Gautama, and the very first Aphorism in which he sets forth his topics shows clearly that he has not the higher philosophical end in view, *viz.*, complete unification of experience by investigation into the nature of the highest reality. The Sutra runs as follows "supreme felicity is attainable by the right knowledge of the sixteen topics (1) sources of right knowledge (2) objects of right knowledge, (3) doubt, (4) utility (5) example (6) established conclusion (7) parts of reasoning (8) indirect method of proof (9) removal of doubt (10) discussion, (11) wrangling, (12) cavil, (13) fallacies, (14) quibble, (15) futile arguments, (16), and occasions for rebuke. The categories here

enumerated clearly show that the Nyaya system has directly to do only with the process of reasoning and argumentation rather than with the problem of the highest reality as the Vedanta professes to do. I am supported in this view by no less an authority than the celebrated Sree Vaishnava scholar, Venkata Natha, who, in his masterly work on logical science, Nyaya Parisuddhi says "investigation of the sources of knowledge is the essential topic of the Nyaya Sastra." Right knowledge of the objects by means of *Pramanas* leads ultimately, though not logically, to salvation by producing right knowledge of duty *viz.*, what we should do and what we should not. This knowledge is possible not by the mere investigation of the sources of knowledge but by the application of instruments of knowledge to their appropriate objects. In order that the intelligent enquirer may be persuaded to take to its study it is pointed out that it will indirectly lead to the ultimate end of life. Several topics which are only secondary and non-essential are therefore included in the subject matter of the Nyaya Sastra. However, the ultimate object of all the orthodox systems is to teach *Tatvajnana*—Knowledge of Truth, directly or indirectly, and thereby to facilitate the spiritual salvation of the human soul. Herein consists an essential point of agreement amongst all the six systems of Hindu orthodox philosophy however much they may differ with regard to their views on the various philosophical problems.

(To be continued.)

THE INNER MEANING OF TAGORE'S "THE POST OFFICE."

BY

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

Ravindranath Tagore's name is now a household word in India. He possesses in an eminent degree that combination of spiritual vision and practical work by which alone our beloved land can be re-lifted into her lofty seat of greatness among the nations of the world. It is not my purpose here to discuss the general elements of his unique genius, as I have done this else where. I shall briefly discuss here the inner meaning of Tagore's "The Post office."

This work is a drama. Tagore has practically re-discovered a unique literary form which is full of entrancing beauty and is in perfect harmony with the mystical elements of his genius. Sanskrit literature is full of books giving us the highest spiritual truths through parables, love-stories, and dramas ostensibly dealing with the familiar incidents of everyday life. The great value of this literary form is that it brings home to our hearts the most precious truths by leading in the unknown in the guise of the known. Our rhetoricians say that literature's command to us to live the higher life is like the command of the beloved—sweet, subtle, and irresistible. The conversion of the heart till it becomes fit to receive the divine light is the aim of all higher work. But it is effected in a silent unperceived way by such works as Tagore's dramas. The process is as sweet as it is certain, and the means are as beautiful as the end. To irradiate the commonplace with a higher light and to sweeten the daily life by subtle hints of the divine energy that sustains such life form the highest function of a poet. To bear us away on the wings of music and spiritual emotion to the very throne of Grace is undoubtedly a lofty mission. But it is even nobler and rarer to open unknown and unrecognised windows in our souls and let in the radiance of God's Light and Love into the dark chambers of our everyday lives and thoughts.

The story in this play is very slight and Tagore keeps his personality out of it as far as possible. He practises the highest artistic self-effacement by refusing to allow the pomp of verbal melody to obscure the low sweet call of the voice of God. Mr. Yeats, in his brief but brightly-written introduction to the

drama, deprecates the attempt to discover detailed allegory in the play. He says : "The meaning is less intellectual, more emotional and simple. The deliverance sought and won by the dying child is the same deliverance which rose before his imagination, Mr. Tagore has said, when once in the early dawn he heard amid the noise of a crowd returning from some festival, this line out of an old village song, 'Ferryman, take me to the other shore of the river.' It may come at any moment of life, though the child discovers it in death, for it always comes at the moment when the 'I' seeking no longer for gains that cannot be 'assimilated with its spirit' is able to say, 'all my work is thine.' (*Sadhana* pp. 162, 163). On the stage the little play shows that it is very perfectly constructed, and conveys to the right audience an emotion of gentleness and peace." Though it is true that no definite theories of life are preached in so many words in the play, it is obvious that it means more than it says. My purpose is to hint at such meaning in the very process of setting out the story in the play.

Madhav, a rich and worldly man, is childless and adopts a dreamy and high-souled boy Amal by name whose body is weak and who falls very ill later on. The physician who is called in says that the child must be never let out. He represents the sum of worldly activities that try to keep the aspiring soul in bondage. There is great art in making the child the adoptive, and not the natural-born son, of the rich man. The very name of the boy is Amal (the pure one). True spiritual effort can never be the offspring of a thoroughly worldly life. At the same time a mere worldly life can never fulfil the purpose of its existence unless it seeks alliance with the spiritual life. Tagore has brought out this truth in his own simple but inimitable way. Madhav says : "Formerly, earning was a sort of passion with me, I simply could not help working for money. Now, I make money, and as I know it is all for this dear boy, earning becomes a joy to me."

The boy who is thus kept within doors yearns for a full and free life. The doctor's medicines and injunctions make him worse and worse. The boy says : "See that far-away hill from our window—I often long to go beyond those hills and right away..... Uncle, do you think it is meant to prevent us crossing over ? It seems to me because the earth can't speak, it raises its hands into the sky and beckons. And those who live far off and sit alone by their windows can see the signal." He has seen an old man going to cross the hill and himself yearns to do so. The hill is really the rampart of worldly life and the spiritual nature has an imperious inner demand to cross it.

The boy sits at the window and sees the rich stream of life flow in front of him. He first sees the dairyman come from the village to sell curds. The boy asks him to take him away and teach him to sell curds. The dairyman asks the boy to grow strong and promises to bring some curds in the evening. The boy then meets the village watchman and asks him to sound the gong. The watchman says that he can sound the gong only when it is time to do so. The following passage is full of beautiful and profound symbolism :—

Watchman.—My gong sounds to tell the people, Time waits for none, but goes on for ever.

Amal.—Where, to what land ?

Watchman.—That none knows.

Amal.—Then I suppose no one has ever been there ! Oh, I do wish to fly with the time to that land of which no one knows anything.

Watchman.—All of us have to get there one day, my child.

Amal.—Have I too ?

Watchman.—Yes, you too.

Amal.—But doctor won't let me out !

Watchman.—One day the doctor himself may take you there by the hand.

Amal.—He won't ; you don't know him. He only keeps me in.

Watchman.—One greater than he comes and lets us free."

It is the watchman that informs the boy about the King's Post Office. The boy becomes eager to have some letter from the King, and desires to become eventually the King's postman. The boy then meets the village headman who ridicules the boy's idea of getting a letter from the King. Then a girl named Sudha comes to the boy and promises to bring him a flower in the evening. Then enter a troop of boys, and at Amal's request play with his toys and then go away.

What is the inner significance of this panorama of life unfolded to us ? The dairyman's life appeals to the simple child-nature of Amal because of its purity, simplicity, and intimacy with nature. The watchman represents time and the regulation of the life of the world. The symbolism brings to our mind the famous Sanskrit story in which the drummer's verses end with the refrain तस्याजाग्रत जाग्रत (Therefore awake, awake). The village headman represents the unimaginative yet proud worldly man of power. The girl Sudha (which means nectar) represents the bloom and fragrance and sweetness of true womanhood which without

PURITY OF HEART, OR THE ALLHEAL PANACEA.

BY

Prabhulal.

The world is flooded with innumerable methods of curing diseases that torment mankind. Leaving aside the old methods of treatment by drugs, we have had recently some such methods of cure as Nature Cure, Chromopathy, Oreopathy, Mechano Therapy, etc., in which no drugs are used. The advocate of each system claims superiority as regards efficacy for his particular method over others. But, ah, what man can claim any real infallibility for his particular method, having regard to our solicitude for the obliteration of all pain or misery arising from disease or any other cause? Most of the treatments for curing diseases end in superficial or temporary cures only. No radical cure of disease is ever obtained by resorting to methods that are at present in vogue simply for the fact that they look only to the physical condition of the body. It is true that our ailments that are generally due to our intemperate habits are for a time cured by drugs or by other forms of treatment, but they are liable to recur on the reappearance of intemperate habits which man is quite unable to shake off as long as he has no control over his mental inclinations. The only one radical and infallible cure of all diseases, nay of all evils, therefore, lies in the attainment of a stable state of mental purity.

Thought is another name for fate. What one thinks that he becomes. If a man begins to think impure thoughts and harbours debasing immorality, heart-breaking affliction and distracting sorrow shall be forced upon him into the bargain. The fool thinks he enjoys sensuous pleasures, but knows not that in an impure thought or deed, his very vitality is sold, squandered or consumed. Purity of thought does not consist entirely in one's freeing himself from lascivious inclinations, but from all passions such as anger, envy, or desire for the gratification of sensuous cravings. One given to indulging in liquor or dainty dishes,—the source of so many diseases—is a man of as impure a mind as the one who is inclined to carnal thoughts.* One who is envious or passionate and is unable to control his anger, is incessantly ruining his health by his constantly brooding habits. Immoderate attachment does also similarly lead to physical ruin, the result of our afflictions due to the death of or separation from those whom we love fondly. All these are signs of an impure heart or mind. To what a tremendous extent does the least impure thought

* This statement would appear perfectly true from the stand-point of the absolute purity of the Soul which is absolute desirelessness.—Ed.

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affect the physical health of a man striving to live a really spiritual life, must no doubt have been the sad experience of all who have trodden this path.

The mind may be compared to a gramophone record in which all sorts of tunes, musical or discordant, are registered. All our thoughts, pure or impure, leave their traces or impressions on the mind before they die out. As in the case of a gramophone record, the tunes already registered therein, begin to vibrate as soon as the key is turned, so the mind records also begin to sound all sorts of notes, whether melodious or discordant,—the key here being the associations of ideas or suggestions from some external objects or words. When we are hearing a lecture or attentively listening to a sweet song sung by a singer in flesh and blood, we feel no need of whiling away the time with a gramophone record; but in the absence of such a lecture or song to hear directly, we are apt to betake ourselves to gramophone records for amusement in our idle hours. Even so, when we are entirely unoccupied after the day's work, we are apt to string the cords of mind setting all sorts of notes in vibration—generally notes that are full of debasing music. Such notes in consequence of their constant repetition tend to deepen further the impressions on the mind, leading to more and more debasement of it and finally to more and more bodily or mental suffering. The impressions in the mind are technically called *Vasanas*, and the desire for further enjoyments, the result of those *Vasanas*, is named *trishna*. *Trishna* is unconquerable as long as any trace of *vasana* is left in the mind. Now, the question is how to obliterate this *vasana*—this ever-present source of all evil. No amount of moral teaching or instruction can bring about this result. One's own experiences in life are the best guide. Says the Swami Rama Tirtha:—

“The world has enough of slaves of impurity, but, perhaps, more dangerous are the slaves of purity concealing their weakness under the name of morality. Be genuine, true to yourself. Live your own experience. There is no master more masterly than your own experience. No man was ever pure at heart except through his own experience. Attaching undue importance to the merest trifle of outward purity, keeps you off from the only true purity—the realisation of self.”

When a man through his own bitter experiences comes to realise, the dreadful consequences of his intemperate habits or evil associations or impure thoughts, he can far better rely upon his own exertions to live a pure life than one who has only learnt moral lessons through a book or a teacher. The dread of sin is constantly hunting man. Man who is essentially pure Atman, free from all taints, thinks himself under a strange delusion to be a sinner. This delusion, to speak the truth, is a creation of his own, the product of so many conventions which he has himself invented for his guidance. There

are acts that cannot be said as purely moral or purely immoral. For instance, a man lives with his cousin in the married state as husband and wife. This is quite a moral act to him, but to a man in whose case sexual connection with a cousin is an incest, it is highly immoral or rather a heinous sin. The first man's conscience will never prick him for committing that act, while the conscience of the latter will certainly chastise him in calm moments, though he might have committed the incestuous act in the heat of passion. Now it is such reproaches of conscience or remorse only that tell the most upon the body and degenerates the physical health : when there is the moral sense, there alone arises the idea of responsibility, etc., and the development of the moral sense depends entirely on the education of a man, teachings of his religion, conventions of the society to which he belongs and lastly on sentimentalism. Although I am no advocate of the doctrines of socialism, yet I may say with certain amount of truth that most of our woes have their origin in our having to conform to the various conventions which we have ourselves placed before us in the form of property rights or marriage laws, etc., and it may be said without fear of contradiction that if there were no such conventions, we would have been at least less miserable than we are. The socialistic doctrines, however, are utterly unworkable in any state of society which we may think of and they are not even workable in utterly savage conditions or animal states. In the transcendental state of realisation of the Self, however, all idea of *meum* and *hunc* is destroyed, but it is not the fortune of everybody to attain to that state. It is not easy even to attain to the state of the purity of heart, though it should be our lifelong effort at least to attain to that state, whereby we can get rid of much misery. But where there is selfishness, there cannot be produced any purity of heart in its truest sense. The least interestedness for self is apt to conflict with the interests of others; and though a man may not actually be a rogue, he may not have that universal love which ought to form a prominent trait in a man having a pure heart.

Doctors, physicians and surgeons all pay attention to the physical derangements of organs in the human body, but they never care to direct their attention to the internal derangement of their patients' minds. They never bestow their attention to the mental disturbances due to their patients' harbouring impure thoughts, the root of all evil in the form of diseases. Utterly ignorant of their patients' state of mind which the latter are either unwilling or are perhaps ashamed to confess, the physicians have to take the outward symptoms only as the criteria to base their diagnosis of the causes of the disease, the real cause of disease lying, however, entirely beyond their ken. In such cases, a spiritual doctor would be more serviceable than a doctor drug-giving constantly his patient without producing any efficacious results.

If a man lives a perfectly pure life, he will not only be free from many harassing cares attendant upon a house-holder's life,

but will also pave the way to final beatitude. Apart from the individual evolution, it will lead to the progress of the society as a whole as well, if the individuals composing the society act upon the ideal of the purity of heart in all the various phases of their lives in relation to each other. The life-force of such pure souls cannot but act and react upon the aggregate we call society, and thus would bring it up to a level far above its original state, nay its evolution will be marked in every succeeding generation with augmenting purity in the elements of the organism. So we see the purity of thought, word and deed is the only one infallible remedy of all our ailments, whether mental or physical.

Those that are themselves good never criticise any one, as they never care to see anything bad in others. Those who are constantly after other people, criticising them at every step, naturally ever dwell upon others' faults, and so those faults assume material shapes as it were, and get gradually ingrained in their own minds, converting them also into sinful beings. Hence what is wanted is that you yourself should shine and throw your lustre on others, which may convert them into virtuous men, if they are not already so, by your own example.

TO THE LAND OF THE SNOWS.

BY

A. K. D.

(Continued from Page 57)

In tradition, Garhwal was designated as a "Bawani," i.e., occupied by 52 chiefs, each with his own fort; hence is its modern name Garhwal, meaning 'the country of forts.' It is one of the three districts of the Kumaon Division of the United Provinces, and lies almost entirely within the Himalayan Mountains. The trend of the range here is from the north-west to the south-east. The district of Garhwal covers an area of 5,629 square miles and resembles roughly a rectangle in shape. It is drained entirely by the Ganges and its affluents. The mountain system of the district forms a series of spurs shooting off from the Tibetan watershed, of which the principal ones are the Nanda Devi Range and the Badrinath Range. They present as it were a snowy wall stretching due east to west. The former is the highest mountain in the British Empire, attaining according to the latest calculations an altitude of 25,660 feet. It has three peaks known as the Dunagiri (23,184 feet), the Trisul (23,400 feet) and the Nandakot (22,530 feet). The Badrinath range has two peaks, namely the Kedarnath and the Badrinath

or Chankhamba (22,901 feet). Another very massive range runs down from the watershed forming the water-parting between the Vishnuganga and the Dhauliganga. Its principal peak is the Kamet (25,443 feet). The chief trees in the forests that clothe the mountains are the *Sal*, pine, oak, silverfir, yew, cypress, deodar (cider), sycamore, birch, and rhododendron. The district abounds in fruit trees such as, mangoes, pomegranates, walnuts, peaches, apricots, cherries, medlars, wild apples and pears. Bears, tigers and panthers are common throughout the district and are sometimes very troublesome. Elephants are growing scarce. Deer of various kinds (including the musk deer) are widely distributed all over the place. The district is very rich in bird life. The principal crops of the district are : rice, *Mandua*, wheat, barley, til, maize, pulses, sugarcane, potatoes, onions and some spices. The fields where crops are grown, are peculiar in shapes ; they are all like segments of circle laid on tier above tier on the sides of the hills. From a distance they look like so many steps of a grand staircase for mounting up the hills. Copper and iron exist in sufficient quantities in the district, but the mining here has failed to attract capital owing to the difficulties of transport and fuel.

This district was larger in area before the advent of the British. But it is now divided into two : the British Garhwal and the Native Garhwal. The latter is ruled over by a Native Prince and is called Tehri-Garhwal. In this tract lie the famous Gangotri (10,319 feet), the source of the Ganges and the Jumnotri (10,800 ft.), the source of the Jamuna. These two places, specially the latter, are almost inaccessible and consequently few pilgrims only go there. There are several other places of pilgrimage in Tehri-Garhwal.

Now, to come to our subject. We seven with our guide and two coolies commenced our journey without much loss of time. The Ganges was on our left. The road was scarped out of the side of the rocks and had scarcely anywhere width more than 8 feet. On one side of it rose the hills like a wall ; while the other side was bare, the hills sloping down, in most places abruptly, into a narrow glen below through which the river swept along. Occasionally a careless pilgrim drops down into the abyss and breaks his neck. Higher up from here one of the band which just followed us, was suddenly missed in this way.

Here Nature wore quite a different aspect. No more the green swards stretching to the far-reaching skies could be seen ; in their stead stood the tall cliffs still and motionless on either sides. The busy din of men entirely faded away. It was a region of calm and

quiet, only broken at intervals by the faintly echoing songs of the warblers or the solemn whistling of the wind when it rustled through the boughs of the tall deodars ; such was the scene amidst which we moved. Eight miles we crossed that morning, and stopped for the day in an inn. The pilgrim route is studded with such inns, there being 120 of them altogether on an average of 3 miles apart from each other. Each inn has a few resting houses or rather sheds owned by grocers. The pilgrims have to pay no rent for their shelter in those sheds ; they have only to buy in return necessary articles of food from the grocers. Cooking utensils are supplied free by them. These sheds are generally made of stone roofed in with straw and dry leaves, or shingles or stone slates. All these are very much exposed, most of them being unfit to live in during heavy rains. Every grocer keeps a good stock of rice, dal, ghee, potato, salt, sugar, red pepper and wood for fuel. Milk is available almost everywhere. Pumpkin and onion are often to be had. Few other vegetables also can be procured, but rarely. In good inns only one can get mustard oil, kerosene oil, matches, tobacco and spices.

When we reached the first halting place, we took a long rest and made preparations for our breakfast. Our Brahmachari companion (whom we called Babaji) and the guide did all the cooking for us, the rest only helped them when necessary. It is needless to say how very irksome it is to cook after a long journey. I would therefore advise him who desires to visit these parts (if he is not a good hand in cooking) to have a cook with him. If that is not possible he should, while securing a cooly for himself, select a Brahmin one who can cook. There are enough of such Brahmin coolies. But then besides the cooly hire he should be given two meals also. Moreover it will be well to bear in mind the following points : (1) never to remain in naked body, (2) never to bathe in ice-cold water, (3) never to drink from small fountains, (4) not to drink river water before allowing it to settle down, (for there are good deal of sands mixed up with it) and (5) never to walk in empty stomach or in the sun. Pilgrims often suffer by disregarding these points.

In the afternoon we proceeded three miles more and passed the night in an inn named Bijni. Next day we got up at 4-30 in the morning. Our routine was to get up every day at about that time and to hold ourselves ready to start in half an hour. The coolies were always sent forward sometime before us, for their pace was naturally very slow. These good fellows never play false like their confreres of the plains. Sometimes our coolies had to pass the

night in different places altogether, not being able to overtake us. But they were never found to betray their charge. By 9 o'clock at forenoon we used to stop walking every day and resume it again at 5, in the evening. It was a steep ascent that day and consequently we were very much exhausted, and its effect did not leave us for two or three days. Up and up rose the hills as we went more and more forward, and the Ganges wended her way through them sometimes bubbling and frothing, sometimes smoothly. How cool, and clear and tasteful her water is! The hill-men call it the "mother's milk." Is this an exaggeration? To us it seemed not.

On the next morning we reached Vyasghat—a distance of 6 miles only. The famous Rishi Vyasa performed penance here and a small temple exists still there to commemorate it. The fatigue of the previous day constrained us not to stir in the evening. Besides, I was slightly indisposed. Next morning the little band left for Devaprayag 9 miles away without me, saying that I should not march on foot with them but go on horse-back or *jhampan* when the sun was up. The grocer, in whose shed we were, told me not to be anxious, he or his brother would make every arrangement for me. After I performed the morning services the grocer gave me a cup of milk which refreshed me much. Then he with his brother tried every corner of the place, but could secure neither a horse nor a *jhampan*. At last they were arranging to send a man to the neighbouring village, they were so very kind and hospitable, to get a vehicle of any kind, when an unfortunate scuffle between two men in the adjoining dharmasala upset everything. All the local people got excited over the matter, and I did not like to remain in the place any longer. So I bade them adieu. After going forward for about three miles, I got a pony on hire. For a mile or so I went all right. And then when trying to adjust myself, I put all my weight on one stirrup and the harness turned down, its band being loose. I fell down with my umbrella which I kept open on account of the sun. It broke, but I was not injured. Fortunately I did not fall on the glen side. Had it been so, my journey and life both would have ended here. However, this did not deter me. No sooner the band was made tight than I took my seat and rode up to Devaprayag where my friends were anxiously waiting for me.

The village looked very nice from a distance—just like a painted village on a screen. It lies in Native Garhwal and is approached by a suspension bridge over the Alakananda, the principal river of the district. Here the Alakananda joins with the Ganges. At the

confluence the Ganges is 112 feet broad and rushes out with great force and rapidity down a steep declivity, roaring and foaming over large rocks scattered on its bed. The sprays are thrown up to a height of 10 or 12 feet above! No wonder that *Airavata* (the elephant of Indra) could not withstand the force of the current! But the Alakananda with a breadth of 142 feet flows rather smoothly and winds gently round the point. The breadth of the conjoined stream is 240 ft. This confluence is held very sacred, and is the first of the five *prayags* in the hills that fell on our way. There are two basins excavated in the rock at the point of junction, one on the Ganges known as the Brahmakund and the other on the Alakananda called the Vasisthakund. Here the pilgrims perform religious ablutions, *Sraddha*, and tonsuring. Nowhere in the district fish are found in so much abundance as at this place; their tameness was amazing to me. Upon a terrace in the upper part of the village (about 100 feet above the water-edge) stands the temple of Raghunath, built of massive uncemented rough hewn stones. It is an irregular pyramid having a white cupola at the top with a golden ball and spire. Its age is computed at 10,000 years! The village contains a primary school, magisterial and police headquarters, post and telegraph offices and a market. The priests of Badrinath live here. We spent that night in that village.

Next day at gloaming we reached an inn where we wished to stop for the night. But it was full to its corners with pilgrims. Some could not secure any room and were lying outside on the bare ground. All our attempts to secure a little room for us were baffled. So we had to press forward. Unlike the previous days our way lay through fields in a valley and so there was no danger of tumbling down a deep chasm below. The kindly light of the moon above and our two lanterns showed the way, and at about 9-30 we reached Srinagar. The whole town was almost buried in sleep. No resting place could be procured. So we had to spend the night on the roadside in the verandah of a dharmasala. It may be worth while to note here that the pilgrims should take care to get at an inn, where he would stay for the night, before sunset, otherwise he will often be put to difficulty like us.

No sooner was it morning than we secured a room on the first floor of the dharmasala as we wanted to remain there for the day and see the town. After having our breakfast we had a round through the town. It was once the capital of Garhwal. But the old town is no longer in existence. It was washed away in 1894 by the Ghona flood. A few ruins here and there now

testify to its former site. The present town is located at a higher level (1706 feet above the sea) at about two-thirds of a mile to the north-east of the old town. It has wide streets lined with avenues of trees. The houses are mostly double-storied, and built of stone with slate roofs. The finest building in the town is the hospital. The place contains the police headquarters, a combined post and telegraph office, and a high-school with a boarding house. At a distance of about half a mile from the town is the temple of Kamaleswar Siva. Women desiring offspring keep up a vigil at night in the temple during Vaikuntha Chaturdasi with *ghee* lamps in their hands, those being considered the favourite of the god whose lamps are found burning even till dawn. There are a few other temples in the town. The travellers' bungalow stands above the town and commands an extensive view of it and the river (Alakananda) beyond. Plenty of shops line the roads and many a thing is available which is rare in the district. We made a few necessary purchases. While perambulating through the town we made acquaintances of the Sub-Inspector of Police—an Almorah gentleman named Joykissen Joshi. He was a great admirer of Swami Vivekananda and received us very cordially. He visited Kedar and Badri some twenty years ago and recounted to us how bad was the state of the roads and how infested they were then with bears. He told us a curious story of the instantaneous changes produced in the mind of a fellow pilgrim by a nod of the renowned Swami Jnanananda Saraswati at Badrinath.

To me the Garhwali seemed to be as a rule good-tempered, honest above the average, and faithful to his trust. He is suspicious like a child, and is very impatient of restraint and compulsion. But he is dirty and too much fond of smoking. Theft to all practical purposes is unknown. At night all our articles lay scattered here and there in the shed while we slept, but we never lost even a trifle. His complexion is brown. The Garhwali of the southern tracts resembles in appearance the people of the submontane districts, and is much thinner and less sturdy than his northern kinsfolk. He has generally, except in a few instances, to buy his wife at a price varying from Rs. 200 to Rs. 1000. Our poor guide said he had to pay Rs. 500 to get his wife! Nearly seventy per cent. of the population live on agriculture, but they never work with borrowed capital like the cultivators in the plains. The greater part of the remaining population work as coolies. The women do nearly all the field work except the actual ploughing. They sow, weed and reap, and between harvests are fully employed in bringing fuel and fodder from the neighbouring

hills. But they are not allowed to work on a public road. They are very much fond of needle and thread, and would often send their boys and girls to the passing pilgrims to beg for those articles; if they are successful they become very glad. The people are, however, generally poor. Seldom there is seen a home in much affluence.

(To be continued.)

VEDA AND CASTE.

By

R. Krishnaswami Sastri, B.A.

II.

(Continued from page 60.)

(c) Mr. Sastri interprets the term Dharma to mean "the Divine law of the evolutionary progress of the universe," and makes out man's duty to consist in "consciously co-operating in the Divine scheme of the evolutionary progress of humanity and the whole sentient existence." This interpretation is in direct contradiction to Hindu scriptural authorities recognised by Mr. Sastri. The Vedic conception of Dharma is contained in Rishi Jaimini's sutra "चोदनालक्षयोऽर्थो धर्मः" (Dharma is a matter, the distinctive characteristic of which is "institution" or scriptural injunction). This injunction ought to be unhesitatingly obeyed by all who seek ultimate redemption from the bondage of samsara. The Veda is the source of such commands. Mr. Sastri himself seems to accept this interpretation when he says "the genuine teachings of the Veda relate to these unalterable laws of higher human progress." But who is to find out what are the "genuine" teachings of the Veda? Without the aids furnished by the Smritis and Puranas and tradition (*Sampradaya*) we can never arrive at a reliable, unvarying and universally acceptable interpretation of the Vedas. Vague, sonorous and tantalising generalisations about the Divine law of evolution and conscious co-operation with the Lord can render no *real* help to the aspirant earnestly bent on reaching his destined goal. What one requires is an objective norm of conduct and this can only be gained by recourse to the aid graciously furnished by the Divine sages who have endowed us with the Smritis and Puranas. The Lord Sri Krishna himself says "तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणां ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ" (*Gita* XVI, 24.) "Hence the Sastras are your authority in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done." In the *Anugita* also the Lord says "श्रुतिस्मृती ममैवाज्ञे"

"The Srutis and Smritis are my commandments." This single instruction and command of the Lord to his bhaktas is enough to dispel Mr. Sastri's vague notions regarding Dharma, its source and interpretation. According to Mr. Sastri, the Smritis contain "only the secondary Dharmas which change from age to age and must be distinguished from the primary eternal laws of Dharma laid down in the Veda." To a certain extent this view may be accepted. But the nature and amount of the difference among the many authoritative Smritis are grossly exaggerated. So far especially as the question of caste is concerned the agreement among the Smritis is simply astonishing. This seems to be the reason why Mr. Sastri is at so much pains to discredit their authority. In one place he says "the secondary Dharmas betray at once the lofty wisdom of sages and the unwisdom of worldlings." He exhorts upon all cultured men "to bring their enlightened reason to bear upon them (the Smriti regulations) and weed out the noxious outgrowths which hamper the healthy growth of social progress." He professes to take his stand upon "the well-recognised laws of Vedic exegesis which make a clear distinction between the Sranta and Smarta Dharmas." However, as usual with him, Mr. Sastri makes no attempt to inform us as to what he understands by "the well-recognised laws of Vedic exegesis." If the Purva Mimamsa system is to be accepted as the true authority on Vedic exegesis,—and we have no other—then Mr. Sastri's position cannot derive the least support from it. For instance in the first and second sutras of the third *pada* of the first Adhyaya of his Mimamsa Darsana, Jaimini has clearly established the authority of the Smritis in general. We are not at liberty to reject them as a whole or individual Smritis or select texts. There is no inherent antagonism between Sruti and Smriti as such. Only when a Smriti contradicts what is universally understood as established beyond doubt by the Sruti, does the former lose its authority. In the words of Kumarila Bhattapada, "नैव तावच्छ्रुतिस्मृत्योः स्वरूपेण विरुद्धता". Before we recognise or attempt to set up any antagonism between Sruti and Smriti, we must put forth our credentials for securing recognition as having gained the real import of the Veda. Unless this preliminary condition is satisfied, no one has any right to proclaim to an unsophisticated and uncritical public that there is any antagonism between the Sruti and Smriti and that a fresh interpretation is needed in the interests of truth and progress.

Again, the idea of co-operating with the Lord is entirely foreign to the Aryan mind. The Supreme Lord, who is सर्वज्ञ (All-knowing) and सर्वशक्तिमान् (All-powerful), has no need for the co-operation of insignificant beings like ourselves. He has the ability to make, unmake or transform the entire creation. In His unbounded mercy he has formulated certain rules of conduct which must necessarily be observed if a man aims at liberating himself from the bondage of samsara

or the acquisition of the high privilege of being, through Divine pleasure, entrusted with duties in any department of जगद्वापार. Man's business is either to follow the Lord's injunctions, in which case he will reach his goal, or to reject the same at the peril of losing his cherished *summum bonum*. These injunctions are contained in the Srutis and Smritis, as the Lord Himself says in the *Anugita* "श्रुतिस्मृती समैवाज्ञे".

In support of his "co-operation and fellowship" theory of Dharma, Mr. Sastri quotes a hymn from the Rigveda (V, 50-1) which runs as follows:—"विश्वोदेवस्य ने तुः मर्तोबुरीतसख्यम् । विश्वोराय इषुष्यति-
युञ्जं वृणीत पुष्यसे ॥" He translates it as follows:—"Let every mortal seek fellowship with the Divine Lord. Every one wants power; let him seek to increase the Glory." This is a very inaccurate and misleading rendering of the mantra for the following reasons:—

(i) According to Mr. Sastri, to be an efficient co-operator with the Divine Lord, the aspirant must cultivate "a strenuous life of self-sacrifice and universal love" for humanity and sentient existence as a whole. By selfishly seeking power for himself a man loses his claim for fellowship with the Divine. To this our reply is that it is exactly such selfish prayer that is mentioned in this particular mantra, for Mr. Sastri is mistaken in translating the term रायः into power, while its true meaning according to the वैदिकनिबन्ध (II-10) is wealth. The succeeding mantras of the hymn also contain prayers for worldly objects like progeny, wife and servants and for the defeat of enemies. Where then is the relevancy of importing the idea of "fellowship" into this simple prayer for self-advancement?

(ii) The word सख्यं which Mr. Sastri presses into his service and interprets to mean "fellowship" (with the Lord) has reference only to "the friendly attitude" of the deity towards the author of the mantra. All that the Rishi means is that deity, Savita, here invoked—not the Supreme Lord—may be kind to him and bestow on him all the objects of his desire (*viz.*) wealth, etc. He does not here claim equality—which सख्यं usually implies in Indian sacred literature—with the deity whose favour he invokes to obtain material blessings.

(iii) As translated by Mr. Sastri, the mantra can give no intelligible meaning; for the three complete statements therein contained have no connection with each other. For, the first sentence contains a command that every mortal should seek the friendship of the Divine Lord. The second sentence states a plain fact (*viz.*) every man wants power. The third sentence again propounds a rule that every man should seek to increase the Lord's glory: surely it is quite unnecessary for a man to seek to accomplish the impossible feat of gilding the refined gold of the ineffable glory of the Lord

in order to obtain a paltry concession of wordly power for himself. Thus the Mantra as interpreted by Mr. Sastri, has been proved to be lacking in interconnection and therefore unity of meaning (एकवाक्यता).

According to the Mimamsakas, वाक्यभेद (or the splitting of the sentence to include two different topics in the same Vakya or context) is a fault to be always avoided संभक्त्येकवाक्यत्वे वाक्यभेदश्चेत्येते (Kumarila Bhatta's *Sloka vartika* page 185). "When it is possible to maintain unity of meaning, it is not proper to introduce two different topics." For the above reasons, we declare it to be abundantly proved that Mr. Sastri's interpretation of the mantra ought to be rejected as obviously beset with inherent self-contradictions and opposed to the established canons of commonsense Vedic exegesis.

We now give what we have shown to be the correct rendering of the mantra which is as follows :—"Every mortal should solicit the friendship of the deity (*Savita*). Every man wants wealth. He should seek (from the deity) wealth for purposes of nourishment." It is gratifying to us to be able to say that this rendering is also in perfect accordance with the interpretation of Sayanacharya, whose authority no scholar can lightly impugn. How, then, Mr. Sastri can profitably base his "fellowship" theory upon this simple mantra, passes our comprehension. Thus it will be seen that Mr. Sastri's new-fangled view of *Dharma* is entirely opposed to the true import of the sastras, as established by the above discussion.

(To be continued.)

THE INDIAN SELF-SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL COLONY.

The object is to form an industrial and educational organisation in which young men and boys will be trained to support themselves and pay for their training by their labour, and in which it is hoped that they will be able afterwards to remain, earning good remuneration and forming the nucleus of an industrial and agricultural organisation on the co-operative principle. After a year's training, however, they will be free to leave if they find that the experience they have gained opens up better prospects to them elsewhere.

The general plan is to employ the young men and boys under training about six hours a day on practical industrial work and to give them one and a half hour, mostly in the evening, of literary and theoretical instruction.

Training will be given at first in Electrical and Mechanical, Metal and Carpentering work for about fifteen pupils, Tanning about five, Weaving and Scientific Agriculture about ten.

The establishment is under the immediate charge of Captain J. W. Petavel, Organising Secretary of the Educational Colonies Association, and under a committee presided over by the Hon'ble Maharajah of Cossimbazar, who is the founder and patron of the establishment.

The committee will be pleased to hear from the guardians of young men who desire to join. They must be industrious and fit, physically and otherwise, for the work.

A limited number of suitable candidates are being received free of board and all charges from the beginning.

The regular charge for board is Rs. 8 per month but after three months all will be expected to earn their board by their labour. Those failing to do that will not be kept in the Institution unless there is some reason for their failure.

Pupils reside at Berhampore, Bengal, in a house lent by the Hon'ble the Maharaja for the purpose.

Applications to be addressed to

CAPTAIN PETAVEL,

Cossimbazar, E. B. S. R.

(Murshidabad Dist.) Bengal.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE RELIEF WORK.

For the last few months almost the whole of the Eastern Bengal has been in the throes of terrible famine, but lately the condition of the people in the famine-stricken areas of Tipperah and Noakhali districts has gone from bad to worse. The Ramakrishna Mission had already opened several centres of relief work in the different places there, but to meet the increased demand, three new centres have been opened as subcentres of Hajiganj, namely, Suchipara, Sahapur and Dhodda, all in the district of Tipperah. The distress in the Noakhali district has been very severe too, but for want of funds we have not yet been able to extend our relief to many villages which are crying piteously for it. The work of the Ramganj centre in this district, however, has gone up by leaps and bounds, as will be seen from the details of the whole work given below :—

Centre.	Number of Villages.	Total Number relieved.	Quantity of Rice Mds. Srs.	
Hajiganj (Tipperah) ...	45	607	31	14
Do. (next week) ...	45	711	37	0
Paikpara (Tipperah) ...	52	605	32	13
Do. (next week) ...	55	659	36	38
Suchipara (Tipperah) ...	27	315	17	20
Sahapur (Tipperah) ...	23	162	11	20
Dhodda (Tipperah) ...	12	130	7	0
Ramganj (Noakhali) ...	63	786	48	38½
Do. (next week) ...	86	1,223	68	29
Khalispura (Noakhali) ...	24	400	25	18½
Do. (next week) ...	23	309	24	30

It is our pleasure to note that the Collector of Noakhali has kindly allowed us the use of the Government Dak Bungalow of Ramganj for our quarters and the Divisional Commissioner, Mr. Lang, I.C.S., who paid a visit to the place was pleased with our work and made a personal donation of Rs. 20 to our famine-relief fund.

Our workers are daily sending us reports of distress, which would move the hardest hearts to pity. Want of space prevents us from giving here an elaborate account. It is one long chapter of misery, which no sun-shine relieves. Every house tells the same sad tale : no food, no clothing, no employment, so many mouths to feed ; disease due to insufficient and improper food, and the gloomiest prospect ! The task before us is so arduous that with our best efforts we can but partially alleviate the widespread sufferings, and to do this, we require prompt and energetic co-operation of the generous public. We appeal to all sympathising souls to do their utmost to feed and clothe these half-starved and half-naked Narayanas. Surely no gift is better utilised than the morsel of food that saves a life, and no one who is proud of his birth in this land of Dharma should stand aside at this hour of sore need.

Contributions however small, and cloths old and new will be thankfully received and acknowledged at either of the following addresses :—

Swami Brahmananda, President, the Ramakrishna Mission, Math, Belur P. O., Dt. Howrah, or the Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukerji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

Saradananda,
Secretary, The Ramakrishna Mission.

(Nachiketas said :))

“ All those are most transient, O Death. They wear out all sense-vigour of the mortal. Moreover all lives are short indeed. So keep thy horses, dance and song for thyself.”

[All lives are short indeed—Creation is change, so there is no object created that is eternal, although the duration of one object may be longer than that of the other. The span of man's life might be greater than that of many animals, the life of the gods might be longer than man's, even the life of Brahma that makes the cycle of manifest creation, the *Kalpa*, might be deemed as the longest ; but the countable years of these finite lives dwindle into insignificant moments, when they are compared with the infinity of Time, and much more so when viewed from the standpoint of that Absolute Life which transcends even Time. This Absolute Life is the Immortality, the *Amritattvam*, for which man consciously or unconsciously thirsts. So it is but natural for Nachiketas who wants to realise the reality of Being which is beyond death and all possibilities of mortal changes, to reject all finite life however grand, as transitory.]

न विन्नेन तर्पणीयो मनुष्यो लप्स्यामहे वित्तमद्राक्ष्म चेत्वा ।

जीविष्यामो यावदीशिष्यसि त्वं वरस्तु मे वरणीयः स एव ॥ २७ ॥

मनुष्यः man विन्नेन with wealth न not तर्पणीयः satisfied. (वयम् we) चेत् while त्वा thee अद्राक्ष्म have seen, वित्तं wealth लप्स्यामहे shall get. (तथा एव so also) यावत् so long त्वं thou ईशिष्यसि rulest जीविष्यामः (we) shall live. तु but सः that वरः boon एव alone मे my वरणीयः is to be chosen.

“ Man never gets satisfied with wealth ! (Moreover) when we have seen thee, we shall surely get wealth, and we shall live as long as thou rulest. But that boon alone is to be chosen by me.”

[When we have seen thee, etc.—Nachiketas means that when he has such a good fortune as to be graced by the sight of the god Yama, how can he suffer from want of wealth hereafter? Moreover he cannot die so long as Yama rules as he has been favoured with the knowledge of the fire-sacrifice by Yama himself. So he hints that it is redundant for him to ask for long life and

wealth. He is sure to get them under the circumstances, if he would so wish it.

That boon—i.e., the boon that he should be instructed about the existence of man after death.]

अजीर्यताममृतानामुपेत्य जीर्यन्मर्त्यः कथंस्थः प्रजानन् ।

अभिध्यायन्वर्णरतिप्रमोदानतिदीर्घं जीविते को रमेत ॥ २८ ॥

अजीर्यतां the imperishable अमृतानां the immortal ones उपेत्य having reached, (तेभ्यः उत्कृष्टतरं प्राप्तव्यं प्रयोजनं the more worthy objects to be received from them) प्रजानन् knowing, कथंस्थः existing on the earth down below जीर्यन् being perishable कः who मर्त्यः the mortal (अपि च moreover) वर्णरतिप्रमोदान् (वर्णः, रतिः, प्रमोदः) the enjoyment of dancing and singing, अभिध्यायन् having scrutinized अतिदीर्घं very long जीविते in living (i.e. life) रमेत exult.

Having reached the imperishable, immortal ones, what mortal, being perishable himself, and knowing (the more worthy boons to be received from them) can exult in living very long, after scrutinizing the enjoyments of dancing and singing?

[*Note*—This mantram and the preceding two clearly testify how deeply was Nachiketas convinced of the utter meanness of all sense pleasures, and the fleeting nature of life even though it might be extended more than the normal span of man's longevity. He thinks it is impossible for a sane man realising his own mortal nature, to ask for ephemeral worldly enjoyments from the immortal gods;—he should ask for nothing short of what would make him immortal. This eager hankering of his for the attainment of immortality truly speaks of his मुमुक्षुत्वं i. e., being desirous of his emancipation from the bondages of life.

Exult in living very long—Because, however long may be the duration, still it must come to an end through the same law by which it had its birth. There is no life eternal except in the Atman.

After scrutinizing, etc.—i. e., having realised that such sense-pleasures are mere sensations and short-lived, and as such, are utterly unable to save man from the clutches of decay and death.]

यस्मिन्निदं विचिकित्सन्ति मृत्यो यत्सांपराये महति ब्रूहि नस्तत् ।

योऽयं वरो गूढमनुप्रविष्टो नान्यं तस्मान्नचिकेता वृणीते ॥ २९ ॥

मृत्यो O Death ! यस्मिन् in which महति supreme सांपराये life after death यत् what इदं this विचिकित्सन्ति (they) doubt, नः to us तत् that ब्रूहि tell. यः that अयं this गूढं mysterious (incomprehensible) अनुप्रविष्टः has become (is) वरः boon (विद्यते there is), तस्मात् than that अन्यं other नचिकेताः Nachiketas न वृणीते shall not choose.

Tell me, O Death, that, that Supreme Life of Here-after, in which they have doubt. None shall Nachiketas choose other than that boon which is (so) mysterious.

[*Note*—As it has been said in the introduction, the real *Upanishad* or *Para Vidya* begins from the second chapter of this *Upanishad* whence begins Yama his sacred discourse on the Supreme Principle of Life.

Nachiketas wants to know about this Supreme Principle by his third boon. But the subject being highly transcendental, its right comprehension demands a highly trained, pure and developed mind. So it is generally believed that none can properly comprehend the *Atma Vidya*, unless he have the requisite qualifications i. e., the *Sadhana Chatustayam*, which are (1) इहामुत्रफलभोगविरागः, dispassion for all enjoyments of here and hereafter, (2) नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः, discrimination of the eternal from the transitory, (3) शमदमादिषट्संपत्तिः, the six ethical virtues, viz., tranquillity of the mind, restraint of the senses, renunciation of desires, endurance, placidity of mind and faith, (4) and lastly मुमुक्षुत्वं, desire for final liberation from the trammels of nature. Hence Yama first tests Nachiketas with so many temptations that he may prove his fitness to receive the *Para Vidya* he asks for. The *Sruti* has beautifully described by implications in mantrams 22, 26—29, that Nachiketas has all the above mentioned requisite qualifications of a true aspirant and thereby it has indirectly testified to the fact that none is capable of receiving properly this instruction of *Atma-Vidya* unless one be like Nachiketas. This *Upanishad Vidya* does not consist in mere metaphysical disquisition, but in the right intuitional perception of the Truth, and which will be impossible, unless the mind be perfectly purged of its least impurities in the form of desire (काम) and attachment (आसक्तिः) for the sense-enjoyment and sense-life. This the *Sruti* itself will tell later on in a more distinct and emphatic tone.]

KATHA—UPANISHAD.

CHAPTER II.

अन्यच्छ्रेयोऽन्यदुतैव प्रेयस्ते उभे नानार्थे पुरुषं सिनीतः ।
तयोः श्रेय आददानस्य साधुर्भवति ह्रीयतेऽर्थाच्च उ प्रेयो वृणीते ॥१॥

अन्यत् different श्रेयः the good (beneficial) उत्त and अन्यत् different प्रेयः indeed प्रेयः pleasant. ते they उभे both नानार्थे of different requisitions (सति being) पुरुषं man सिनीतः bind. तयोः of these two श्रेयः the good आददानस्य of him who accepts (follows), साधु good भवति becomes ; उ and (सः he) अर्थात् from the goal ह्रीयते falls away यः who प्रेयः the pleasant वृणीते chooses.

One thing is the good and (quite) different indeed is the pleasant ; having been of different requisitions, they both bind the Purusha. Good befalls him who follows the good, but loses he the goal, who chooses the pleasant.

[The Good—i. e., the supreme Truth, the knowledge of which brings salvation to man.

The Pleasant—the sense-pleasures.

Of different requisitions—i. e., each lead its votaries to a different goal.

They both bind the Purusha—The Purusha, the Atman, is perfect by himself. He never becomes the agent of any action. Yet through the illusion of ignorance he conceives himself limited and conditioned by wants, so by the same illusion again he feels himself as if acting for a certain end, be it for sense-pleasure or final emancipation. Hence from the standpoint of the absolute Atman, both the desires of sense-pleasure and emancipation are bondages, although the latter ultimately relieves him of his delusion. The Atman is ever free—he never was, nor is, nor will be bound, so any attempt on his part to set himself free is nothing but delusion and bondage, yet it is absolutely necessary for the ordinary deluded soul, as it negates itself finally dispelling the nescience of life.

The goal—The supreme bliss in the ultimate deliverance of the soul from bondages of life.]

The Vedanta Kesari

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that 'I am the Atman.'"

—Swami Vivekananda.

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE GREAT MASTER.

BY

Swami Saradananda.

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VI

The Pilgrimage to Gaya and the Birth of Gadadhar.

According to the Hindus, the beautiful Goddess of Fortune has an extremely variable mind, so that there is no knowing when she would turn her back towards one whom she has been favouring with her smiles, or when she would begin to bestow favours upon one, whom she has been neglecting hitherto. To the little family of Khudiram however, who had an especial share of her frowns for years successively, she did not appear very much in that light until at present, when their financial affairs were placed on a much better footing. For during the years that followed the pilgrimage of his father to Ramesvara, the earnings of Ramkumar increased steadily and the fame of his being a competent knower of the *Smritis* (codes and old usages) began to spread around. It seems moreover, that he had earned a little reputation by his knowledge of astrology at the time. For the story runs in the family how Ramkumar, who had inherited the devotion and the psychic temperament of his parents, was favoured with a vision

one day, of the Divine Mother, whom he worshipped daily, appearing before him and touching his tongue with power while he was in meditation; and from that moment he was enabled to see future events and tell people about them before they actually took place. It is said, that he foretold thus, the death of his wife, and said that she would meet her death as soon as she would become the mother of a child! And strangely enough, she died when at the age of thirty-six she gave birth to her only boy, Akshaya! Numerous other instances are cited by the family even to the present day, about Ramkumar's power of predicting future events; but we need not enter into their enumeration here. Sufficient for our purpose to know that he helped to increase the income of the family not only by his knowledge of the scriptural laws but also by making use of the power that he possessed of seeing future events. For it endowed him with a special aptitude in the eyes of the people to conduct services and ceremonials for propitiation of the gods in the interest of those that were in trouble or were seized by incurable maladies. Thus passed ten years one after another, and Khudiram finding himself free to devote his time and energy entirely to religion, made plans for a visit to the shrine of Gya in the year 1835 A. D.

Hridayaram, son of Hemangini, the favourite niece of Khudiram, related to us a strange event as the immediate cause of the undertaking of the pilgrimage. Katyayani, the eldest daughter of the family became obsessed, he said, by an evil spirit at the time. And when Khudiram had told it in the name of God, to depart elsewhere leaving his daughter free, it promised never to come near her again, but entreated him at the same time to liberate it in turn, from the dreadful state of bondage to which it had brought itself by its evil deeds in the past, by undertaking to offer prayers for its sake at the shrine at Gya. The fond father had mercy on the sad plight of the spirit and agreed readily to its proposal. Be that as it may, the story goes very little beyond supporting the fact that all the members of the little family of Khudiram, were possessed of finely sensitive nerves and had their psychic vein open in some form or other.

The pilgrimage to Gaya was undertaken by Khudiram at the age of sixty. Tall, slim and fair, and graceful of form, he was blessed besides with an iron constitution. He did not hesitate now to perform the journey to that distant place on foot, even at that advanced age, and started early in the year so that he might reach his destination by the beginning of March after a short visit to Benares. For as a genuine Hindu, he believed firmly on

the injunction of the scriptures that offerings and prayers made at the shrine of Gaya during the 'sweet' * month of Chaitra (March), bring infinite blessings to the departed spirits of one's ancestors.

It is impossible to realise in these days of hurry and bustle, the joy that used to thrill the pilgrim's soul in India, in old times. The mild climate of the country, the beautiful scenery that caught his eyes at every step, the life in the open air face to face with nature and with all ideas of responsibility that troubled and worried him at home, dropped for the time—all combined to bring home to his mind a sense of freedom which he had not tasted since his days of childhood. The shackles of artificiality which grow round one as one advances in years, would drop off one's soul on such an occasion, and the spirit asserting itself over matter would make one think deeply on the whence, why and wherefore of all human affairs. Again, the uncertainty of getting much of the creature comforts on the way, and the dangers that beset the roads, brought in the idea of man's helplessness and the wisdom of dependence on the Lord, to the pious mind, which it seldom experienced in the safe surroundings of its daily life amongst friends and relations. Thus a deep sense of calm and repose used to pervade the mind of the pilgrim, as he wended his way slowly, day after day, to realise the fulfilment of the long cherished desire of his heart. And thus rivers and rocks, shrines and images of a long-standing antiquity, nay the very stones and the dust of the places of pilgrimage, were used to be idealised, worshipped and surrounded with a bright halo by the mind of the faithful devotee.

Such must have been the experiences of Khudiram as he approached the portals of the old city of Gaya, the place which had a tradition and fame for sanctity of its own dating from even the pre-Buddhistic era. For did not the mighty Buddha prefer the hilly tract of Gaya-sirsha for his meditations and austerities to all other sacred places? And does not the meaning of that name itself, 'the head of Gaya,' point unmistakably to the existence of a long-standing tradition before his time?

About a month passed for Khudiram in offering prayers and observing customary ceremonials in the minor shrines in the hills and plains around, before the priest directed him to do the same in the central temple of the place, containing the hallowed relics of the foot-print of the Lord. It is natural that he should find himself

* The Chaitra or the last month of the Hindu year, has been designated in old Sanskrit literature as the month of 'Madhu' or sweetness, the literal meaning of the word being 'honey.' It might have been so named on account of its being the last month of the spring-tide.

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overcome with emotions at the very sight of the holy relics, aye, he could almost see with eyes open what he was directed to meditate, about the vast conclave of the spirits of the departed, and amongst them his own ancestors, standing in worshipful reverence around the throne of the mighty Saviour of souls, Who had taken upon Himself the task of saving mankind from going for ever into evil ways, and in His great mercy had left His foot-print and the privilege of worshipping the same for poor, self-forgetful mortals. Then after worshipping that effulgent Being, when he began to do the same to the members of the assembly in whose line he had taken his birth and presented them with his humble offerings, he felt himself instilled with the peace that 'passeth all understanding' in the joy of reunion in the Lord, the essence of infinite love, with those who had passed out of his daily life long ago.

The ceremony ended, and after prostrating himself before the sacred relics with tears of devotion in his eyes he came away to his humble lodgings to pass the rest of the day. But his mind dwelt with fondness again and again on the bright vision that had come to him within the holy precincts of the shrine. And at night when he laid himself to rest, the self-same vision came to him in sleep, a hundred times brighter and more vivid than what it had been during the day. And amidst the hushed silence of devotion in the great conclave of the departed he heard a voice calling him by his name with infinite tenderness and compassion. He looked forward in wonder to find what it meant, when lo, he found that the great Saviour, the effulgent Being, who formed the central figure of the assemblage was Himself addressing him! With trepidation and awe, and all his faculties concentrated, Khudiram now heard the inspiring and hopeful words—"I take my birth again and again to save the human kind; I find for them new ways to Dharma (the goal to be attained through religion) to bring them to perfect enlightenment; the time has come for me to be born again soon, to fulfil that purpose and I shall honour your humble devotion and love for me by appearing as your child!"

Khudiram, entirely taken aback at this wonderful proclamation, felt elated nevertheless, at the great honour that was thus accorded him. But remembering his poor circumstances and his unworthy self, the very next moment, he began to plead with a heavy heart to decline the privilege. For he was then overcome with the idea that it was not his power to serve the Divine-child in the way that it should be done! And while he was in the midst of his pleadings the dream vanished and he awoke with a sudden start.

The strange dream created such a deep impression in the mind of Khudiram that he could not understand for some minutes after awakening, whether he was in this world or in that of the departed. Then, when he became perfectly conscious of the real situation, he went on thinking deeply within himself to find out the answer to the question, was it really the phantasy of the overburdened brain that had haunted him thus ere long, or something higher that came through the mercy of the Deity? For the belief prevailed among the religiously inclined of his countrymen that dreams relating to God or the great Saviours, which left such strong impression on the mind, were to be regarded as visions obtained from higher planes of consciousness, and going to be realised in the near future. Khudiram decided in the end to keep quiet about the affairs and to wait and watch carefully the turn of events in his future life.

NYAYA PHILOSOPHY.

By

Professor N. Ramanujacharya, M. A.

(Continued from page 74.)

Let us now proceed to a brief enquiry into the views of the Naiyayika on some fundamental problems of epistemology, cosmology, ontology and finally logic, which, as I have already stated, is the essential topic of the system. Consistently with his method, Gautama at the outset proceeds to an enumeration of the sources of right knowledge. As against other opposed schools he maintains that there are only four sources of knowledge, perception, inference, resemblance and verbal testimony. The Charvakas admit only one source of knowledge—perception. The Vaiseshikas and Buddhists admit two, perception and inference. The Sankhyas and the school of Ramanuja admit three,—perception, inference and verbal testimony.

The Naiyayikas, we have already seen, admit four; the Prabhakaras admit besides these a fifth called *Arthapatti* (presumption); Bhattas and Advaitins add a sixth—*Abhava* or non-existence. Pauranikas recognise two more, *Sambhava* (probability) and *Aithihya* (tradition.) But we should remember that the question, 'how many sources of knowledge have we' is not, from the philosophical point of view, so important as the question of the nature and validity of

knowledge in general. The views of both the Naiyayika and the Vaiseshika so far as their epistemological views are concerned are purely realistic. The validity of human cognition is accepted without question both by Gautama and Kanada. For both of them there is nothing that stands between the cognising subject and the object cognised. There is no veil, so to speak, thrown over reality before it is apprehended by our consciousness as Sankara and the Buddhists hold. The realistic view is a necessary consequence of the Naiyayika theory of external perception—that the contact of sense with its appropriate object leads to a direct presentation of that object to consciousness. The essential nature of cognition is such that it is able to directly reveal to the mind the reality under certain nominal conditions, which conditions we can investigate and discover. It is not thereby meant that there is no such thing as error at all in our cognitions. What is meant is that error is not natural to consciousness. It is only adventitious. It is due to the produced are wanting and in consequence the deliverances of consciousness sometimes happen to be erroneous. On that account we are not justified in rejecting the testimony of consciousness altogether. Moreover whenever we attempt to discover the source of error and to explain its cause, have we anything else to rely upon than the testimony of this consciousness? Even the attempt made by the opponents of this view to establish the natural invalidity of cognition in general by process of reasoning necessarily involves the assumption of the validity of the testimony of consciousness. Gautama's view on this subject is fairly representative of all forms of realism, both ancient and modern. If this view is not accepted, if we attempt to cast even the least doubt on the power of our cognitive activity to directly reveal reality, we do so at the risk of falling into intellectual scepticism or nihilism. Sankara starts with the fundamental assumption that *Adhyasa* or illusion lies at the root of all cognitive experience; and we are never face to face with the reality. The Buddhist also believes that the human mind can be directly cognisant of only phenomenal reality and as such our knowledge is, at no time, in touch with noumenon, if any such higher reality exist at all. This leads the Buddhist naturally to the denial of the possibility of the existence of any reality beyond the phenomenal world of our experience. The Buddhist theory of cognition is based on the analogy of hallucination, that is, the appearance to consciousness of nothing as something which he says is a fact of experience. On the other hand, Sankara denies the possibility of hallucination in our experience and attempts to base his theory of cognition on the analogy of illusion, that is, something appearing

to consciousness as something else. Consequently while the Buddhist philosopher believes that the universe of our perceptive experience is a vast hallucination without any permanent reality underlying it, Sankara contends that there must be behind the illusory appearance of the universe, an ultimate reality—an *Adhishtana*, that is, a permanent substratum as in the case of the ordinary illusion of perceptions. Thus while Sankara's view of cognition leads him to the acceptance of an unknown and unknowable noumenon behind the phenomenon, the Buddhist gives him a flat denial and says "no evidence." It must be remembered here that the terms 'absolute' and 'relative,' 'noumenon' and 'phenomenon' are significant only if we accept the theory of cognition of Sankara or of the Buddhist. They have no meaning in a realistic system unless they are used to signify, 'the so-far-known' and 'the yet-to-be-known.' A something absolutely unknown and unknowable lurking behind the object of cognition does not exist for the realist. The realist thinks that the assumption of such an unknown and unknowable substratum is unnecessary and illogical and that it does not serve any useful purpose in philosophical speculation. The absolute is but another name for nescience—*Tuchha*, as it is called in Sanskrit. It is at best an abstraction. Ramanuja who defends the realistic view begins his criticism of the Advaita in his *Sri Bhashya* with a brilliant discussion on the problem of the Absolute or *Nirvisesha Brahman* of Sankara and arrives at the conclusion that there can be no proof for its existence inasmuch as everyone of the *pramanas* has to do only with something qualified. It is unnecessary to carry the discussion on the subject further. Suffice it to say that excepting Sankara and the Buddhist schools all other Indian systems are more or less realistic.

With regard to their cosmological views, both the Naiyayika and the Vaiseshika appear to hold that the ultimate reality is not a unity but a real manifold,—a manifold both in its physical and metaphysical aspects. The atoms of the four elements, viz., fire, air, water and earth together with ether, time and space constitute the original stuff, out of which the physical world has evolved. Spiritually both the schools accept the existence of plurality of individual souls, distinct from one another, eternal and substantially independent of God. Iswara is conceived as the efficient cause of the universe and not as its material cause as the Vedantins do. The creation and dissolution of the universe are supposed to have their ultimate source in divine volition—a power external to and independent of the original world, the materials out of which the present world is produced. Thus while the Vedanta is both physically and

spiritually monistic, and the Sankhya physically monistic but spiritually pluralistic, the logical schools of Nyaya and Vaisesika are pluralistic both physically and spiritually. In its ontological aspect, the Nyaya system is professedly a system of pure theism. It believes in the existence of a personal God all-pervading, infinite, eternal and distinct from and independent of the *jivas*. The *jiva* is supposed to be spiritual, intelligent and all-pervading; and on account of its all-pervading nature it is supposed that there can be no limitation to the knowledge which it can attain. There is naturally nothing which is and can be beyond the pale of human knowledge though in this state of embodied existence, the cognitive power of the *jiva* is limited by karma. The spiritual intuition is regarded as a natural attribute of the *jiva* which, if cultivated by the methods of the Yoga sastra, will enable the *jiva* to rise to a state of omniscience and perfection. Like all other systems of the Hindu orthodox philosophy both the Naiyayika and the Vaisesika lay stress on the importance of Yoga practice for the attainment of spiritual intuition and ultimate salvation. That the human mind by the potency of Yoga, can become perfect and omniscient is a belief common to all forms of Hindu philosophy and religion. Lastly with regard to the logical aspect of the Nyaya system—I have already told you that the essential topics of the logical schools are investigation of the sources of right knowledge and analysis of the reason in process. It will, of course, be conceded by all that Gautama was the father of Indian logical science. That honour is undoubtedly his. It was Gautama who laid the foundation for Hindu logic and made the first attempt to present to the world a systematic treatise on the subject. It was the followers of the logical schools—Vat-syayana, Udyotakara, Vachaspati Misra, Udayana of the ancient times, and Gangesaupadhyaya, Jagadeesa, Gadadhara and others of the modern time that have made the most valuable contributions to the logical literature in Sanskrit. It is unnecessary for us to go into the various interesting features of the Hindu logical science, nor will it be possible for me to give you even a fairly intelligible view of this system within the time at my disposal. I shall, therefore, be content with pointing out to you one or two interesting features in the Hindu logician's theory of inference. He agrees with the modern logicians that *Vyaptijnana*—knowledge of invariable concomitance, which corresponds to what we call in modern logic, generic judgment, lies at the root of all deductive reasoning and is generic judgment. *Vyaptijnana* is the vital principle of inference, makes it possible. *Vyaptijnana* is the vital principle of inference, makes it possible. *Vyaptijnana* is the vital principle of inference, makes it possible. The mental process by which the human mind arrives at *Vyaptijnana* from individual facts of experience is what we call 'induction' in modern logic. In Indian logic

there is no unnatural separation between inductive logic and deductive logic. The Hindu logician holds that *anumana*—inference—is a source of true knowledge and that even in deduction there is real addition to our knowledge. In inductive inference we are able to get only a knowledge of the invariable concomitance of two things or two attributes from experience. That is only a formal universal (*samanvajan*). But real addition to our positive knowledge (*vishepajan*) is got only by the application of this *Vyaptijnana* to other unobserved instances in the universe of experience. The two processes, inductive and deductive, are not distinct nor are they different aspects of one and the same process in the view of the Hindu logician. He views the process of inference as a continuous one involving both induction and deduction. The stage at which *Vyaptijnana* is produced is induction and the later stage of its application to extend our knowledge in the world of experience, whenever it may take place, is deduction.

Again, the Hindu logician divides inference into two kinds, viz, (1) inference for self (*Swartha*), and (2) inference for the sake of others (*Parartha*). The former is a real inference—the actual psychological process of arriving at inferential knowledge through *Vyaptijnana*, as it takes place in the individual mind. The analysis of the Hindu logician of this process is quite sound and unobjectionable from a psychological point of view. He tells us that the mind starts from the individual facts of perceptive experience in observation and proceeds through comparison of positive and negative instances to the discovery of *Vyapti*—invariable connection between two things or attributes. This *Vyapti* is what we call in modern logic a universal judgment or a law of nature. It is at this stage that what we call in modern logic 'induction stops and deduction begins.' But for the Hindu logician the two processes are continuous though the deductive process may take place long after the knowledge of *Vyapti* is obtained.

Inference for the sake of others is what we call syllogistic reasoning in modern logic. Its obvious aim is to set forth an inference in the form of an argument to convince others and to bring home to their minds the truth of that inference. The Indian logical schools maintain that for a complete and satisfactory syllogistic demonstration of a proposition, the arguments must consist of five members—*Pratigna*, *Hetu*, *Udaharana*, *Upanaya*, and *Nigamana*. This analysis of syllogistic argument into five parts is sometimes criticised by those who have not understood the standpoint of the Hindu logicians. The Mimamsakas maintain that three members—the first three or the last three—are quite enough for a complete

argument. The Buddhist holds that the first two members are quite enough and the rest are superfluous. But the Hindu logician looks at the syllogistic argument from the point of view of a person who attempts to establish the truth of a proposition for the sake of producing conviction in the mind of some other. In the first place there can be no beginning for a syllogistic argument unless the two persons are aware beforehand what that proposition is which one of them means to establish by reasoning. This makes *Pratigna*—the statement of the proposition to be proved—the first member of the Indian syllogism, essential. Then there arises the necessity for the statement of the universal proposition under which this proposition to be proved must be subsumed. This makes the second member of the syllogism necessary. Further to avoid the possibility of the universal proposition being a mere guess without any foundation in fact, it is necessary that, at least, one instance from experience must accompany it to ensure its possibility, which makes the third member—*Udaharana* indispensable. The fourth member is essential to every syllogism as it indicates the characteristic by means of which it is brought under the universal proposition. And lastly the original proposition is restated so as to convince the other party that the proposition has been established, beyond any possibility of doubt, by a rigorous process of reasoning. Of course in purely formal logic argument, the necessity of the example and the restatement of the original proposition may be dispensed with. But the Hindu logician tells us that such formal arguments could serve no useful purpose in the growth of knowledge and must be avoided as much as possible. An analysis of the Euclidian method of proof will show that all these five members are found in everyone of the propositions which Euclid establishes by the direct method of demonstration. So, then, we see that from the point of view of the Hindu logician, five members are indispensable for a complete demonstration; but he does not deny that in practical life or even in a scientific treatment of the syllogistic process three members may be quite sufficient, but he will regard such arguments as enthymematic, in other words, as abridged forms of reasoning.

There are other interesting details of Indian logical science but it is not possible here to enter into them; let me therefore conclude with a few remarks on the position of the Nyaya philosophy from the point of view of the orthodox Hindu. Of the three leading systems, the Nyaya, the Sankhya and the Vedanta, it seems to me, that the Vedanta alone represents the real teachings of the Vedic Rishis. It is the only system

which can lay claim to complete orthodoxy. The Nyaya and the Sankhya, so long as they accept the authority of the Indian scriptures, cannot contradict the teachings of the Vedanta. Of course the points of view they have adopted, as I have already shown, constitute their limitations. In consequence, their conclusions should not be regarded as ultimate and final like the conclusions of the Vedanta. The atomic theory for example obviously contradicts the teachings of the Upanishads and other Hindu scriptures. The spirit of the whole Hindu religion is decisively against the atomic theory of the logical schools. It is erroneous to suppose that either Gautama or Kanada, having accepted the authority of revelation, could have so directly and flagrantly contradicted the teachings of the Upanishads. But a reconciliation is possible. According to the Hindu cosmogony there are two forms of creations and two dissolutions called the primary and the secondary. In the primary creation it is believed that the world-stuff consisting of the atom, the original elements, is evolved out of Brahman. This world-stuff is supposed to continue to exist without destruction throughout a *Mahakalpa*. In every secondary creation which occurs after each *pralaya*, the original materials created in the beginning of the Mahakalpa remain intact. If we suppose that the analysis of the cosmos given by Gautama and Kanada applies only to the beginning of the secondary creation and not to the primary, then there can be no contradiction with the teaching of the Vedanta on this subject. Such reconciliations are possible with regard to all their other teachings wherever they appear to contradict the Vedanta. If the teachings of the logical schools are carried to the logical consequences, it will thus be seen that they find their culmination in the system of Badarayana Vyasa well known to all of us as the Vedanta. The Vedanta alone represents in its entirety, the full spirit of the teachings of the ancient Rishis and it is no wonder that it took a firm hold upon the Hindu mind even at its very beginning and has continued to exercise its wholesome influence upon the life and thought of the people of this country for so many centuries.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MAHARSHI DEVENDRA NATH TAGORE.

BY

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore was not merely one of the leaders of a great religious movement; he was a great spiritual personage and had a personality of wonderful attractiveness. He had the defects of his qualities, and some of his tenets err by overstatement and narrowness of mental vision. Some of his views are also out of harmony with the most vital doctrines of Hinduism; and his own church was distracted by various schisms and dissensions. But this record of his inner growth is of entrancing charm, and shows the development of a great personality and is a precious human document, and deserves our deep and reverent study.

Evelyn Underhill has contributed a most admirable and appreciative introduction to the work. She says: "In the life of Maharshi Devendra Nath Tagore such readers will find a new document of absorbing interest: one more amongst the small number of authentic histories of the soul." Indeed the experiences of the great mystics of the world have been similar. As Evelyn Underhill says: "When the Love of God is reached, divergencies become impossible; for the soul has passed beyond the sphere of the manifold, and is immersed in the One Reality." She points out further: "Here, too, we find, I think, the synthesis which is perhaps the highest achievement of the mystical consciousness: the fusion in one living whole, one wide, deep, and ardent intuition, of the personal and metaphysical, transcendent and immanent aspects under which the Deity is apprehended by human consciousness." Further, he could not rest till he communicated to the world the vision and the rapture that came to him.

The following lines from Walt Whitman about Columbus are very appositely quoted by Evelyn Underhill:

"Thou knowest my years entire, my life,
My long and crowded life of active work, not adoration merely,
Thou knowest the prayers and vigils of my youth,
Thou knowest my manhood's solemn and visionary meditations,
Thou knowest how before I commenced I devoted all to come to Thee,
Thou knowest I have in age ratified all those vows and strictly kept them,
Thou knowest I have not once lost faith nor ecstasy in Thee
Accepting all from Thee, as duty come from Thee."

The autobiography has been translated by the Maharshi's son Satyendra Nath Tagore helped by his daughter Indira Devi. The

history of Brahmoism is well-known; and Satyendra Nath Tagore has prefixed to the translation a sketch of Brahmoism and a brief life of the Maharshi. Devendra Nath Tagore was born in 1817. He was the son of the famous prince Dwarka Nath Tagore. He had a strong spiritual awakening early in life and started the Tatwabodhini Sabha in 1839 where he sought to preach a pure theism founded on the Upanishads. After some years the Tatwabodhini Sabha was incorporated into the Brahmo Samaj which had been founded in 1828 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Devendra Nath Tagore and nineteen others were the first to sign the Brahmic covenant. In 1844 he established a Tatwabodhini Patashala for the teaching of Vedanta and the training of young men to preach the Brahmo religion. In 1845 he laid down that Reason and Conscience, and not the Vedas, were the supreme authority. He then prepared the *Brahma Dharma Grantha*, "a valuable theistic manual of religion and morals." In 1846 Dwarka Nath Tagore died in England. The Maharshi refused to follow the customary Shradha rites as idolatrous and performed the Shradha "according to a form which he had himself prepared for the occasion, in which had been retained all the prescribed Vedic texts."

His friends and relatives thereupon forsook him. His father died deeply involved in debt. Devendra Nath placed all his properties—including properties covered by a deed of trust for the benefit of the family executed by his father—at the disposal of the creditors. These eventually allowed the family itself to manage the properties and pay off the debts. He went to the Himalayas in 1856 and spent a year and a half in the mountains. He met Keshab Chandra Sen in 1859 and the latter became a Brahmo. But the latter finally broke away from the Adi Brahmo Samaj, and founded the "Brahmo Samaj of India" in 1868. The Maharshi's mind was rooted in the ancient Indian scriptures, and he was not prepared to adopt measures calculated to subvert the social fabric of Hinduism. But Keshab Chandra Sen quoted from all scriptures as authorities making an amalgam of them, and introduced social reforms subversive of the social fabric of Hinduism. He in his turn was discarded by his followers when he married his daughter to the Maharaja of Cooch-Bihar. They said that the marriage was done before the proper age and that idolatrous rites were allowed at it. They then founded the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj which was based on democratic and advanced principles. This was in 1878. In 1881 Keshab proclaimed his New Dispensation, which, "besides a number of rites and ceremonies adopted from our own and other systems of religion, emphasises the fundamental unity of religions." It is well-known that this change in him came into existence after his mind was mellowed and sweetened by the influence and magnetic fascination of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's personality. The Maharshi in his later life lived practically in retirement and meditation at Shanti Niketan (the abode of peace) at Bolpur. He died on the 19th January 1905.

One of the most pleasing things in this autobiography is the Maharshi's deep reverence and love for his grandmother. It was on the night before her death that he had his first great spiritual experience. He describes it thus—

They were singing the Holy Name to Didima : " Will such a day ever come that while uttering the name of Hari life will leave me ? " The sounds reached my ears faintly, borne on the night wind; at this opportune moment a strange sense of the unreality of all things suddenly entered my mind. I was as if no longer the same man. A strong aversion to wealth arose within me. The coarse bamboo-mat on which I sat seemed to be my fitting seat, carpets and costly spreadings seemed hateful, in my mind was awakened a joy unfelt before. I was then eighteen years old.

How was this to be accounted for ? He says :

The fair winds of luxury and pleasure were blowing all around me day and night. Yet in spite of all these adverse circumstances, God in His mercy gave me the spirit of renunciation, and took away from me my attachment to the world. And then He who is the source of all joy gave me new life by pouring streams of joy into my mind. This mercy of His is beyond compare. He alone is my Gurm. He alone is my Father.

He tried to recall this experience later on, but did not succeed. He now sought to reach the Truth by the light of Knowledge. He realised how the subject is different from the object—the knower from the known ; how there was wisdom operating throughout the world ; and how this Divine Mind had no form. He began to hate idolatry. In his nature the strain of asceticism was not combined with a high degree of insight and imagination. Hence it was that he was never able to realise the significance and beauty of what is blindly called idolatry or image-worship in Hinduism. No other religion lays so much stress upon the impossibility of expressing the Infinite in terms of the Finite. No other religion has at the same time sought to bridge the gulf between man and God by fitting man for divine communion through image-worship, and by describing God's incarnation in human form through love, as Hinduism has done.

पाषाणलोहमणिमृत्तमयविग्रहेषु पूजा पुनर्जननभोगकरी मुमुक्षोः ।

तस्माद्यतिः स्वहृदयार्चनमेव कुर्यात् बाह्यार्चनं परिहरेदुपनर्भवाय ॥

(Maitreyi Upanishad).

The Maharshi revolted not merely against image-worship but also against Sankara's philosophy of the impersonal and the absolute and of the human soul and the universal soul being one. But he had not the necessary preliminary training to understand fully the grand synthesis of Hindu thought known as Sankara's philosophy. Sankara never rejected the personal aspect of Deity or denied the legitimate place of love and aspiration for God's grace in spiritual evolution. The Maharshi was however a devoted theist and hated idolatry and the doctrine of incarnation. His deep desire for divine communion and his sincerity and loyalty to his ideals compel our respectful

admirations and win our love. He at first sought to base his faith on the Upanishads, but eventually resolved to lay down that reason and conscience were the really infallible guides and were to be regarded as the supreme authority.

Our countrymen may well ponder over the Maharshi's words about the *Gayatri Mantra*. It is now-a-days a fashion to darken sanctities with flippant and foolish thought, and it is a pity that our community is slowly losing its hold on the source of light and life—the *Gayatri Mantra*. He says:

" I continued to worship Him daily by means of the *Gayatri*, before touching any food, with mind alert and collected so as to fulfil completely the injunctions of the *Brahma Dharma*. The deep significance of the *Gayatri* began to be disclosed to my mind day by day. Gradually the spirit of Him who sends us permeated my whole heart.....what profit beyond all expectation had I not gained by adopting the *Gayatri Mantra* ! "

The Maharshi sought God through the gate of knowledge but attained Him through the gate of love. He says:

" I was satisfied with getting so much but He was not content with giving so little.....Now at the rising of the sun of love, life was infused into my heart, I was awakened from my deep slumber, the gloom of sadness was dispelled. Having found God, the current of my life flowed on swiftly, I gained fresh strength. The tide of my good fortune set in, I became a pilgrim on the path of love. I came to know that He was the life of my life, the Friend of my heart, that I could not pass a single moment without Him." (Page 97).

Again he says :

" Hitherto the severe and sacred flame of knowledge alone had been lighted in *Brahma's* shrine, now He was worshipped with the flowers of heart-felt love" (Page 179).

Another admirable feature in the Maharshi's life is his intense patriotism. It was through his enterprise that the tide of Christian conversion was stemmed in Bengal. He started a Hindu educational institution called *Hindu Hitharihi* (the well wisher of the Hindus). He yearned for unity and vigorous national life in India. He says, " If I could preach the *Brahma Dharma* as based upon the *Vedanta*, then all India would have one religion, all dissensions would come to an end, all would be united in a common brotherhood, her valour and power would be revived, and finally she would regain her freedom." (Page 102).

The Maharshi took some trouble to acquaint himself with the *Karma Kandas* of the *Vedas* before he finally resolved to break away from the same. His genuine search for truth and sincerity of soul shine all the better when we realise how many a Hindu—" educated " as he proudly calls himself—has, and expresses, the supremest contempt for the *Karma Kanda* without having read or learnt a single line of it. The following description of *Agni* at page 185 of the *Autobiography*

shows how well he understood the teachings of the Karma-kanda, though according to many a sapient social reformer who talks learnedly about the Vedas without having read a line of them, marriage is not a sacrament in the case of Sudras. "From the birth ceremony up to the funeral and Shradha ceremonies, on all occasions there must be Agni. He is the witness of marriage. The Sudra has no right to the Vedas, yet he must have Agni as a witness to marriage, to whom he has to offer ghee without repeating any Mantras."

The Maharshi carefully studied the Upanishads also before, owing to his peculiar mental composition, he finally resolved to preach and establish Brahmoism. He says in regard to them:

This stream of truth, flowing onwards, flooded and purified and ennobled the lives of the Rishis of the Upanishads. Their lives were built up out of these truths. Through these they tasted of immortality, and advanced on the path of salvation. It was owing to the influence of these truths that they exclaimed out of the fulness of their hearts: "I have come to know that sublime and shining Being beyond the confines of darkness. The worshipper overcomes death by knowing Him alone; besides there is no other way of attaining salvation." I learnt that this was the supreme knowledge, and it had for its knowledge the Absolute Brahma *Ekamevadvityam*." (Pages. 138-9.)

Though the Maharshi discarded the blessed doctrines of incarnation and image-worship, and though he found but little comfort in the contemplation of the impersonal aspect of the Deity—immanent and transcendent, the universal soul, the one Reality—his conception of Godhead is lofty and inspiring. He says:

"Seekers after God must realise Brahma in these three places. They must see Him within, see Him without, and see Him in that abode of Brahma where He exists in Himself. When we see Him within our soul we say, 'Thou art the innermost soul of the soul; Thou art my father, Thou art my friend, Thou art my comrade.' When we see Him without us, we say, 'Thy royal throne is in the infinite sky.' When we see Him in Himself, see the supreme Truth in His own sanctuary then we say, 'Thou art in Thine own self, Supreme Goodness and Peace; One, without a second.'" (Page 150)

This stern Theism was at once the glory and the defect of the movement. He says: "But when in the Upanishads I came across 'I am He' and 'Thou art That,' then I became disappointed in that also. . . . Where should we seek a refuge for Brahmoism? . . . The pure unsophisticated heart was the seat of Brahmoism. We could accept those text only of the Upanishads which accorded with that heart. Those sayings which disagreed with the heart we could not accept." But neither he nor any one else has told us how a pure unsophisticated heart is to be recognised or how we are to choose between two hearts each advertising itself as pure and unsophisticated.

His conception of salvation also is necessarily different from that of Hinduism because of the difference of the fundamental postulates.

He conceives salvation to be an infinite progress towards higher and higher heavens. He says:

"Thus rising higher and higher he progresses from holy to holier spheres, from innumerable heavens to other heavens, and returns not to earth again. In heaven, there is no animality, no hunger, no thirst; there is no desire of women or wealth, neither lust nor anger nor greed. There is eternal life, eternal youth. Thus from one heaven to another, the tides of wisdom, love, virtue and goodness carry that divine soul onward towards everlasting progress, and from his heart the fount of joy perennially springs." (Page 163.)

That the movement while thus a protestant movement is yet in touch with the Hindu faith in some respects is clear from the essence of the Maharshi's compilation made in 1848 and known as *Brahma Dharma*. He says: "Thus by the grace of God, and through the language of the Upanishads, I evolved the foundation of the *Brahma Dharma* from my heart. Within three hours the book of *Brahma Dharma* was completed." He says again "I proceeded to read the Mahabharata, the Gita, the Manu Smriti, etc., and by collecting verses therefrom to swell the record of commandments."

It is not surprising that Maharshi did not realise fully the great truths that are popularly known as *Vivarttha Vada*, *Maya Vada*, and God being *Nimitta Karana* and *Upadana Karana* of the universe. These are easily misunderstood and ridiculed, and even more easily overstated and made unacceptable. Here again the tyranny of words has unfitted many to rebel against it and seek the gentle and loving sovereignty of ideas. The Maharshi himself says: "This universe is relative truth; its Creator is the Truth of Truth, the Absolute Truth." This is all that is meant by that unhappy and much-abused term, *Maya*. Sankara himself lays down that *Jnana* is *वस्तुतन्त्र* (*vastutanthra*) and that every act of cognition means that the object of cognition exists. The world exists as a phenomenal entity so long as the Jiva does not attain cosmic consciousness; when he does attain it and realises himself, it is lost in light. To some people the idea of the world proceeding out of God and His being immanent in it is repugnant, as they conceive of Him as dwelling in some far-away radiant region and creating the world by a divine decree. But out of what does he create? *Ex Nihilo Nihil Fit*. Creation could not have come out of nothing. Where then was this fine cosmic substance before creation? Where but in God? The idea of Individual Acts of creation out of nothing is irrational and unscientific and no one can accept it for a moment. As from the ocean rise a thousand rivers through vapour and then flow in a thousand ways vivifying and beautifying the earth and creating before our eyes the infinite play of colour and fragrance and softness—the glory of leaf and bud and bloom and fruit—and finally reach the ocean and get merged in it, even so does the world come out of God and is merged in Him.

I may refer here to some of the admirable and noteworthy traits in the Maharshi's nature. One was his deep love of natural beauty

and of art. The following description of the Taj by him speaks for itself :

" At Agra I saw the Taj. This Taj is the *taj* (crown) of the world. Ascending a minaret, I saw the sun setting in the western horizon, making it one mass of red. Beneath was the blue Jumna : The pure white Taj in the midst with its halo of beauty, seemed to have dropped on the earth from the moon" (Page 211).

The following description of a hill, a hill-stream, and a family living near the hill is equally beautiful :

" The mighty current of this stream (Nagari), dashing against the huge elephantine rocks contained in its bosom, becomes fierce and foaming, and with a thundering sound rolls on to meet the sea, by command of the Almighty. From both its banks two mountains rise up straight to a great height like immense walls and then incline backwards. The rays of the sun do not find room enough to remain here long..... only one man was living there with his family in one room, which was not a room but a cave in the rocks. Here they cooked, and here they slept. I saw his wife dancing joyfully with a baby on her back, and another child of hers running about laughing on a dangerous part of the hill, and his father sowing potatoes in a small field. God had provided everything necessary for their happiness here. Kings sitting on their thrones rarely found such peace and happiness as his." (Pages 244-5).

I shall quote one more wonderful description, viz., that of a forest fire :

"In the evening I was walking alone on the banks of this river, charmed with its beauty when I looked up suddenly and found the hill lighted up with flames. As the evening wore on and night advanced the fires also began to spread. Like arrows of fire, a hundred thousand sparks fell swift as stars and attacked the trees below, down to the banks of the river. *By degrees every tree cast off its own form, and assumed the form of fire, and blind darkness fled afar from that spot.* As I looked upon this wonderful form of fire, I felt the glory of that Divinity who dwells in fire. Before this, in many a wood, I had seen charred trees that bore witness to forest-fires, and in the night I had seen the beauty of fires burning on distant hills ; but here I was delighted to see for myself the origin, spread, growth and arrest of a forest-fire. It went on burning all night. Whenever I woke up during the night, I saw its light. When I got up in the morning, I saw many charred trees still smoking, and here and there the all devouring ravenous fire burning in a dim and exhausted manner, *like the lamps remaining in the morning after a festive night.*"

How well it recalls to mind a passage of supreme beauty and spiritual wisdom in the Kathopanishad.

अग्निर्वैश्वानरो भुवनं प्रविष्टः रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव ।

एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बहिः ।

Another trait in the Maharshi that we should remember and admire is his shrewd appreciation of character. The deficiencies and defects of human nature and its innumerable contradictions were well-known to him. He pitilessly exposes the *pandas* who fatten on the pilgrims in Northern India. He describes how in Burma the men are very obedient to the women. Again he says, " The Burmese eat crocodiles. The Buddhist doctrine of *Ahimsa* (non-killing) is on their lips ; but crocodiles are inside their stomachs." (Page 186).

He deplores the lack of true piety in men. He says :

" Then again, Akshay Kumar Datta started a Friends' Society, in which the nature of God was decided upon by show of hands. For instance, somebody said, " Is God the personification of bliss or not ? Those who believed in His blissfulness held up their hands. Thus the truth or otherwise of God's attributes was decided by a majority of votes ! Amongst many of those who surrounded me, who were as my very limbs, I could no longer see any signs of religious feeling or piety ; each only pitted his own intellect and power against the others. No-where did I obtain a sympathetic response. My antipathy and indifference to the world grew apace." (Page 208-4).

It is this combination of artistic feeling for beauty, his knowledge of the difficulties of life and the defects of men, his deep piety, and his mysticism that make him a figure of such unique attractiveness. It is well-known that the mystical sense "presents its intuitions to the surface mind in a pictorial, musical, or allegorical form" in the words of Evelyn Underhill. I shall quote only one instance of this here.

" With thrilling heart I saw the eyes of God within that forest. His sleepless gaze was fixed upon me. These eyes were my guide in this difficult path..... This gaze of His has become rooted indelibly in my heart. Whenever I fall into trouble, I see those eyes of His." (Page 280.)

We must remember also how he though devoted to God and though passionately fond of a life of seclusion and renunciation, felt a call to come into the world and give it his message and work for its uplift. How he felt this call may be well said in his own words—beautiful words with which I may well close this review of the self-revelation of a great soul, great in its love of God and Man, great in its renunciation and spiritual striving, great in its sincerity and steadfastness and purity of purpose, great in its service to humanity.

" Oh! how pure and white is the river here. How naturally clear and cool its waters. Why then does it dash downwards in order to deprive itself of this purity? The lower it goes, the more will it become defiled and tainted by the dirt and refuse of the earth. Why then does it rush headlong in that very direction? By what power has it to keep still for its own sake? By command of that All-ruling one, though it be stained with the dirt of the earth, still it has to humble its pride and take a downward course, in order to fertilise the land, and make it yield again. I was musing thus, when suddenly I heard the solemn commandment of the Guide within me. ' Give up thy pride, and be lowly like this river. The truth thou hast gained, the devotion and trustfulness thou hast learnt here ; go, make them known to the world.' " (Pages 261-2).

THE ECHOES OF THE TEACHINGS OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY

Dr. M. C. Nanjunda Rao.

(Continued from page 394 of Vol. I.)

Before mentioning a few of the incidents in the life of Sivaji which clearly illustrates the great Bhakthi and the highest reverence he had for his illustrious Guru, Sri Ramadas and the great influence exercised over Sivaji by the saint for the uplifting of the nation and the regeneration of the country, it would be interesting to know something about the mission for which Ramadas had incarnated and the message he gave to the nation at that period. We have already mentioned how the Mahratta saints of that age by their preachings and exhortations to the people did invaluable service in rousing the Mahratta minds from a state of religious torpor and directing them to an enthusiastic observance of the Hindu Religion and thus helped the awakening and development of the national spirit amongst them. But it was reserved to Sri Ramadas to take a more intimate and active part with the help of his illustrious disciple Sivaji to bring about that grand consummation of remodelling the Hindu life and institution which had been so sorely neglected for centuries. As a writer in the columns of the 'Mahratta' wrote some time ago, Ramadas was a forceful and commanding personality. The qualities which he brought to bear upon this work of national regeneration were of a high and varied character. To the detached outlook of a *Sadhu* he united the fervour of the pulpit, the farsightedness of the philosopher and the strong practical mind of a politician. He alone could compel admiration by his commanding personality and by the fervour of his preachings, and could even extort reluctant homage from the religious cynics. Others like Thukaram, Eknath, Namdev etc., have been equally great but they were entirely given to the teaching of devotional and ethical greatness. They generally shunned the society whereas Ramadas courted it. They could hardly be persuaded to get out of their religious trance, and move out of the religious groove. Ramadas though equally at home in superconscious meditation could yet find elasticity of mind to turn with undiminished vigour to the wants of the society and even to advocate a regular crusade against the Moslems who persecuted the "mild" Hindus with no sparing hand. He alone could rule its warring elements as easily as a wise father manages his children and with the ease and completeness which revealed the born leader of men. From the heights of spiritual meditation his restless capacious intellect could yet descend

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to the level of the society, could find recreation in attending to the burning national questions of the day and then with undiminished ease and elasticity soar back to the regions which years of unremitting penance had made accessible to him. It is only after intervals of many centuries that one comes across such personalities and no wonder that thousands and thousands of people flocked to his favourite residence near Satara to hear his message.

Those were the days of nationalism in Maharashtra. As we have already noticed, for once, patriotism and religious zeal were synonymous words and the proud national spirit of Saint Ramadas was deeply roused at the various signs of national degradation so much visible in the life and conduct of the people at that time. Even before the time of Ramadas earnest minds had begun to resent the disrespect which the Mahomedans had displayed for the culture and the civilisation of the country, and this resentment was not passive but thoroughly active in spirit, and no wonder that by the time the morning sun of national liberation in Maharashtra began to shed his first rays on the hills of Torna (Sivaji's first conquest was the fort of Torna), Saint Ramadas having completed his pilgrimage should have come down to Maharashtra with the object of setting up a strong religious organisation which would kindle the hearts of the people with greater fervour towards the National Faith.

Never, in India, since the days of Sri Sankaracharya, had the idea been conceived of establishing a strong organisation for the propagation of religion. The organisation of Ramadas differed however from that of the great Sankara in many respects. Sankara worked only with the learned. His aim was to create a band of erudite scholars who would be able to cope successfully with the Anti-Vedic sects and religions extant at the time, by the help of the new intellectual armour with which he furnished them. But the object of Saint Ramadas was not to convince or to puzzle the intellect but to capture the hearts of the people. He tried to work with the masses at large. His organisation sought to unite all the Hindus under one banner, it extended over the whole of the Indian Peninsula. Monasteries were established in hundreds and the work of awakening and arousing the masses in different parts of the country was entrusted to zealous intellectual and specially trained disciples. For once, practical knowledge of the world was not despised and we find in *Dasabodh*—one of the chief religious treatise of the great organisation—even minute instructions laid down on all matters of state and religion for the guidance of his disciples.

The aim of his organisation as has already been said, was to bring the Hindus under one banner, *viz.*, Love of God. Minute sectarian differences were to be overlooked and attention was to be concentrated upon the principles common to all forms of Hinduism. The necessity of upholding the national religion helped to unite in one common bond the warring elements of Hinduism; and this

movement was allied with and supported by the movement for national independence. In fact patriotism and religion combined together at this juncture to mould the character of the Mahrattas and enabled them to carry on the great political revival and acquire territories after territories and build a great kingdom almost out of nothing. Not only were the religious leaders intensely patriotic and the leaders on the political side intensely religious but the Mahratta patriotism of the period busied itself not only with religion and politics but sought to remodel the whole national life. Several were the social usages of the Moslem rulers that had crept into the habits and customs of the people and made them imitate the habits and customs of the Moslems, as the present day educated young men are given to the indiscriminate imitation of the habits and customs of the Western nations. Hence the ambition of the Saint Ramadas was to reinstate Hindu ideals and institutions in their pristine glory. While pundits at the court of Sivaji were engaged to weed out the Arabic and Persian words that had crept into the Mahratta vocabulary, the attention of Ramadas was particularly paid to the minutest details of the national customs which had become degenerated by long contact with the Mahomedans, and which he tried to improve by implanting Hindu ideas and wiping out foreign ones and thus he was the one great soul who may be said to have attempted a task which had sorely been neglected for centuries, viz., of remodelling the Hindu life and institutions.

And what was the nature of the message of Ramadas which influenced so largely the minds of the people and made them unite together to build a great nationality? The message was simple and encouraging. He had no sympathy with the weak-minded, the melancholy, the pessimistic and the morbid class of people. He was the champion of the idea of strength, the apostle of the message of hope. "Have strength," he used to say, "strength to think independently, strength to speak boldly and strength to act firmly." Slavery of thought he detested. He was impatient of intellectual thralldom. Never believe—but test always that is what he said. Despair not. Each one has immense potentialities in him. Only in many they are latent. Just kindle the Divine Flame and you can achieve anything. Never go to the wall and weep like a woman. Never even if the whole world be against you, even if mountain-high difficulties were to be encountered! Difficulties are but the helping hand of God. Follow the will of God; obey faithfully and never reluctantly. He is leading you to the goal. What if the path be not strewn with roses? Rather consider life to be a battlefield, and woe to him who comes there with a craven heart! Be strong; strength is life, weakness death. Concentration even in worldly affairs is a kind of *tapasya*; even greatness in secular matters is a spiritual asset. Shun not society; serve it heart and soul; social service is synonymous with divine worship. Approach everyone

through his ideals. Lead society forward and forward. Forget differences, never emphasise them; they will always be there. He is the true leader of men who can give them some positive ideas. Life is short. Life is fleeting. Death is knocking at the door. Be ready to face it any time, but so long as life endures, let it be consecrated to Self-elevation, Social-service and Divine Worship.

The above excerpts from his voluminous teachings give the gist of his message, a message of courage, strength and hope. And it is this message which kindled so much enthusiasm in the nation and brought about its final emancipation from foreign thralldom.

The above characteristics of Saint Ramadas's activities had to be mentioned at length to show the great resemblance that exists between the modern domination of the Hindu life and institutions by foreign ideals and usages and that of the 17th century; and to show how great is the need for another such great soul to bring about a similar change in the Hindu life and institutions of the present day. There is no doubt that there is a kind of resemblance to such a great personality in that of our Guru Maharaj Sri Ramakrishna and his great disciple Swami Vivekananda in having established the greatness and pristine glory of our Sanathana Dharma throughout the world. Paramahansa Ramakrishna though engaged in teaching all those that approached him, the necessity of cultivating great devotion and achieving ethical greatness to make oneself perfect, yet his heart was moved to great pity at the great degradation which the masses have been reduced to, and he could never rest contented until he imposed the duty of finding out the means for the uplifting of the masses on his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda, and it is even said that when Swamiji flagged in his interest and began to get disheartened at the stupendous nature of the task imposed on him, the figure of Maharaj used to appear before him to gently chide him for his weakness and to give him encouragement and hope to go on with his task. It was this duty that took Swamiji to the West to study the condition of the masses all over the world and to find out how the masses of India could be regenerated and brought back to the great spiritual height from which they have so miserably fallen. The result of his experience gained has been clearly stated for our guidance in those memorable speeches and lectures delivered on his triumphal entry to India during his travel from Colombo to Almora. One can see from those lectures and teachings that the means of regenerating the masses was almost like those employed by Sri Ramadas in the 17th century and that the message of Swamiji was also simple, and was equally one of strength and hope. He too like Ramadas had no patience with the weak and the pessimistic. While Ramadas preached the common love of God as the means of uniting the Mahrattas, Swamiji went a step further and shewed the common divinity that lay hid in the heart of each potentially and how necessary it was to preach the same to the masses in order to infuse strength into

the hearts and restore their lost faith and thus to raise them from the slough of despondency to which they have fallen. In no uncertain voice did he say over and over again, "We have lost faith in ourselves. We have forgotten the glory of our souls. For centuries people have been taught theories of degradation. They have been told that they are nothing. They have been so frightened for centuries, till they have nearly become animals. Never were they allowed to hear of the Atman. Let them hear of the Atman,—that even the lowest of the low have the Atman within, which never dies and never is born—Him whom the sword cannot pierce, nor the fire burn, nor the air dry, immortal, without beginning or end, the all-pure, Omnipotent and Omnipresent Atman. Let them have faith in themselves for what makes the difference between an Englishman and an Indian? The Englishman believes in himself but the Indian does not. Why is it that we, three hundred and thirty millions have been ruled for the last one thousand years by any and every handful of foreigners who chose to walk over our prostrate bodies? Because they had faith in themselves and we had not. Faith—Faith in ourselves, Faith in God, this is the secret of greatness. The Englishman believes in himself and he believes he can do anything. That brings out the God within him, and he can do anything he likes. You have been taught and told that you can do nothing and non-entities you are becoming every day. What we want is strength; so believe in yourselves. We have become weak; we have wept long enough. No more weeping, but stand on your feet and be men. It is a man-making religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. It is a man-making education all round that we want. And here is the test of truth—anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually, and spiritually, reject as poison, there is no life in it, it cannot be true. Truth is strengthening, Truth is purity, Truth is knowledge. Truth must be strengthening, must be enlightening, must be invigorating. Have faith in yourselves and stand up on that faith and be strong. That is what we need. What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and the secrets of the universe, and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom and meeting death face to face." Many more soul-stirring teachings of a similar nature did Swamiji give to different people in different parts of India and he wanted to start some definite organisations to carry on those teachings practically but unfortunately for India, the people were not prepared to carry out his teachings in practice and it looks as if he was born a quarter of a century too early. Still one cannot but discern how those ideas have been gradually leavening the whole Indian society and even beyond India. But the task of trying to preach to the present masses the same glory of our Vedanta and bring them under one banner of the common Love of God irrespective of all sectarian

differences and also of readjusting the social fabric so as to weed out all foreign undesirable usages which have crept into our habits and customs and been undermining all our traditions and sucking out the very sap of our national life, ought to devolve on the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and the formation of a practical organisation to unite the masses together and create in them a spirit of patriotic love for their national culture and traditions is a duty that the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Mission alone ought to undertake and bring to fruition in course of time.

To give only a few incidents from the life of Sivaji which shows in what esteem and reverence Sivaji held Ramadas. After his initiation by Ramadas, Sivaji returned to his palace and made it a point to visit his Guru once a week every Thursday and take advice from him on all matters. He used to consult Ramadas invariably before any undertaking was made. Once it so happened that he was attacked by the Mahomedans who surrounded his capital and he found it impossible to pay his weekly visit to Ramadas. This made Sivaji very sad and restless. He was devising all sorts of means to go to Ramadas any how, but the enemy was too strong and all advised him not to risk his life but to give up the idea for the moment. But Sivaji would not listen to them yet at the same time saw the utter futility of his attempt to do so. In utter despair he vowed in the midst of the large assembly that he would not do anything—not even move his little finger to defend himself against the attacks of the enemy without consulting Ramadas. So determined he turned from the assembly to go to his private apartment when suddenly Ramadas appeared in the assembly to the wonder and amazement of all that were present, who one and all including Sivaji prostrated before him. Ramadas blessed them and told Sivaji that he should not vow like that in future for it might be, he said, that he was far away from him and not able to accede to his wishes; but Sivaji insisted on consulting him always whatever might be the circumstances. Ramadas though pleased at the great Bhakti or faith of Sivaji, advised him not to do so but to consult the wishes of Bhavani whenever he was in doubt about any matter. Sivaji asked him what he should do if the Devi did not appear to him in vision. Ramadas gave him certain definite instructions as to how he should proceed to ascertain the wishes of the Devi, how he should bathe, keep vigil and fast, keeping two persons near him one to write down the questions and the other to take down the answers which would be given by the Devi through Sivaji himself after first making Sivaji to get into a condition of trance. So saying Ramadas assured him of his success against the Mahomedans and disappeared from the scene. Several have been the so-called miracles performed by Ramadas as necessity arose, such as feeding two thousand followers of Sivaji on one occasion from food received from a cave, of creating water to quench the thirst of the people from under a rock and the sacred place where this occurred still goes by the name of Kabadi Yogadanda Thirtha. But

let us note one instance which gives a striking proof of the highest unattachment which Sivaji had for anything worldly and the great sacrifice he had made in his heart to the feet of his Guru namely of the three great sacrifices of body, mind and all his possessions which a true disciple has to make to his Guru or God incarnate on Earth. It is said, that one day Sivaji was in the fort of Satara, and saw Ramadas begging in the city below. He went to his *chitnis* (head writer) Balaji Abaji and dictated an order, sealed it with the royal signet and went down into the street where Ramadas was begging and placed it in his wallet. Ramadas said, "Does paper appease hunger?" And on opening the paper he found it contained the gift of Sivaji's whole kingdom to him. Ramadas asked Sivaji what he proposed to do after he was dispossessed of his dominions, to which Sivaji replied that he would pass his life in the service of his great preceptor. "Very well," said Ramadas, "follow me now." He threw his wallet over the king's shoulder and asked him to go and beg and ask for alms. Sivaji readily obeyed and without the least hesitation or any feeling of shame, he went from house to house in the very fort of Satara, and begged and when he had collected sufficient flour, he went to the river with Ramadas and laid the alms he collected before him. Ramadas baked two cakes (*chapaties*) from it and ate one himself and gave the other to the king. After breakfast, Ramadas asked Sivaji how he liked his new calling to which the reply was that he was perfectly satisfied with it. Then Ramadas asked him to take back his kingdom to which Sivaji with a saddened heart replied, "You may ask me to do anything but do protect me from the sin of *Dalthapaharam*, i.e., of taking back one's own gift." Then Ramadas inquired whether Sivaji would obey his commands, and being answered in the affirmative, he bade him go back to his palace and rule his kingdom in the name of his preceptor. And this the monarch readily obeyed and from that day, as a sign that the kingdom belonged to an ascetic, he adopted the ascetic's orange coloured cloth for his banner—the great *Bhugwa Jhanda* as it was called. This banner is still preserved in the museum of collections of various things which belonged to Sivaji, so enthusiastically obtained from various sources and at such great expense by Mr. Purushothama Vishram Mowjee of Bombay. Such indeed was the great and pure heart of Sivaji which had no attachment whatever to the things of the world. His conduct throughout shows an unwavering adherence not to the exigencies of the passing moment, nor to projects of personal ambition, but to certain leading principles of action and administration which he had prescribed to himself as the adequate and necessary means to his grand end.

Swami Vivekananda grew very enthusiastic when he came to this portion of the narrative and said "Is such a great and pure soul to be branded down as a mountain rat, a free-booter and a treacherous deceitful man? That is what you have learnt of the great hero, a hero to whom his whole kingdom was but a straw, a hero-

who did not flinch from the act of begging in his own fort imposed on him by his Guru. You ought to be ashamed to hand down such a sacrilege about Sivaji to your children."

But I meekly asked Swamiji whether the conduct of Sivaji towards Afzul Khan the Agent of Bijapur, was not an unmerited treachery and how Swamiji would explain the conduct of Sivaji on that occasion.

"Yes," said Swamiji, "I know superstition, cruelty, treachery and deceit have been alleged against him by English Historians who have blindly followed Mahomedan writers but those who have learnt the inward life of Sivaji know exactly how Sivaji acted even in that one instance, which has been depicted as a great blot in his character. Sivaji's private life was never stained by sensuality and equally spotless was his public career, though dire necessity compelled him to undertake some measures for self-defence, which are considered so questionable though in fact there exists not the least ground for doing so."

I begged Swamiji to kindly explain clearly the circumstances connected with the death of Afzul Khan at the hand of Sivaji and the Swamiji though late that night readily condescended.

(To be continued.)

RANDOM NOTES.

BY

A Thinker.

The prevalence of annual Conferences, and creation of Parliaments and other institutions on the Western model, are curious phenomena eloquent of the unreality of our present culture and the inefficiency of our modernised existence. Our old life was well-organised on an intelligent and consistent oriental model. The modern life of the West is well and largely organised on an intelligent and consistent occidental model. It materialises certain main ideas of life and its well-being, provides certain centres of life, equips them efficiently, serves the objects with which they are instituted. Our old life also did exactly the same. But it is sad to observe that this is precisely what our modern life fails to perform. Its institutions are apes of a foreign plan, unintelligent expressions of an idea which is not ours; they serve no civic, no national purpose. They are the spasmodic movements of an organism whose own life is arrested, but which feels itself compelled to move, however awkwardly and uselessly, if only to persuade itself that it is not dead. Our Conferences and Congresses which meet but once a year if nothing occurs to prevent them, have really no intelligent

purpose except as the centres of an organised activity of life. The pulse of our life is feeble and artificial. These Conferences are so many convulsive attempts to relate ourselves to each other, which evinces a vague desire for united living but no capacity to effect it. In the West the club, the various literary papers, the schools of writing, the academy, etc., are distinct entities in which the members of the organism have living relations, a common atmosphere, a common intellectual food.

But we in India, have neither these institutions nor any other centres of our own, our modern clubs instituted on Western models providing mainly an opportunity for some recreation, and idle gossip, if not for something worse. They are very rarely utilised as centres for any literary, political or civic activities. The great intellectual stir, hopefulness and activity of the last half a century even has disappeared. The individual at the present time, lives only to himself, vigorously or feebly according to the varying robustness of his personality or intensity of his temperament. Co-ordination is still far from us. United thought and action devoid of selfish ends are rarely to be seen !

Life creates institutions ; institutions do not create but express and preserve life. This is a truth we are too apt to forget and think that our life will be made by the creation of institutions in imitation of the West. The Europeans and especially our present-day gurus, the English, attach an exaggerated importance to machinery because their own machinery has been so successful, their organisation so strong and triumphant. In the conceit of their success they imagine that their machinery is the only machinery possible, and that the adoption of their organisation by foreign peoples is all that is needed for perfect social and political felicity. In Europe this blind attachment to machinery does not do fatal harm, because the life of a free nation has developed the existing institutions and modifies them by its own irresistible law of life and development. But to imitate and take over those institutions and think that they will magically develop in us European virtues, force and robustness or the vivid and vigorous life of European nations is, as if a man were to put on another's coat and think to take over with it his character. Have not indeed many of us been masquerading in the amazing garb which Nineteenth Century Europe developed, thinking that we may become so many brown Englishmen ? This curious conjuring trick has not worked ; hatted, coated and pantalooned we are still keeping the *dhoty* and *veshti* in our civilised by mere borrowing European institutions will end in an equally disastrous failure.

श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतस्तौ संपरीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः ।

श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभिप्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमाद्वृणीते ॥२॥

श्रेयः the good च and प्रेयः the pleasant च and मनुष्यं man एतः approach. धीरः the wise तौ those two संपरीत्य examining from all sides (*lit.* going round) विविनक्ति discriminates. हि yea, धीरः the wise प्रेयसः to the pleasant श्रेयः the good अभिवृणीते prefer ; मन्दः the fool योगक्षेमात् (योगः the acquirement of the unobtained things, and क्षेमः the preservation of the obtained) through avarice and attachment प्रेयः the pleasant वृणीते choose.

Both the good and the pleasant approach man ; the wise discriminates the two having examined them (well). Yea, the wise prefers the good to the pleasant, but the fool chooses the pleasant through avarice and attachment.

[Both the good, etc.—The path of knowledge and the path of pleasure are ever laid before man and he is also given the option to choose the one or the other. The wise knows that the former leads to the eternal bliss of the Soul and freedom, and the latter to ephemeral sense-enjoyments and bondage ; hence he prefers the former to the latter.]

स त्वं प्रियान्प्रियरूपांश्च कामान् अभिध्यायन्नचिकेतोऽत्यसाक्षीः ।

नैतां सृङ्गां वित्तमयीमवाप्तो यस्यां मज्जन्ति बहवो मनुष्याः ॥ ३ ॥

नचिकेतः O Nachiketas ! स त्वम् thou प्रियान् beloved प्रियरूपाः the pleasant in appearance च and कामान् desirable objects (pleasures) अभिध्यायन् having pondered अत्यसाक्षीः renounced. वित्तमयीं of wealth एतां this सृङ्गां the path (or garland) न अवाप्तः (अवाप्तवान् असि) hast not attained, बहवः many मनुष्याः men यस्यां in which मज्जन्ति sink.

So thou, O Nachiketas, hast renounced all those pleasurable objects of love and those pleasant in appearance, having pondered them well. Thou hast not gone into this path of wealth in which perish many men.

[So thou—i.e., even though tempted by me.

Pleasurable objects of love—i.e., " sons and grandsons," etc.

Those pleasant in appearance—i.e., “the fair nymphs with their chariots and musical instruments,” etc.

This Path of wealth—The path of the worldly where the mundane wealth is striven for and valued the most, and which was about to be made so full of earthly pleasures for thee.]

दूरमेते विपरीते विषूची अविद्या या च विद्येति ज्ञाता ।

विद्याभीप्सिनं नचिकेतसं मन्ये न त्वा कामा बहवोऽलोलुपन्त ॥ ४ ॥

अविद्या ignorance या what च and विद्या knowledge इति thus ज्ञाता is known एते these दूरम् wide, greatly विपरीते apart विषूची leading to different ends. नचिकेतसं Nachiketas विद्याभीप्सिनं desirous of knowledge मन्ये (I) consider. (यतः because) बहवः many कामाः desirable objects त्वा thee न अलोलुपन्त did not shake.

Wide apart and leading to different ends are these two, ignorance and what is known as knowledge. I consider Nachiketas an aspirant of knowledge, as even so much prospects of pleasure could not shake thee.

[Wide apart, etc.—Ignorance, i.e. the course of the pleasant, leads ultimately to misery and bondage, whereas knowledge, the path of the good, takes man to freedom and beatitude. Here the path of pleasure has been synonymised by ignorance as it is based on the false conception of the Self.]

अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्तमानाः स्वयं धोराः पण्डितमन्यमानाः ।

दन्द्रम्यमाणाः परियन्ति मूढा अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धाः ॥ ५ ॥

अविद्यायां in ignorance अन्तरे in the midst वर्तमानाः existing, स्वयं themselves धोराः wise पण्डितमन्यमानाः fancying themselves as learned scholars, दन्द्रम्यमाणाः staggering to and fro मूढाः fools परियन्ति go round and round यथा as अन्धेन by the blind एव verily नीयमानाः led अन्धाः blind men.

Fools, wise in their own conceit, dwelling in the very midst of ignorance, (yet) puffed up with vain knowledge, go round and round, staggering to and fro, like blind men led by the blind.

[Vain knowledge—i.e., the worldly wisdom.

Go round and round—i.e., they have no emancipation from the bondage of life, they have to undergo ever so many cycles of births and deaths.

Staggering to and fro—i.e., they shake like a broken reed buffeted by the miseries of life.]

न सांपरायः प्रतिभाति बालं प्रमाद्यन्तं वित्तमोहेन मूढं ।

अयं लोको नास्ति पर इति मानी पुनः पुनर्वशमापद्यते मे ॥ ६ ॥

सांपरायः the Hereafter, (or the spiritual means of attaining glorious life after death) बालं to the child वित्तमोहेन by the delusion of wealth मूढं befooled, deluded प्रमाद्यन्तं careless न प्रतिभाति never appears. अयं this लोकः the world (अस्ति is) पर other न अस्ति does not exist इति thus मानी he who thinks पुनः पुनः again and again मे my (i.e., Death's) वशम् control, आपद्यते falls into.

To the careless child befooled by the delusion of wealth never appears the path of Hereafter. ‘This is the world and there is no other,’—he who thinks thus falls into my clutch again and again.

[Note—Nachiketas while asking for the third boon stated that some held that there was life after death, and some that there was none. So here Yama in the 5th and 6th mantrams describes the nature and fate of those who deny the Hereafter.

Careless child—The ignorant, foolish people.

Falls into my clutch—i.e., they are born again and again to die.]

श्रवणायापि बहुभिर्यो न लभ्यः शृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवो यन्न विद्युः ।

आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धाश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ॥ ७ ॥

यः who (the Atman) बहुभिः by many श्रवणाय to be heard of अपि even, न लभ्यः is not available. बहवः many शृण्वन्तः having heard अपि even यं whom न विद्युः cannot know. अस्य its वक्ता the teacher आश्चर्यः wonderful, अस्य its लब्धा the recipient (the pupil) कुशलः clever, कुशलानुशिष्टः taught by the able preceptor ज्ञाता the knower आश्चर्यः wonderful.

Even to hear of it is not available to many; many even having heard of it cannot comprehend. Wonderful

is its teacher, and (equally) clever the pupil. Wonderful indeed is he who comprehends it taught by an able preceptor.

[*Wonderful is its teacher*—The rarest man in the society is the Atmajnanin and his power and nature are indeed wonderful. He is the salt of the human society.

[*Equally clever the pupil*—The proper recipient of the instructions about Atman is also very rare, as he is far above the ordinary run of humanity. The requisite qualifications of *sadhana-chatushtayam* (vide note on *mantram* I. 29) that make one the fit student of Atmajnanam are of the supreme order.]

न नरेणावरेण प्रोक्त एष सुविज्ञेयो बहुधा चिन्त्यमानः ।

अनन्यप्रोक्ते गतिरत्र नास्त्यणीयान् ह्यतर्क्यमणुप्रमाणात् ॥ ८ ॥

एषः this (Atman) अवरेण inferior नरेण by men प्रोक्तः told (instructed) न सुविज्ञेयः not easily comprehended (भवति becomes) (यस्मात् एषः अनेकैः because by many this) बहुधा variously चिन्त्यमानः thought of (भवति becomes.) अनन्यप्रोक्ते unless taught by another (i.e., superior teacher) अत्र to it गतिः way न अस्ति there is not. हि because (एषः it) अणुप्रमाणात् than the subtlest अणीयान् subtler (अपि च and also) अतर्क्यम् beyond arguments.

This (Atman) can never be well comprehended, if taught by an inferior person, even though often pondered upon. Unless it is taught by another, there is no (other) way to it. Subtler than the subtlest is it, and unarguable.

[*Inferior person.*—i.e., one who has not realised the Atman.

[*Even though often pondered upon*—Sri Sankaracharya takes the text to mean—"Because it is thought of variously as 'existent,' 'non-existent,' 'agent,' 'non-agent,' 'pure,' 'impure,' etc."

[*Unless it is taught, etc.*—Sri Sankara gives various interpretations to this passage, as—"If it is taught by one who is identified with the Self, then there is no uncertainty." Or, "If it has been taught as identical with ourselves, then there is no perception of anything else" or "then there is no re-birth." Or, "If it has been taught by one who is identified with it, then there is no failure in understanding."

[*Unarguable*—because it is transcendental].

The Vedanta Kesari

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that 'I am the Atman.'"

—Swami Vivekananda.

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE GREAT MASTER.

BY

Swami Saradananda.

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VII

The Pilgrimage to Gaya and the Birth of
Gadadhar.—(Concluded).

Khudiram returned to his native village sometime in April next. The first thing that drew his attention, within a short time of his arrival, was the change that seemed to have come upon his dear wife during his absence. She appeared to him like one transformed by divine touch, in the fullness of sympathy of her heart for everyone around. Possessed always of an active temperament, she had kept herself buoyant hitherto in ministering to the wants of her little family and in looking after the proper arrangement of the daily offerings and sacrifices to the family Deity Sri Raghurir. But now the mother in her would not be content to remain within those bounds and would make her constantly look after the wants and comforts of her poor neighbours even before

that of the family. And though it did not mean a neglect of those whom she called her own, nevertheless it was often at the cost of great personal sacrifice that she could help them. For she herself was not rich and had not much to give away after meeting the wants of her own family. Khudiram found that she would not partake of her daily meals before enquiring first, personally, whether her poor neighbours had enough to eat on the day. And if she found that for some reason or other any one of them had not been able to procure it, she would privately give her own meal away; and that she would do so even for the beggars who visited her doors.

Then, as days passed, Khudiram became aware of the strange turn that her devotions to God had taken at present. For, instead of looking up to the family Deity with awe and reverence as she used to do before, she would regard and love Him as her own eldest child, who can never feel offended with the shortcomings of His poor and weak mother. An unwonted sweetness also surrounded her while she performed her daily duties about the worship-room. Strong emotions would overcome her at times in the midst of them, and she could see visions of strange gods and goddesses appearing before her as lovely little children addressing her in sweet familiar words and asking sometimes for food offerings.

But the astonishment of Khudiram knew no bounds on the day that his simple-minded wife told him of the strange experiences that had come to her while he had been to Gaya. She said, "I had a dream one night that you had come; and that before I could know if you had entered the room, I found you locking me within your loving embrace and I felt so happy! But on looking up to your face the next moment, I found that you had so transformed as I could hardly recognise you. Your appearance seemed to be more like the effulgent forms of those whom we worship than of any man I had ever seen. A strange feeling then possessed me as if I was in another's embrace. I shrieked and struggled to free myself, and in the attempt, I awoke with a sudden start to find me alone in my bed shivering all over with fright and dismay! Then again, a few days later as I was standing one day with my poor companion Dhani, the daughter of our blacksmith neighbour, before the temple of Siva in front of our cottage, I was so startled to find the image alive! It began to emanate ethereal waves of exquisite, supernatural light at first slowly and then with a rapidity which can hardly be imagined. The waves filled the room, then gaining in volume and strength suddenly darted towards me like the mighty bore in

the river, and deluged me completely as I was struggling to get away—and I fell down on the ground losing my consciousness! I awoke to find myself in the arms of my companion, who however was perfectly unaware of what had taken place. But instead of feeling weak for it, I felt myself stronger than ever and borne up with a strange elation of spirit. I have the impression since then as if a part of the self-same waves is still within me, making me feel as I did before while in the family way!"

Strange as were the dream and the vision, Khudiram could not but feel in them a confirmation of his own wonderful experience at Gaya. He told her that he too had been blessed with some strange visions of late, which seemed to point to the fact of the birth of the Divine child in the family in the near future; but it was best not to relate such experiences to every one. So Chandra kept quiet though the fullness of her heart shone on her face and made her look tender and graceful, more than ever before; and it soon transpired that she was really in the way to maternity even at that advanced age of forty-five.

Days and even months passed in cheerful performance of duties with a perfect resignation to the Lord, and at last the time arrived when Chandra would soon be blessed with the birth of one, whose coming into the world was heralded to her by such strange visions and experiences. She felt happy and withal anxious for the future turn of events. For who can ever feel certain about things, which are beyond the farthest limits of reason?

It was on the morning of the sixth day of the month of Falgun, corresponding to the 17th day of the English calendar month of February, 1836 A. D.—the beginning of spring-tide in Bengal, when all nature was revelling in the fresh waves of life and energy that had newly come upon it, that Chandra felt as if she could no longer perform her daily duties in the worship-room and the kitchen. She grew anxious for there was none to take her place in their performance on the day, and she expressed her fear to her husband. But Khudiram assured her that it could not be so, that howsoever ill she might feel, the Divine child would never enter the world by creating a disturbance in the services of the Deity. And strangely enough, Chandra felt herself stronger than ever from that very moment, and attended to all her duties throughout the day. Nevertheless, everything was kept in readiness for the advent of the child, and Dhani was requested to sleep with her during the night.

All went on well until past midnight, and in that auspicious mystic hour when it was giving place slowly to the awakening of a

new day that Chandra felt sure that the time had come and removed herself with the help of her companion to the hut in which she had her oven for boiling paddy and the husking machine. For, besides the two rooms in the cottage which served as bed-rooms to Khudiram and Ramkumar, there was not a single place in it which could be used for her lying-in. Slowly as the eastern horizon was becoming aglowed with crimson in spite of the darkness that was still brooding over the earth below, she gave birth to the child whose advent was awaited with so much solicitous tenderness and anxiety by her. Having helped the mother, when Dhani came to look for the new-born babe she was startled to find that the child had slipped gradually away into the cool oven and was lying there besmeared with its ashes! The sacred sound of the conch-shell then announced to the world the advent of the child, and the ladies of the rich Laha family who had been great friends to Chandra and who had come there on hearing that she was unwell, found to their astonishment that 'the baby looked almost as big as a child of six months!'

The necessary rites were performed then on the sixth day of the birth of the child; and the ceremony of taking the babe out of the room to look for the first time, at the moon and the wide world, took place when it was about three weeks' old. Then after propitiating the gods, the child was given the name of Gadadhara (the wielder of the club), in memory of the strange dream that came to its father while he was at Gaya to worship the footprints of Gadadhara or Vishnu.

The astrologers were called in next to read the pre-natal influences that would help or hinder to shape the life of the babe in the world and prophesied great things after necessary calculations about the future life of it. They said that the child would not only have a strong religious consciousness to liberate himself from the bonds of *Maya*, but would discover a new path to liberation for the good of the many and would pass his days in a temple surrounded by many seekers after religion and would be looked upon by men as the Deity-incarnate. He would thus be a strong spiritual light to illumine the minds of men and would help to establish the religious consciousness which had grown dim in the world.

Next the ceremony of giving the first diet of boiled rice, the food which the child would have to take for nourishment as long as would be in this life, took place when he was six months' old. Khudiram was able with the help of his rich Zamindar friend Dharmadas Laha, to feed not only the gentry of the village but also a great number of poor people who came to his doors on the

occasion. And the child grew in loveliness as days passed on in such a way as to hold in fascination all the ladies of the neighbourhood, who would henceforth make time to visit Chandra every day at some hour or other simply for the pleasure of taking her beautiful baby into their arms for a while, and they said that the little Gadadhar became extremely naughty as he grew in years.

GREEK PHILOSOPHY AND ITS RELATION TO INDIAN THOUGHT. *

BY

Swami Paramananda.

The origin of philosophy can be traced to the search for the cause of things. It is the natural instinct of every human being to inquire, but the method of inquiry varies according to individual tendencies. Some try to find the cause exclusively in external phenomena, others seek it in internal nature; but every system of philosophy without exception is the outcome of this search, whether directed to the inner or to the outer realm. Since, however, it rises from this instinctive desire of man to know, it is very difficult to fix an historic date when this search began. In India, the oldest record, contained in the Rig-Veda, the most ancient known scripture, is placed by conservative authorities at between two and three thousand years before Christ.

Turning to the Greek world, Thales (636 B.C.) appears as the first marked figure in philosophical research. His investigations led him to the conclusion that water was the most vital principle in the universe. As he carefully studied nature—sky, sea, earth, he found water present everywhere. He observed that man, animal, plant, all alike depended on water for their life and sustenance; therefore he concluded that water was the basis of creation. His disciple Anaximenes went one step forward and regarded air as the most vital. Since all things live by breathing air, which pervades the entire universe, he held that to be the fundamental element. "Just as our soul, being air," he said, "holds us together, so do breath and air, encompass the whole world." The next eminent philosopher in the Ionian School, Heraclitus, born 503 B.C., declared fire to be the basic principle of life.

Thus we see among the Greeks philosophical research in the beginning was limited chiefly to the natural elements. This

* Lecture delivered at the Vedanta Centre of Boston, U. S. A.

tendency, however, of the human mind to find a satisfactory explanation of creation in external phenomenal nature is not peculiar to the early Greek philosophers, but is to be found in every ancient philosophical system. This was undoubtedly the origin of all nature worship. As man apprehended the great elemental forces playing about him, he was overwhelmed with awe and wonder; and gradually personifying these forces as gods, he sought to propitiate them or seek their blessing and protection. This we also observe in the earlier periods of Indo-Aryan development. We read in the Vedic Scriptures of the Fire-God, the Air-God, the Wind-God, but it is evident that these are not worshipped as the Supreme Ruler, but as different manifestations in nature of the One Infinite, Absolute Cause. The Greeks, however, took account of only four elements—earth, water, air and fire, while the Indo-Aryans recognized another, ether, and based their cosmogony on five elements. They knew that all created objects were the combinations and recombinations of these elements, which however could never operate without a Supreme Intelligence behind. Therefore even in the most ancient Vedic period, they were never regarded as fundamental, for while the Greeks respected nature as a vital part in itself, the Indo-Aryans knew that nature was only an expression of something higher.

This tendency to go behind the elements and seek an immaterial cause for the universe also appears, although much later, in Heraclitus's conception of fire, which he defined as the "self-kindled principle of life, endowed with intelligence and ceaseless activity." He "found that there was life within him which he could not call his own, and yet it was in the very highest sense himself, so that without it he would have been a poor, helpless, isolated creature; a universal life which connected him with his fellowmen,—with the absolute source and original fountain of life" (Maurice). George Henry Lewes also writes in his 'Biographical History of Philosophy': "He proclaimed the absolute vitality of nature, the endless change of matter, the mutability and perishability of individual things in contrast with the Eternal Being—the Supreme Harmony which rules over all."

This idea of a Supreme Intelligence, which remained dim and indefinite in the mind of Heraclitus, was fully developed by Anaxagoras, the most distinguished of the Ionian philosophers and the teacher of Pericles, Euripides and possibly of Socrates. Born of a rich and noble family in 500 B.C., he renounced his inheritance in order to devote himself absolutely to the study of philosophy and leaving his home in Asia Minor, came to Athens in the

most glorious period of her history. He recognized mind, not matter, as the Final Cause. According to him Intelligence was the basis or "shaping-spirit" of the universe. This Intelligence or the *Nous* he described as "infinite, self-potent and unmixed with anything else." "*Nous*," he says, "is the most pure and subtle of all things and has all knowledge about all things and infinite power. This doctrine of the *Nous* passed to Aristotle. But the knowledge of it could only be acquired through reason; the senses, according to him, were too limited, the intellect too weak, life too short to perceive the Great Spirit or *Nous*. Such a conception of the Eternal Spirit as the basic principle of the phenomenal world resembles that of the Aryan Vedic Sages who gave to this Spirit the name, *Satchidanandam*, "Existence, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute"; and who, many centuries earlier, proclaimed in the Mundaka-Upanishad: "He is not perceived by the eye, or by speech, or by the other senses; nor can He be attained by austerity or work; when a man's mind is illumined by the pure light of wisdom, then he beholds Him through meditation."

Side by side with the Ionian School, we observe another trend of thought growing, wholly different in method. Anaximander, one of the most noted mathematicians of Greece, born in 610 B.C. was the first exponent of this School. His speculations led him to a more abstract realm. He could not accept such material explanations as were offered by Thales, but declared the Infinite to be the origin of all things. According to his theory of the universe the abstract was the source of the concrete, the primary being is a unity, one in all, comprising within itself the multiplicity of elements, from which all mundane things are composed. It is only in infinity that the perpetual changes of things can take place.

Anaximander by his method of didactic mathematical speculation paved the way for Pythagoras, one of the most brilliant figures of Greek antiquity and a contemporary of Buddha and Confucius. "Old historians paint him as clothed in robes of white, his head covered with gold, his aspect grave and majestic, wrapt in the contemplation of the mysteries of existence, listening to the music of Homer and Hesiod, or to the harmony of the spheres." (G. H. Lewes). Although little is recorded of his younger years, it is known that he was acquainted with the Ionic philosophers and that he travelled extensively, visiting Egypt, Chaldea, Persia, India and other countries. About 530 B.C. he settled in Crotona, a town of Magna Græcia, and gathered round him a few faithful

followers, who lived in common and rigidly practised obedience, silence, abstinence, extreme simplicity in dress and food, renunciation of material possessions and the habit of introspection and contemplation. Philosophy with them was not merely a matter of intellectual speculation, but of life and the cultivation of the higher virtues. This community in time developed into a school which in its character and training strongly resembled the ancient monastic system of India. The influence of his contact with Indian thought is also obvious in certain of his cardinal doctrines, such as the transmigration of the soul and its incorporeal nature. His strong mathematical trend of mind led him to find the essence of the created universe in numbers. "All is number," he affirms; or as Diogenes Laertius sums up his teaching: "The monad is the beginning of everything. From the monad proceeds an infinite duad." Thus we see the "Infinite" of Anaximander transformed into the "One" of Pythagoras, which is apparently identical with the "Ekam" or "One only without a second" of the Vedic sages. So in his search for the cause, he passed from physics to metaphysics. The life and teachings of Pythagoras and his followers left a lasting impression on Hellenic thought and was a dominant factor in shaping the philosophy, science and theology of the pre-Socratic period, not only in Greece, but later in Rome, Alexandria and elsewhere.

The second stage of Greek philosophy begins with Xenophanes, who was born in Asia Minor in 560 B. C., and who being exiled from his country wandered over Sicily as a minstrel, "sad, earnest, enthusiastic, indifferent to money, comfort, friends, fame, that he might kindle the knowledge of God" by singing his own elegiac poems full of the profoundest truths. In 536 B.C., he settled in Elea, a town of lower Italy, hence the name "Eleatic" attached to the school of philosophy which he founded.

The foremost subject of his inquiry was God Himself, the "First Great Cause", the "Supreme Intelligence". From his fundamental principle "*ex nihil, nihil fit*", "out of nothing, nothing is made" or something cannot come out of nothing, he drew the conclusion that all things that exist were eternal and immutable, therefore without beginning. God who is perfect and the essence of all things, is eternally One, immovable, all-powerful and all-pervading, but in no sense personal. The Universe and God were synonymous. The world could not exist without God, nor could God be separated from the world. He was a monotheist, but his monotheism was pantheistic—that is God and the manifested world were inseparable. He recognized that by Reason

alone one could not reach the ultimate goal of philosophy—and that "error is spread over all things."

*This conception of God and the universe was further developed by Parmenides, a pupil of Xenophanes, and the most illustrious of the Eleatic School. He sought to realize Absolute Being, uncreated and unchangeable, the fullness of which was thought and intelligence. He declared that knowledge gained through the senses was uncertain, but he did not deny that one could acquire correct understanding through Reason. Out of this naturally sprang the idea of a two-fold knowledge—the true and the apparent. Parmenides was the first Greek philosopher who made this clear distinction between relative knowledge acquired through the senses and higher knowledge gained through Reason.

His disciple, Zeno, born 500 B. C., was chiefly noted for introducing dialectics (the art of rational conversation) into philosophical inquiry—a method by which through logical argument error is refuted and truth established. This was the method which later became so powerful in the hands of Socrates and Plato. He was also the first among the Greeks to use dialogue as a medium of philosophy; but students of the Upanishads are well aware that neither the method of dialectic nor the use of dialogue in philosophical exposition originated with him. Zeno like his master upheld the theory of One Absolute Existence, but he did this by proving the non-existence of the many. Next came Empedocles, who was convinced like his predecessors of the futility of sense-perception as a means to knowledge and claimed that Reason was the only road to Truth. He observed that along with the material elements there existed in the universe two great operating forces, love and hate. The nature of the first was to unite, of the second to disunite. This led him to conceive of Truth as Unity, ruled by love. This he said was the first Great Cause, the Creative Power, for, to use his own words, "God is Love".

Thus we observe that the fundamental principles of the Eleatic system of philosophy strongly resemble the teaching of the Vedic Sages, who, however, ante-date this school by many centuries. The conception of One, Unalterable and All-pervading Being as the First Cause, the emanation of this manifold phenomenal world from that One, the impossibility of knowing Him through sense-perception, and the recognition of two kinds of knowledge, real and apparent, all these remind us forcibly of the Advaita System of the Vedic Philosophy. "Error is spread over all things" suggests very strongly again the Indian doctrine of

Maya. The teaching of the *Bhagavad-Gita*—"There is no existence for the unreal and the Real can never be non-existent..... The Self is never born nor does It die; nor after once having been, does It go into non-being. It is unborn, eternal, changeless and ancient"—finds its echo in these words of Parmenides: "For this shall never be proved that the things that are not, are...What is, is uncreated and indestructible, alone, complete, immovable and without end. I shall not let thee say or think that it came from what is not; for it can neither be thought nor uttered that what is not, is".

All these great men of ancient Greece stimulated the minds of the people of their time, not only by their teachings but by their exemplary lives. Some of them were born to wealth and position, but forsook both for the study of philosophy and the pursuit of Truth. Anaxagoras, who let his family inheritance run to waste through neglect, declared: "To philosophy I owe my worldly ruin and my soul's prosperity." Without any exception, all the leaders and followers of the Ionian, Pythagorean and Eleatic Schools were men of dauntless character. Whether they pursued the inductive or the deductive method, their one aim and ambition in life was to know the First Great Cause; and in order to accomplish this they renounced worldly pleasures and comforts and bore ridicule and persecution. They boldly attacked the anthropomorphism and superstitions of their day and thereby brought about greater freedom of thought and action. But although they were of blameless and lofty characters, they were some times one-sided and hence antagonistic to one another. This led to bitter controversy, which gradually gave rise to doubt and scepticism in the minds of the public. In consequence this glorious period in Greek thought was immediately followed by a wave of materialism and unbelief. Philosophy grew unpopular because it brought no tangible, outward benefit. Instead of spending their time in unprofitable speculations on God-nature, people devoted themselves to the study of those branches of learning such as rhetoric, mathematics, natural history, which promised them more immediate returns. Oratory was one of the most esteemed of the arts and eloquence became a tool to gain the desired end, even at the cost of law and justice. To satisfy the growing ambition for fame, power, wealth, there arose teachers known as Sophists—men of keen intellect, who disdained religion and held the aim of life to be worldly glory and pleasure. They claimed that nothing was absolutely right, but was made so by custom. Truth, they said, was uncertain and could not be known by man. They used many

logical tricks to establish their own ideas and throw ridicule on their adversaries. They were, however, often men of wide learning and refinement, brilliant talkers, quick of wit and sophistry; but "men who made money by sham wisdom" as Aristotle defined them. Although, however, these Sophists did not contribute any thing to philosophy, they did much to enrich the literature and language of ancient Greece.

(To be continued.)

THE ETHICAL ASPECT OF THE VEDANTA.

BY

Professor K. Sundararama Aiyer M.A.

PART VI.

KARMA AND SELF-HELP.

There are many in these days who go about preaching that the whole duty of man is to help the world,—that the sole mission of every one that is born into the world is to so order his life as to leave it better than he found it, and that only thus can humanity be enabled to advance to the highest attainable limit of perfection. A modern poet, too, has sung of a "far-off divine event towards which the whole creation moves" and this has encouraged the propagation of the idea that we ought to help God towards the accomplishment of that event so that peace and good-will may reign on earth in the good time which is in prospect. Many writers have made the effort to prove that "an increasing purpose runs" through all history, and that progress has never ceased among mankind. These views have gained such general acceptance everywhere that they have come to be viewed as axiomatic, and any one holding or expressing views different from, or opposed to, them would be surely put down as foolish, queer or deluded, if not also mischievous or insane.

Undeterred, however, by their wide acceptance among men or seeming influence in determining the course of events, the Vedantin has to offer suggestions towards a more moderate, sober and rational estimate of the facts and reasonings on which the above ideals of conduct and the aims and hopes founded on them are made to rest.

In the *first* place, it is not easy to prove that the world really needs anybody's help. It came into existence without our help; and, when we shall have passed away, its course will continue

without any interruption. Numerous are the souls which are born into the world and pass out of it as mere infants or, at least, without the opportunity needed for doing work of any kind, useful or other. And so, it cannot be said that the very fact of the appearance of a living soul on earth stamps it with the character of a worker for whom the world has been waiting and without whom the world would have been poorer than it is. But, however short its stay on earth or amidst the surroundings which precede and prepare for its appearance on earth, its future fate and fortune cannot fail to be influenced thereby; and it is also true that these surroundings themselves are similarly affected by its appearance and career, short or long. Still, the need or indispensability of the event to this world cannot be proved, and hence we see how often men feel, or are even found to assert, that no one, however great or gifted, is an absolute necessity here.

In the *second* place, the material world and the elements of which it is composed are neither good nor evil. It is due to the association, however caused, between matter and the soul that desire (*Kama*) arises,—and this, in turn produces Karma and the store of tendencies accumulated thereby which react on the world and lead us on from birth to death, and death to birth. Sensibility really belongs neither to the soul, for it is by nature *asanga*, unattached,—nor to matter, for it is *jada*, unintelligent. Only when the two are in association does sensibility spring up, and sensibility in its various forms and degrees of development is the origin of effort, of good and evil. But sensibility is an artificial creation or product which is inherent neither in matter nor in the soul. Hence all the good and evil we have in their manifold forms and all the multiform activities which we find in the world are but the result of the ignorance of the true nature of the soul as *asanga*, i.e., as unattached to, as inherently dissociated from, matter. Hence the blessed Bhagavan says, Gita, V. 14, 15—

न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥
नाऽऽदत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।
अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥

"The Lord creates for the mind, body, &c., (of his own free will) neither activity, nor objects of desire, nor association with the fruits of actions. It is *Svabhava* (Primordial Nature) that (without the intelligent desire for fruit) both acts and induces activity. (In reality) the Lord does not take (on himself the responsibility for

either the evil deeds or the good deeds (even of his devotees). The (discriminative) knowledge (of the real nature of good and evil) is concealed by (primordial) Ignorance (i.e., Matter, or Nature), and so all mortals are deluded (into thinking that they act, suffer or enjoy)."

It is thus clear that freedom exists only for the unattached and actionless soul. Everything in the material world is subject to the universal law of cause and effect; and hence all good and evil is far from the domain of freedom, where the Atman rules alone and unchallenged.

While such is the truth regarding the categories of matter and soul, it cannot be denied that the desire to do good and avoid evil for one's self or others is the highest motive for the ethical activities of men in society and for the ethical improvement of man's nature. The more men pursue ethical ideals and engage in ethical service, the more is the higher nature of man developed and the evil part of his nature held in check. The Shastras have unerringly laid down the distinction between good action (Dharma) and evil action (A-dharma) from a point of view far higher than any to which the imperfect vision of man can ascend and from a knowledge of the results of activity, near and remote, to which we can lay no claim. But this distinction of Dharma and Adharma is not laid down with a view to the attainment of some objective pleasure or happiness which is to come to us from elsewhere and endow us with some possession which we have never had before. Nor can a mere accumulation of purely subjective impressions and feelings without any definite guiding principle or aim constitute the goal of existence.

And this takes us on to our *third* proposition, viz., that all that we can aim at in life, all that we can achieve in life, and all that gives a meaning to life for us is the aiming at greater self-control and self-purification as means to self-knowledge and self-realisation. It is this that the blessed Bhagavan has in view when he teaches in the Gita, VI. 5—

उद्धरेदात्मनाऽऽत्मानं नाऽऽत्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥

"Let one raise (his) self by the self, let him not allow it to go down; for the self only is the friend of the self, and the self only is the enemy of the self."

Here the word self occurs in two senses, one being *mind* and the other the *jiva* (living soul). Sri Madhusudana Sarasvati explains

the interpretation given by Sankaracharya as follows :—“ **विवेकयुक्तेन मनसा स्वं जीवं संसारसमुद्रे निमग्नं तत् ऊर्ध्वं हरेत्** ” “ Let a man raise his self (living personality) which is immersed in the ocean of Samsara above it by his mind which is rendered capable of discriminating (between what is good and bad, between what is ephemeral and what is eternal). Madhusudana, further, explains the purport of the above as follows :—“ **विषयासङ्गपरित्यागेन योगारूढतामापादयेदित्यर्थः** ” “ The meaning is, let him attain to the state of a *Yogarudha* (one who has risen to yoga) by giving up the attachment to the objects of the senses.” Self-help and self-elevation, according to the Gita, consist in conquering the attachments of the senses to their objects by the practice of yoga and thereby raising the spiritual level of the living personality. A living English writer expresses an analogous view of self-betterment as follows :—“ All that is distinctively human in the life of man spring not from the desire to possess this or that object and so far to realise a better, but to be something more and better than he is”. The late eminent philosopher, Professor T. H. Green, explained in his *Ethics* that the aspiration after the good life meant “ the consciousness of there being some perfection which has to be attained, some vocation which has to be fulfilled, some law which has to be obeyed, something absolutely desirable, whatever the individual may for the time desire.” And he reaches the conclusion that “ God is identical with the self of every man in the sense of being the realisation of its determinate possibilities, the completion of that which is merely incomplete and therefore unreal.....In being conscious of himself, man is conscious of God and thus knows that God is, but knows what he is only so far as he knows what he himself really is.” However halting and unsatisfying Green's view of the self as compared with the “ *tat-tvam-asi* ” of the Vedantin, he is surely on the right track with regard to the path of self-realisation through self-help. Wherein consists the fact and the true import of self-help ? The answer is,—in the freeing of the living personality of man from its limitations and the realisation of the joy of self-realisation. No mere external acquisitions or additions to the already perfect Atman,—and no outsiders,—can help in the making of such acquisitions or additions. Every one can easily help himself, as he ought, in removing the fetters which bind him to the world of matter. What a teacher can do is to graciously point out the means to their removal. The fetters of the material world do not attach inherently or inseparably to the soul. And so we can rest assured not only that our freedom and perfection is within our reach, but that the attaining of it through self-help is the goal of life and that the world into which

we are born, as it did not require our help for its own coming into existence and will also continue to go its way when we have left it, does not also require our help during the short time we are here. What Dharma we practise and what Adharma we avoid is for our own elevation and advantage. Hence the inestimable value of the Gita precept above quoted,—*viz*, that we must raise the self by the self, that we must purify our minds by the constant and vigilant practice of Dharma so as to gain freedom from Samsara and realise the immortality and bliss of the interior Atman.

Moreover, the control of the desire-element in human nature by the practice of Dharma leads to peace, inner and outer. On the other hand, the control of physical nature and the growing acquisition of power and resources thence resulting leads only to the feeding of the quenchless flame of desire, and this again acts as the motive power for the further endeavour towards an augmentation of power and resources. The men who fall a prey to this vicious play and interaction of powerful forces unfailingly end as dangerous disturbers of peace and harmony among the world's communities. The present world-wide war and its growing pile of disasters and horrors together with the demoniacal passion of hate which it has tended to breed among semi-civilised races must be regarded as simply a repetition on an unusually large scale of the similar phenomena in times past which are familiar to the student of history. The truth contained in Manu's famous verse should never be lost sight of in this connexion.

न जातु कामः कामानामुपभोगेन शाम्यति ।
हविषा कृष्णवर्त्मैव भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥

“Desire is never extinguished by the enjoyment of the objects of desire. Like fire fed with clarified butter, it only grows again stronger.”

It is only the controlling of human nature and the ceaseless practice of the ideal of Vairagya that can enable man to rise to the perfection of serenity and bliss possible for him. Sri Sankaracharya says :—

सुरमन्दिरतरुमूलनिवासः
शय्या भूतलमजिनं वासः ।
सर्वपरिग्रहभोगत्यागः
कस्य सुखं न करोति विरागः ॥

“Residence at the foot of the heavenly tree (known as *parijata*), with the bare ground as bed and the skin of the antelope as

clothing, and the renunciation of all possessions and enjoyments,—is there one to whom desirelessness will not bring happiness?”

The ideal of self-control and renunciation is within the reach of all men, and nothing can be more effective than self-help for the realisation of its blessings. Nothing can be more suicidal or more absurd than to abandon the pursuit of what is easy, feasible and assured for the tantalising will-o'-the-wisp of improving the world,—a task, never-ending, still-beginning, which has yet remained a dream, a delusion, and a snare. Nor is this duty of self-help dissociated with the rendering of altruistic service,—for the latter is one of the means to the goal of self-knowledge through self-control and self-help; and here we get at the true function of altruism, and see both what it is competent to achieve and what it is not,—the real scope and limitations of our capacity to improve the world.

It would be a grievous mistake to understand what has been said above to mean that men should abandon the active effort needed for promoting the good and checking the evil in human life. Our object throughout, as the title of the present article indicates, has been to inculcate the lesson of self-help and not to glorify the evil habits of indolence and dependence. In the Mahabharata, the great teacher, Bhishma, dwells on the imperative need of both *Purushakara* (human effort) and *Daiva* (divine aid), and the exact nature of their natural relations :—

“**देवं पुरुषकारस्तु देवं बीजमुदाहृतम् ।**”

“Human effort is represented as the field, and divine aid as the seed.”

This means that, as both the field and the seed sown on it are needed for the reaping of the harvest, so human effort and divine interposition must be combined in order to produce human happiness. Bhishma also lays special emphasis on the importance and indispensableness of human effort, and goes so far as to say that Heaven helps only those who help themselves. His words are—

कृतः पुरुषकारस्तु देवमेवानुवर्तते ।

न देवमकृते किञ्चित्कस्यचिदाहुमर्हति ॥

“Divine aid only follows such human effort as has been put forth; to no one is divine aid competent to mete out (fruit) when there has been no exertion.”

In giving this teaching, Bhishma utters the very verse which we have quoted from the Gita, though in a slightly modified form.

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ।

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनस्साक्षी कृतस्याप्यकृतस्य च ॥

“The self is the friend of the self, and the self only is the enemy of the self. The self is the witness of the self, and of what is done and what is not done by us.”

Bhishma concludes by proclaiming the following as the sum and substance of his teachings :—

यथाग्निः पवनोद्धूतः सुसूक्ष्मोऽपि महान्भवेत् ।

तथा कर्मसमायुक्तं देवं साधु विवर्धते ॥

यथा तैलक्षयाद्दीपः प्रमत्तानिमुपगच्छति ।

तथा कर्म क्षयाद्देवं प्रमत्तानिमुपगच्छति ॥

“As a very minute spark of fire increases in size when a blast of wind blows over it, so divine aid when effectively supported by human effort brings a large increase of fruit. As by the decrease of oil the light becomes dimmer, so by the diminution of effort divine aid grows less effective.”

These teachings of one of our greatest authorities on Vedic religion effectively dispose of the charge that Hinduism is a religion of quiescence and inculcates a lotus-eating indolence as the essence and ideal of all high living. Of course its aim is to impose ethical limitations on man's aims in life and modes of activity, and it certainly condemns soaring ambitions like those which have given rise to the present bloodthirsty and savage strife in Europe or the implacable and violent animosities which it is tending to inflame among the nations for all time. But it discourages none of the forms of ethical activity which have the sanction of the enlightened minds of our Rishis and sages and which finally lead to the goal of all life,—the freeing of the eternal soul from the bonds of *samsara*.

If this is the true teaching of the Vedic religion, what is the significance of the promise which the blessed Bhagavan conveys in Gita, IX. 22,—

अनभ्याश्रितयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

“Those who regarding themselves as non-separate from me meditate on me as unlimited (by space and time),—I take on myself

the responsibility of securing the protection of what (possessions) they have and of adding what they further require as means of livelihood to them, engaged, as they are, without intermission in devout worship of me."

Sri Sankaracharya offers the following explanation:—"अन्ये ये भक्तास्ते स्वात्मात् स्वयमपि योगक्षेममीहन्तेऽनन्यदर्शिनस्तु नाऽऽत्मात् योगक्षेममीहन्ते । न हि ते जीविते मरणे वाऽऽत्मनो गृहं कुर्वन्ति केवलमेव भगवच्छ्रयास्ते । अतो भगवानेव तेषां योगक्षेमं वहति ॥" "Other devotees exert their energies on their own account for the safeguarding of what possessions they already have, and for the adding of what they further require for carrying on their livelihood ; but those who see themselves as nonseparate (from the Lord) make no such endeavours on their own account. They do not desire aught for themselves in life or death, but are wholly dependent on the Lord. Hence the Lord takes on himself the burden of securing to them all their further wants and their present possessions". These are the true Sannyasins who have gained the knowledge of the one Reality and are bent on converting that Knowledge into a continuous stream of consciousness so as to attain the Bliss of Immortality even while remaining in their present bodies. This is the *Amritatvam* (अमृतत्वम्) which the sage, Yajnavalkya, not only taught to his disciples, but left his home for ever in order to be enabled to make a matter of lasting and continuous personal realisation. It is to such peerless and perfected sages—those who have attained to *Jivan mukti*—that the blessed Bhagavan graciously promises the provision of all their wants and the safeguarding of their worldly possessions without any endeavour of their own. No such endeavour is possible for them,—for their senses and intellect are turned inward. They have passed for ever beyond the cycle of material existence to the One only without a second which is declared by the Upanishads to be of the nature of *Ananda*, the innermost bliss of the Atman.

'REAL PEACE AND HOW TO OBTAIN IT.

BY

Prabhulal.

The Lord Sri Krishna says :—

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।
न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥

"No knowledge of the Self has the unsteady. Nor has he meditation. To the unmeditative there is no peace, and how can one without peace have happiness."

In spite of the above emphatic declaration of the Lord, we see in the world that everybody is anxious to obtain peace, though unfortunately it is a lamentable fact that every one does not desire to become desireless. For says the Lord again :—

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निस्पृहः ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः स शान्तिमाधिगच्छति ॥

"That man alone attains peace who is devoid of longing and abandons all desires, as well as the sense of "I" and "mine."

It is a curious thing that we hanker after worldly enjoyments and sensuous pleasures, but do not at the same time wish to be afflicted with pain and sorrows that are sure to overtake us sooner or later, as the result of reaction. It is the saying of a wise man :—"Forsake all and thou shalt find all. Relinquish desire, and thou shalt find rest." Again, it is also said that when a man rises above desires, then alone a desire is fulfilled. The more a man devotes himself heart and soul to the fulfilment of his desires, the more he meets with failure, success evading him at every step. The mere saying by mouth that you have given up all desires or you have become indifferent about them, while you are a prey to *vasanas* or germs of desires within yourself internally, does not indicate that you have transcended desires. This object is not secured by any outward renunciation of desires, in deeds or in words, but by a complete mental renunciation, which can only be produced where there are no more *vasanas* to fructify. A complete renunciation of everything that stimulates desires, will alone produce in you a state of perfect desirelessness. When desires are fulfilled in the event of man's going completely above desires, the question is whether the effects of such fulfilment of desires are left behind in obedience to the law of *Karma*, or no trace is left behind to bear any further fruits. This is, however, a disputed point, and the dispute lies between *Karma Yoga* and *Sannyasa Yoga*. *Karma Yoga* advocates

action without attachment to the fruits thereof, while *Sannyasa Yoga* is for a complete renunciation of all action. Howsoever a *Karma Yogi* may have become unattached to the fruits of the actions done by him, he does thereby only cleanse his heart of all dross of sin, but does not attain thereby the knowledge of the Reality as it is, or in other words, does not realise the truth of his oneness with *Brahman*, which alone can bring about perfect peace. That man alone can be said to have attained perfect peace who has not only renounced all sensuous pleasures, but who is also able to withstand their effects when presenting themselves before him as actually fulfilled, in obedience to the law of *Karma*, the result of the fructification of the seeds of desires sown in previous lives. It is possible that such seeds may bear fruit after one has attained *Sannyasa* or even *Jnana*, and every one, whether a householder or a *Sannyasin*, has to work out his past *Karma*. Such fulfilments of desires will no doubt leave their effects behind in the way of stimulating further desires, in the case of an unilluminated man, but never so in the case of one who has attained *Jnanam*. There is, however, a difference of opinion on this point. The great Sankara does not admit the fruition of any *Karma*, even of the *prarabdha Karma* in the case of a man who has become a *Jivanmukta*, and his authority must be accepted as final in this matter.

No doubt one who is a *Karma Yogi* does also attain *Jnanam* sooner or later, but the *Karma Yoga* and the *Sannyasa Yoga* are not exactly equivalent terms. Consequently by becoming desireless, a man cannot be said to have attained perfect peace that is never disturbed. So there should not only be no desirelessness, but also no fulfilment of desires in any circumstance. When we say—“Forsake all and thou shalt find all,” we mean that by forsaking or renouncing everything, one attains all, after attaining which nothing is left to be attained. Herein alone there is perfect peace and not elsewhere.

But how to obtain this peace? So long as the lake of mind is being incessantly disturbed by the strong gale of desires blowing over it and lashing up waves of perpetual worries and anxieties, no amount of external purity or asceticism will help a man in restoring its equilibrium. The best way of restoring this equilibrium, at least, in this *Kali* age, is devotion to one's Ideal whatever it may be. The only one and the best way of killing all *vasanas* or germs of desires, is that all the activities of mind should be stopped by concentrating it on one object, particularly on the Divine Person of God, in whose Divine Love all other thoughts should be completely forgotten. Complete forgetfulness of one's self in the Divine Love or what is called, the ecstatic love (*Prema*) is the only one sure and safe way of calming the ever turbulent mind. But of all ideals of the Divine Love, that of ecstatic Love for the Lord Sri Krishna is preferred for the reason that it presents before the mind's eye a Divine Vision that is highly fascinating and enchanting. Of the various aspects of Sri Krishna, one is

the grand ideal of His Divine Love, so well illustrated in the *Bhagavata Purana*, wherein the sole ideal is Love for Love's sake and for nothing else, not for any return in the shape of fulfilment of desires. It was through Sri Krishna only that such an ideal was for the first time proclaimed to the world. Being the Personification of the Divine Beauty, He was the most Beautiful Person of His time, and in fact of all times. His Beauty, therefore, served and still serves as a fascination for the attraction towards Him of all loving souls. The ecstasy of love as it increases, produces an incessant concentration of mind on His Divine Image, pictured in the devotee's heart, the soul of the devotee ultimately losing itself in it and forgetting all idea of separateness from it, the Divine Image being finally realised as the very soul of the devotee himself. In truth there can be no real love of God produced in the heart of an individual, unless either he actually beholds the Divine Beauty manifested through a concrete form of it, or pictures that Beauty in his heart through an image of that Beautiful Form. The idea of a love for an Abstract God, or even for a Personal God without a conception of a beautiful concrete form of Him, is quite absurd and impracticable.* In the love scenes depicted in the *Bhagavata Purana*, Sri Krishna appears under His loveliest name of Mohana or the Divine Enchanter, as a *Prema Murti* or Love Personified, a Divine Magnet of Love, attracting all loving souls towards Him, and equally responding to their love, He Himself, however, remaining perfectly unattached, in the same way as the *Purusha* is unconcerned with the doings of the *Prakriti*, howsoever she may dance before Him for ever and ever.

When deeply immersed in such an ecstatic love, what soul will not attain perfect peace!

To speak the truth there is no peace of mind in this world of ours, in this vale of tears as it is called. Says a Christian Divine:—“Both above and below, without and within, which waysoever thou dost turn, everywhere thou shalt find the cross, and everywhere of necessity thou must hold fast patience, if thou wilt have inward peace and enjoy an everlasting crown. If thou bear the cross cheerfully, it will bear thee and lead thee to the desired end, namely, where there shall be an end of suffering, though here on earth it cannot be.”

As opposed to the above view, the Vedanta holds out before man a very optimistic view of life, saying that the human soul is not

* This remark may be true for the generality of mankind. But we should not lose sight of a psychological fact that human consciousness can transcend the bounds of gross concrete life and revel in the ethereal realities of ideas only. There, in that state of consciousness, ideas assume much more intensity of life and vividness than the so-called concrete forms and figures, which appeal only to those that are yet unborn to the intuitional perception of the vital reality of thought-life. Even Love is possible in its impersonal aspect as we find it among the Sufi saints.
—Ed.

different from the Divine Soul which is all Bliss and wherein there is not the least taint of evil or misery, though under a strange delusion, it has forgotten its real blissful state which ever exists for it, and has been regarding itself as subject to all sorts of pleasure and pain. In our relative conditions, however, the existence of misery and evil cannot be denied. But the question is: Can we agree with the aforesaid Christian divine in saying: "Bear thy cross cheerfully, and it will lead thee to the desired end." Of course one must bear his cross willingly or unwillingly. There is no help. But is it enough to lead a man to the desired end, as is said? The said Christian Divine apparently is conscious of its insufficiency when he says:—"A Lover of God ought to embrace willingly all that is hard and distasteful for the sake of his Beloved, and not to turn away from Him for any difficulties which confront him. As a lively flame and a burning torch, love forces its way upwards and securely passes through all. A true lover always says:—"My God, my Love, Thou art all mine and I am all Thine. Let me sing the song of love. Let me follow Thee my Beloved. Let my soul spend itself in Thy praise, rejoicing through love."

Such is in fact the grand ideal of Love through which a Hindu or a Christian wishes to forget all the cares and miseries of life, in order to attain the desired end, *viz.*, the peace of mind, or the Eternal Bliss as the Hindus call it. The difference between a Hindu's love for Sri Krishna and that of a Christian for Jesus however lies in the belief of the one in his ever regarding himself as essentially one with his Beloved, though thinking himself for the time being as separate from Him, the belief of the other being his eternal separateness from Him. While the one ever regards his Divine Beloved as ever present within him and the very soul of him, the other takes Him as far far away from him, seated somewhere in the Heaven in all His Glory and Power.

Devotion to one's ideal should gradually rise higher and higher by merging every thought and every desire into his supreme desire for the vision of his ideal.

TO THE LAND OF THE SNOWS

BY

A. K. D.

(Continued from Page 89.)

On the morning of the 31st of May we reached Rudraprayag—the second sacred confluence of the rivers that fell in our way. The Alakananda meets here the Mandakini. The latter, like a mighty cataract leaping down over rocks and boulders, throws down with a deafening roar its blue mass on the white and rather placid waters of the former. So sublime, so grand is the scene of the confluence! Near it stands the temple of Rudranath. It is told that the sage Narada performed *tapasya* here to obtain a sight of Rudranath. The main pilgrim route divides itself into two at this place; one goes along the sides of the Mandakini to Kedarnath and the other along the Alakananda to Badrinath. The telegraph line follows the latter route. The staunch Vaishnavas take this road as they do not go to the shrine of Kedarnath.

The river banks in these localities are very charming. It is not easy to describe how pleasant it is to sit down at dawn or dusk on a stone on the bank and watch the merry river sweeping along the hills beyond and the passing shades. In a moment the mind is carried aloft into the region of the sublime and the beautiful, and is left there to receive holy inspirations.

Next morning we arrived at Guptakashi after climbing a very high hill. A grand sight was seen from here. On our left rose the moss-covered towering crags visible from the top to the bottom, on the right lay the Alakananda like a streak of silver in the valley a mile below, while in front shone the effulgent snows away on the crests of the lofty peaks. Guptakashi is a famous place and the gods are supposed to have done penance here to please Siva. There is a temple of Siva in front of which exists a tank called the *Manikarnika kunda* corresponding to the Manikarnika ghat of Benares. There are also a few other temples and several dharma-salas. The summer sun is not so hot here as in the plains,—June seemed to us like December. From here a change was marked in the dress of the people. Cloths yielded to *paijamas* and cotton to wool. The more we proceeded up the more we saw the people poor and dirty. No more the mules could be seen carrying the

articles of trade. Their place was occupied by the sure-footed goats. Most of the *pandas* of Kedarnath live in this place.

Next morning we had a long steep ascent to climb, and after a day's hard journey we reached Gaurikund in the evening. A little way up on our route lay a populous village named Trijugi Narayan, so designated for having a temple of Narayana in it. It is stated that Siva and Parvati were married here in Satyayuga. The sacrificial fire, that was lit then, has ever since been kept alive. As a rule, every pilgrim feeds the fire and smears his forehead with its sacred ashes. There are also four tanks where certain ceremonies are to be performed. Water-snakes abound in the tanks and their touch is considered auspicious by the bathers. This village is also reached by a difficult pathway from Tehri Garhwal through the Panwali range.

On reaching the place we found it too full. Not an inch of ground was available. At last we made a request to the Deputy Collector who came their touring, to give us a little room in the shed where he was still holding his court. With all complaisance he agreed to our prayer, and thus dispelled our anxiety.

It is said that Parvati, the daughter of Himalaya sat in *tapasya* here to get Siva as her husband, and it was here that Siva, in the disguise of an old Brahmin inveighed against himself to test her mind. There is a hot spring here, which the pilgrims regard as holy. I do not know whether it conduces to any spiritual benefit, but it is certain that it is good physically. A curious custom prevails in the hills here of propitiating the Goddess Durga. The festival that is held in July is called Bagi or Athwar. On this occasion a young buffalo, which represents the Mahish Asura whom Durga slew in Satyayuga, is let loose after receiving a slight wound from a sword or a knife. Sometimes quarrels ensue as to the right to deal the first blow. Villagers then pursue it, hacking it until it dies. The animal's death is protracted as long as possible. Any field which has received a drop of its blood is supposed to grow in fertility. This custom is, however, execrated by the higher classes.

Before I entered on this journey I was under the impression that few people come to visit these shrines. But soon I found out my mistake. Trains of pilgrims are constantly to be seen and one never feels alone in the way. The number of the female pilgrims do not fall much below that of the male. Even old, decrepit and blind men are not wanting. Once I asked a blind man, "Why are you going to Kedar and Badri? You cannot see the image of the god." He told me in reply, "I shall touch the place and enjoy its

holiness." It was a touching reply. He was alone, but his devotion led him safely through the hazardous track. The pilgrims, though they came from different parts, sympathised with each other and had a common greeting, "Glory to Kedarnath," "Glory to Badri Bisal."

Next day we left Gaurikund for Kedarnath. The previous day we passed through a charming landscape. The hill-sides were covered with a rank vegetation. The innumerable flowers that bloomed all around spread a sweet fragrance and it seemed that eternal spring reigned in the place. But to-day our path lay through a different scene and consisted of a series of high ascents. The trees and the shrubs all disappeared. The road appeared to be little more than a pathway existing through the courtesy of Nature. The last two miles were intersected by numerous ravines and the most difficult to cover. We had to halt for 35 or 40 times to take breath. A cloud of cold despair crossed my mind and I thought it audacious on my part to embark on this adventure. In former days this path was called "The path of disappointment," and nowadays it is called "the difficult Kedar," and I can vouch that there is not the least exaggeration in the statement. The exquisite novelty of the scenery around only kept me buoyant. On either side the mountains uplifted their snow-capped heads high into the skies and appeared just like huge masses of polished silver. Their bases shone with particoloured brilliant star-like moss-flowers. Long sheets of glaciers extended from the crests to the valley below. The clouds played all around and at times, kept us out of view from each other. While we were enjoying the sunshine above, beneath our feet, the lightning shone, the thunder roared and heavy rain fell. We reached the resplendent domain of Kedarnath before twilight had overtaken us. And what a splendid view there was before our eyes! I saw a scene that I never saw before and perhaps will never see again. I drank deep, as it were, the charm of the spectacle. For sometime I felt I was in transport and forgot my existence. Indeed my language is too poor to give expression to the matchless beauty and the grand sublimity of the place. Could it be a fiction that the gods lived there? To me everything there seemed to be living and breathed a divine inspiration into my soul. The huge mass of virgin snows looked like the body of the great Lord Siva, and the torrents that came down here and there from them hang like His matted locks, the divine Jata. Here it was that in the days of yore, Siva, after the death of His consort Sati, engaged himself in a severe penance, and Cupid in trying to destroy His concentration of mind was himself burned by the wrath of Siva.

In this mood I reached the lodging where we were to put up. Depositing our baggages there as quickly as possible, we ran to the temple to prostrate ourselves before the *Lingam* of Sadasiva. The temple stood on a ridge 11,753 feet high jutting out at right angles from the snowy range below the peak of Mahapatha. It was built of grey stone surmounted by a gilded pinnacle with a neat facade adorned on either side with niches and images of Durga, Lakshmi and an ox. The *Lingam* of the Lord was of black stone and appeared like the hinder part of a huge buffalo. Tradition says that when the great battle of Kurukshetra was over, the Pandavas thought that sin must have overtaken them for killing so many men and were much penitent. Then was it suggested to them that their sin would be absolved if they touched the Lord Kedarnath. So they came here and searched every corner of the locality, but Sadasiva was not to be seen. They were very much depressed when an unseen voice said that the Lord was grazing close in the form of a buffalo. No sooner did they find Him out than they followed. The Buffalo fled, and finding Himself hard pressed dived into the ground. But His hinder part was still above the ground when the Pandavas came up and touched it. Thereat this part was converted into stone. Since then this is adored as the image of the deity. The remaining parts of the Buffalo are worshipped in four other places not very far from here. The front legs are worshipped at Tunganath, the face at Rudranath, the belly at Madhyamaheswara, and the hair and the head at Kalpeswara. These together form the five (*pancha*) Kedars. The last three places are not much visited by pilgrims. The Mandakini rising from the south-eastern base of the Kedarnath Peak flowed babbling by the temple. But she had not her usual roar or turbulence here. However, bowing down before the Lord we returned to our lodge before the darkness grew thick. The night was extremely cold and the drizzle that continued throughout the night, heightened the inclemency. We kept fire burning in our room and put on all the clothings we had, still we were shivering from head to foot. Not a wink of sleep could be got from this biting cold. At morning we had to perform the *puja* ceremony; but we could not bathe. Those ice-cold waters, the touch of which was painful! We sanctified ourselves simply by a touch and went to the temple. The priest chanted out the *mantrams* and we poured down the offering of food, flowers and water on the *linga*, embraced Him and prostrated before Him. So simple was the ceremony to be observed by the pilgrims. Then we saw a few places here and there. Three miles to the north is a sheet of water named *Basuki Talao* which gives rise to the Mandakini. Four miles from the temple is a precipice on the way to the

Mahapatha Peak known as the Bhairav Jhamp from which in former times devotees used to fling themselves on the snows below. Those who designed thus to immolate themselves inscribed their names on the walls of the neighbouring temples. But this practice has nowadays been put a stop to by the law. Towards the Tibet side of the peak amidst the snows exist the *Himaprasad* (snowy palace) and the *Himavalgiri* (snowy town) of the Father of Durga. But we could not see these for want of time. The distance between Kedar and Badri straightaway from the west to the east is only 25 miles. Long long ago such a pathway existed. Now it lies buried in perpetual snow. At present one has to go round 100 miles to reach Badri.

The Mahant of Kedarnath temple or Rowal as he is here called, must be an ascetic of the *lingait* or *jangam* sect of Malabar. He remains at Akhimath and never conducts himself, as he should, the worship of Kedarnath. The temple remains open from May to October. In the remaining part of the year it lies under the snows, when the temple establishment comes down to Akhimath.

(To be continued.)

RANDOM NOTES.

BY

A Thinker.

It is a grim fact and too assertive to ignore that the national personality of our people is fast undergoing a change under the impact of the new awakening of human consciousness known as scientific culture. The predominant cry in the land has become for radicalism, for a change; and it is a general desire now to make our national boat move quicker with a new rudder and new oars. And not unoften the charge is laid at our doors by those who are inebriated by the spirit of the dawn that we are very slow to move, that we are very conservative in our views and actions. But who is not? All nations are conservative. There is hardly any difference between Indian conservatism and the conservatism of any other nation. The Englishman, for instance, and the Hindu have been alike in their tenacious conservatism and their refusal to accept revolution, alike in their respect for law and things established by long usage, alike in their readiness to change rapidly and steadily if the innovator would only disguise from them the fact that they were changing. The Hindu advanced more slowly because he was an Asiatic in a period of contraction; the Englishman apparently

more quickly because he was a European in a period of expansion. If our social reformers had understood this Indian characteristic they might have revolutionised our society with comparatively small friction; but the parade of revolution which they made has hampered their cause. It is a mistake to think that reform consists in one's being free to eat as he will and marry as he likes and it is equally a mistake to suppose that in Europe men can eat, talk or act as they will with impunity. They cannot. Society everywhere is exacting, scrupulous, minute, pitiless in punishment of slight departures from its code, however absurd and unreasonable that code may be. But while in India, the sanction is religious, in Europe it is social. In India a man dreads spiritual impurity; in Europe he shrinks from the sneers and dislike of his class or his fellows. Social ex-communication has always been the ultimate penalty.

In Europe and India alike we seem to stand on the threshold of a vast revolution—political, social and religious. Whatever nation now is the first to solve the problems which are threatening to hammer governments, creeds and societies to pieces all the world over, will lead the world in the age that is coming. It is our ambition that India should be that nation. It will be that nation, there is no doubt. She has in her something dynamic, volcanic, elemental. She can rise above conventions, she can break through formalities and prejudices. But she will not do so unless she is sure that she has God's command to do it—unless the *Avatar* descends and leads. She will follow a Buddha or a Mahomet wherever he will lead her. It was a little of that volcanic, elemental something in the heart of the nation which Lord Curzon lashed into life in 1905. But the awakening was too narrow in its scope, too feebly supported with strength, too ill-informed in knowledge. In order that India should be what we wish, it is necessary that she should be capable of unsparing revolution. She must have the courage of her past knowledge and the immensity of soul that will measure itself with her future and give up the childish imitation of others' ideals. The *Avatar* has descended in the persons of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Their teachings are influencing the inner life of the nation slowly, steadily and surely like the proverbial leaven and are preparing the nation for such a task till the nation is ready. We have to wait patiently following the great teachings of these great masters.

The Threatening Revolution.

नैषा तर्केण मतिरापनेया प्रोक्तान्येनैव सुज्ञानाय प्रेष्ठ ।

यान्त्वमापः सत्यधृतिर्वतासि त्वादङ्गो भूयान्नचिकेतः प्रष्टा ॥ ९ ॥

प्रेष्ठ O Dearest, त्वां thou यां which (idea) आपः hast got एषा this मतिः knowledge (idea about the Atman) तर्केण by (mere) argumentation न आपनेया not attainable (भवति is). अन्येन by other प्रोक्ता told (taught) सुज्ञानाय easy of comprehension एव indeed (भवति becomes). नचिकेतः O Nachiketas सत्यधृतिः of true resolve (or steadfast in truth) असि (thou) art, वत indeed. नः ours त्वादङ्ग like thee प्रष्टा enquirer भूयान् may there be.

This knowledge which thou hast obtained, is not attained by mere argumentation; it becomes easy of comprehension indeed, O dearest, when taught by another. Thou art of true resolve indeed. May we have an enquirer like thee!

[This knowledge is not etc.—The consciousness of the Atman is a matter of intuitional perception (अपरोक्षानुभूतिः) and as such any amount of mere ratiocination cannot help to comprehend it. It is more to be felt than to be reasoned.]

NOTE.—Knowledge means the awakening of our consciousness to the comprehension of the realities—either subjective or objective. But our conceptual knowledge is based on the perceptual, which again is determined by the contact of the senses with their objects, hence for all kinds of *non-spiritual* knowledge *non-spiritual* suggestions are absolutely necessary. So is also for the spiritual knowledge, though in this case the suggestion and impulse come from another soul. Unless one's consciousness is quickened by the spiritual impulse coming from another awakened soul, it is almost, if not absolutely, impossible to attain the spiritual realisation to the fullest extent.]

जानाम्यहं शेषधिरित्यनित्यं न ह्यध्रुवैः प्राप्यते हि ध्रुवं तत्र ।

ततो मया नाचिकेतश्चितोऽग्निरनित्यैर्द्रव्यैः प्राप्तवानस्मि नित्यं ॥ १० ॥

शेषधिः treasure अनित्यं transient इति that अहं I जानामि know. हि for ध्रुवं eternal अध्रुवैः by the non-eternal न not हि verily प्राप्यते is attained. ततः Yet (hence) मया by me अनित्यैः transient द्रव्यैः

by objects नाचिकेतः Nachiketic अग्निः Fire. चितः has been performed (lit. laid). (तेन by that) नित्यं the eternal प्राप्तवान् अग्नि (I) have attained.

I Know that (all) treasure is transient ; for verily the Eternal is never attained by the non-eternal ; yet by me has been performed the Nachiketic Fire with the transient objects and (through that) have I attained the eternal.

[Treasure.—Good Karma born of good deeds.

The Eternal.—The Atman.

By the non-eternal --By Karma which is impermanent in its very nature.

Have I attained the eternal.—According to the commentators, here 'the eternal' does not refer to the absolute state of the Atman, but means only the position of Yama which may be called relatively as eternal in comparison to the earthly life. Cf. I. 14, 17, 18.

Note.—The exact significance of the second half of the *mantram* seems to be a little obscure. It is hard to comprehend the right force of the word ततः in the beginning of the sentence although it has been explained by the commentator as “तस्मात् मया जानतापि नित्यं अनित्यसाधनैः न प्राप्यते इति” (Therefore, i.e. even knowing that the permanent can never be attained by any means of impermanent nature) ; but this interpretation seems to be a little forced one, for, as such, the second half becomes self-condemning and redundant ; moreover Yama only creates more confusion in Nachiketa's mind by using the words ध्रुव and नित्य in different senses, though they are almost synonymous. The commentator Anandajana suggests, and which suggestion is fully corroborated by the next *mantram*, that here Yama eulogises Nachiketas, meaning that even he being fully aware of the ephemeral nature of karma and its results and that by it nothing permanent can be achieved, performed the Nachiketa fire-sacrifice to attain the Yama state, but Nachiketas withstood all such temptations, so Nachiketas is even superior to Yama.

Some scholars have taken the *mantram* as the words of Nachiketas. They translate the second half thus : “Hence the Nachiketa fire has been laid by me (first) ; then by means of transient things, I have obtained what is not transient (the teaching of Yama)”. But this is not correct, as it would be a misstatement of

facts. We have seen that Nachiketas has never performed till now the Nachiketa Sacrifice, he has only been instructed about it ; then how can he say, “Hence the Nachiketa fire has been laid by me” ?]

कामस्यासि जगतः प्रतिष्ठां क्रतोरनन्त्यमभयस्य पारं । स्तोममह-
दुरुगायं प्रतिष्ठां दृष्ट्वा धृत्या धीरो नचिकेतोऽत्यसूक्ष्मः ॥ ११ ॥

नचिकेतः O Nachiketas ! कामस्य of desires आसि the consummate fulfilment, जगतः of the universe प्रतिष्ठां the stay, क्रतोः of the rites अनन्त्यं the eternal fruit, अभयस्य of the freedom from fear पारं the shore स्तोममहद् (स्तोमं and महद्) the adorable and great, उरुगायं the wide resort, प्रतिष्ठां the basis (of life) दृष्ट्वा having seen (त्वं thou) धीरः (being) intelligent धृत्या with firm resolve (तद् that) अत्यसूक्ष्मः has rejected.

The consummate fulfilment of all desires, the stay of the universe, the endless fruit of all the rites, the bourne of freedom from fear, the most adorable and great, the exalted resort, the basis of life,—even having seen that, thou being intelligent, O Nachiketas, thou hast rejected it with firm resolve.

[The consummate fulfilment etc.—These epithets refer to the Brahma Loka or the state of Hiranyagarbha which is considered as the *summum bonum* of life within the creation, and is attainable by the performance of great sacrificial rites like *Aswamedha*, etc.

Even having seen that—i.e., having scrutinized that state and finding it still wanting. Or, it may mean, “even getting that state within your easy reach.”]

तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनुमविष्टं गुहाहितं गह्वरेष्ठं पुराणं । अध्यात्मयोगा-
धिगमेन देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोकौ जहाति ॥ १२ ॥

दुर्दर्शं very difficult to be seen, गूढं subtle (hidden), अनुमविष्टं immanent, गुहाहितं seated in the heart (or in intelligence), गह्वरेष्ठं residing within the body, पुराणं the ancient तं that देवं effulgent being अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन by means of meditation on the inner self मत्वा realising (comprehending) धीरः the wise हर्षशोकौ joy and sorrow, जहाति relinquishes.

The wise relinquishes both joy and sorrow, having realised by means of meditation on the inner self that ancient effulgent One, hard to be seen, subtle, immanent, seated in the heart and residing within the body.

[*The wise relinquishes etc.*—When the Atman is realised, one attains that state which transcends all relative aspects of life, such as pain and pleasure, life and death, good and bad, etc. And so this state is called शाश्वतपदं, the eternal absolute state. The sense of pain or pleasure is derived through the modification of the body and the bodily concerns, there being no such modification or affection possible in the Atman, it is in itself beyond all joy or sorrow, pain or pleasure.]

एतच्छ्रुत्वा संपरिशृणु मर्त्यः प्रवृह्य धर्म्यमणुमेतमाप्य । स मोदते
मोदनीयं हि लब्ध्वा विवृतं सद्य नचिकेतसं मन्ये ॥ १३ ॥

मर्त्यः the mortal एतत् this (Atman) श्रुत्वा having heard, धर्म्यम् inseparable with Dharma अणुं the subtle प्रवृह्य discriminating संपरिशृणु having comprehended well सः he एनम् this (Atman) आप्य having attained, मोदनीयं the enjoyable हि indeed लब्ध्वा obtaining मोदते rejoices. नचिकेतसं to Nachiketas सद्य the house विवृतं open मन्ये (I) think.

The mortal who have heard this and comprehended well that subtle, the soul of Dharma, after discriminating it (properly), attains it ; he verily rejoices having obtained the enjoyable. Methinks the house is open for Nachiketas.

[*The soul of Dharma.*—The original word is धर्म्यम्, which literally means “connected with Dharma.” But the exact force of the epithet here is to signify that the Atman is the very centre of all Dharma, without which nothing is possible, and which is the sole quest of Dharma.

After discriminating etc.—i.e., carefully separating the Atman from the body and mind.

He verily rejoices—The rejoicing that comes from the attainment of the beatitude of the Atman is not of the ordinary kind that originates from the sense-pleasure. In the latter there is intoxication and reaction, but in the former the serenity of peace. Hence one

The Vedanta Kesari

“Let the lion of Vedanta roar.”

“Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that ‘I am the Atman.’”

—Swami Vivekananda.

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE GREAT MASTER

BY

Swami Saradananda.

VIII.

A few words on the Unique Experiences of
Gadadhara's Parents.

We have recorded the fact of the occurrence of some unique experiences in the lives of Khudiram and his wife before the birth of Gadadhara. There are some more of the kind to tell the reader before we proceed to express our humble opinion on them. The simple-minded rural people of the village and Khudiram's own relations, whom we found still living while we first visited Kamarpukur in 1887, soon after the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna, had told us of them. The words of such people would not satisfy perhaps, the modern idea of competent evidence, but the fact that they had no axe of their own to grind by relating such stories, and that they had very little idea then of the unique greatness of the Master even by hearsay, go a great length to convince the unbiased mind that those should have our careful consideration. Moreover, we should always remember that the qualitative value of what we call competent evidence, would always vary according to the predisposition of the mind that goes to test the same, and that therein the mind set against itself not to accept anything beyond the most

ordinary of human experiences, is as much a hinderance to arrive at truth, as the mind that always holds itself ready to receive anything and everything and is marked down with the designation 'credulous.'

Besides the descendants of Khudiram's own children we had the good fortune of meeting the sons and a daughter of Dharmadas Laha, the survivors of the family of the Pynes, who had seen better days and were great friends of the Chatterjes, and also the members, both male and female, of various other families who were connected more or less intimately with the Chatterje family during the birth and childhood of Gadadhara. They gave their evidences in support of the unique experiences independently and without any selfish motive whatsoever. What could she, for instance, have expected of us when Prasanna, the widowed daughter of Dharmadas Laha, the rich Zemindar friend of Khudiram—whom we had the good fortune to meet several times, related to us, such facts as the following :—

"Chandra was looked upon by me and my companions as a queer woman and as one perfectly unacquainted with the ways of the world, for telling us all her extraordinary visions and experiences. She not only saw gods and goddesses and held conversations with them, but used to smell sometimes exquisite fragrance of flowers and incense where there was none, and heard frequently the tinklings of a child's anklet about her while she was deeply engaged with her household duties, before the birth of Gadadhara.

"She used to have such strange experiences at times, even after the child was born. Well do we remember the row that she made one day by calling us all and her husband too because as she said, she found the child so heavy that she could not manage to lift it to her arms with her utmost effort ! and still, on another day she entreated her husband and every one whom she knew to call in the assistance of an able exorcist for she saw her sleeping child, who was seven months old at the time, transformed into a big man for a while ! She fancied that ghosts were playing such tricks with her baby on such occasions and feared they might finally take it away from her. We, of course always laughed at her for her such wild fancies and fears."

When asked if she knew anything of Chandra's vision before the Siva-temple, she said, "Don't I ? and didn't I warn her solemnly not to repeat that and the dream in which she fancied herself to be in another's arms, for the wicked might go to the length of imputing a bad character to her for them ? But still she would go on

repeating them sometimes before her friends—such a self-forgetful, confiding and unsuspecting nature had Chandra !"

The late Professor Max Muller in his little book entitled "Sri Ramakrishna, His Life and Teachings," in going to deal with these unique experiences in the life of Gadadhara's parents, has discussed long on the fact of the growth of ordinary nucleus of facts through accretions on them by what he calls "the dialogic process." He has gone the length to suggest that such accretions must have taken place around Chandra's vision before the Siva-temple and transformed it gradually into its present form, making it appear very much like the fact of the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin, the mother of Jesus the Christ. The only reason he advanced for such a suggestion, is the fact that disciples of Sri Ramakrishna were almost all of them well versed in English and acquainted with the Christian idea of the immaculate conception ; so in their sub-conscious attempts to look to the greatness of their Guru or spiritual guide in every respect, they went on transforming words and phrases in their narration of the vision little by little, without being aware of the fact, while they repeated it amongst themselves or for the enlightenment of the new proselytes. And the changes that appeared at first to be insignificant and were overlooked and accepted, assumed perceptible proportions in a little time though they were perfectly innocent in their gradual introduction and acceptance of them.

With due deference to what the learned Professor has said we must say that he has missed or overlooked a strong point against his statement of the case. For if it be true that the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna were picked up from the class of men who had received a tolerably good western education, then it goes without saying that they had acquired at the same time, the western habit of careful statement of facts ; and for the reason of that they would have been the persons least likely to lay themselves open to "the dialogic process." The fact is that they heard of the vision before the Siva temple first from the lips of the Master while he spoke to them about his mother and her strange visions from time to time, and then had it corroborated by asking such persons at Kamarpukur who were most likely to know of it. Again as the Hindu scriptures, the Puranas in general, are full of instances of different degrees of immaculate conception, we do not see the force of the argument that the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna had to go to the Christian Purana, the Holy Bible, to get their idea of it.

A close examination of the Hindu scriptures will reveal to us the fact that while they acknowledged universally the occurrence of extraordinary experiences in the lives of the parents of great religious

geniuses who were regarded in later times as incarnations of Isvara or the ruler of the universe, they did not hold it necessary that their birth in each case should take place through supernatural process. The parents of Rama, of Krishna, of Buddha and of all the other Incarnations had all had unique experiences, more or less, before and after the birth of their noble sons, and yet the Puranas have not recorded the fact that their mothers had borne them through such a process. Again the fact of immaculate conception has been explicitly recorded by them in certain cases of individuals who were not as great. As an instance of the latter kind we may point out to the reader the birth of Karna, the noble hero of the Mahabharata. It is a well-known fact that Kunti the mother of the hero, gave birth to this child of her's through the touch of the Sun-god and yet retained her virginity, and getting married afterwards became the mother of the five Pandava brothers. Considering the facts stated above the conclusion seems to us to be inevitable that the Hindu scriptures rather point to the fact that the extraordinary experiences that come in the lives of the parents of incarnations, do not go against the natural process through which human births take place.

The conclusion to which we have arrived above by our examination of Hindu scriptures, is in harmony with the mandates of reason and the discoveries of modern science besides. For the theory of heredity which supports the fact of noble parents having noble progeny, if acknowledged to be true, will drive us to conclude that the minds of the parents of a Krishna, a Buddha and a Jesus, must have lived and moved in much higher planes than those of ordinary humanity. And does not the rise of the mind to higher planes of thought and unselfishness enable us to get glimpses of things which the ordinary sense-bound mind can never have? Thus the theory of heredity leads us to acknowledge the fact of the occurrence of the unique experiences in the lives of the parents of the Incarnations as quite probable.

The Hindus, however, do not go to the theory of heredity to find the final solution to the problem of what causes men to be born with different degrees of power physically, mentally, morally and even spiritually. Heredity according to them, can find the answer only to material side of it, but not to its spiritual counterpart. For it has nothing to say when the problem is pushed a step forward into the form,—what causes particular individuals to go to parents who can transmit to them particular physical and mental capabilities? The answer to it they hold, can only be found in the theory of individual Karma, which makes one fit to receive a particular kind of heredity only.

But on going to examine the lives of the great religious geniuses, the Hindu mind came face to face with facts, which could not be explained by the theory of individual Karma even. For Karma, which is only a finer form of the theory of cause and effect, can be said to exist only in cases where the effects produced are of the nature of their causes. For the effect is the cause transformed and, therefore, there cannot be anything in it that is not in the cause itself. But the lives of the Incarnations appear on examination, to be so dissimilar in nature to those of their parents, in regard to the quality and the quantity of power expressed in them, that it is not possible to look to them both as related to each other in the form of cause and effect. For where do we find even a thousandth part of the purity, unselfishness, love for their fellow beings and spirituality that a Krishna, a Buddha and a Jesus manifested, in the lives of their respective parents? There were hundreds of Kshatriya chieftains and thousands of carpenters living almost the same kind of life at the time, as did Vasudeva, Suddhodana and Joseph, the fathers of Krishna, Buddha and Jesus respectively. Therefore, nothing can be more unreasonable than to suppose that the lives of the Incarnations are but the necessary effects of such ordinary lives. The Hindu scriptures, therefore, have come to the conclusion that such giant personalities could not have come to the world through the ordinary process of Karma or causation. That they in fact, were beyond all bondage of Karma and must have appeared in the world out of their own free choice to do good to humanity. Then as time went, the belief in the existence of an omnipotent, omniscient, independent and immanent personal ruler of the creation, made people to look upon the Incarnations as but different manifestations of that self-same Being, who in His infinite grace takes birth from time to time among men by accepting human limitations, to enlighten and liberate them from sense-bondage.

Such in short is the history of the development of the theory of Incarnation as we find it in the present day, in the whole range of Hindu philosophy. It remains for us to see now, whether this theory is compatible or not with the subject of the present discourse, namely, the birth of the Incarnations through the ordinary process and the fact of their parents having unique experiences at the time of their appearance. It is evident from what has been stated above that the Hindu scriptures deny the bondage of Karma to the Incarnations themselves but not to their parents. Therefore everything, besides the event of giving birth to such powerful personages, in the lives of the latter, must occur not through any kind of supernatural process but as results of their previous Karma or in other

words, through the medium of the ordinary course of cause and effect. But the latter event would take place in their lives only through the grace of the Lord. Now the question is, does that grace presuppose any standard of fitness to its recipients? The answer given to it has always been in the negative if we do not bring into account the one universal condition common to all religious aspirants, that there should be an intense struggle in their minds to proceed Godward.

The origin of grace has thus been placed beyond the limits of human reason, for it depends entirely on the Supreme Will, that is above all conditions of causation. But the effects of it have been recorded; and it has been found out that in every case it uplifted the mind of its recipient to higher planes of thought and unselfishness, and enabled it to have glimpses of things transcending reason. Thus the occurrence of extraordinary experiences in the lives of the parents of the Incarnations is not only supported but confirmed by the theory.

Again, when we consider the fact that the birth of the Incarnations through compassion is altogether a free act of condescension on the part of the Deity, to raise and enlighten the human kind, it is not possible for us to set a limit to the length to which He would come down for the purpose. Therefore the arguments that sets up immaculate conception as necessary to His appearance in the human plane, loses its force completely. The Hindu scriptures on the other hand assert the fact that when the Deity condescends to take His birth among men, He assumes the frailties and weaknesses common to the human kind, and by controlling those with intense struggle sets up an ideal before men that they might follow in order to liberate themselves from such bondages. It is evident therefore, that to impose any kind of super-natural power on the Incarnations which they do not earn here as the result of their intense struggle to conquer the flesh and the frailties of the mind—or to make them appear in the human plane with such advantageous conditions as the ordinary run of humanity can never have, would be, according to the Hindu scriptures, to attempt to baffle the very purpose for which the Deity undergoes incarnations, and does not the theory of immaculate conception in its attempt to ward off the dross of carnal desires from the birth of the Incarnations, hint at the same time at their starting in this life with such unequal advantages as regards purity and power? The Hindus, therefore, can understand the greatness of a Jesus depending entirely on the will of the Father and suffering crucifixion at the hands of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, while he could have called in legions of angels to help him to baffle their

machinations—but cannot very well do so when his advent into the world is described to have taken place under conditions which fitted him with advantages, which are not granted to even a single one of the human kind.

The reader must not imagine however, from what has been stated above as the outlook of the Hindu scriptures on the theory of God-incarnations, that there are no record of cases in them of manifestations of supernatural powers or of extraordinary conditions of birth in regard to them. The miracles stated to have been performed by Sri Krishna from almost the very day of his birth, the conception of the widowed lady who gave birth to Sankara, by the powerful touch of the God Siva, and various other instances of the kind, would have gone against us, had we attempted to do so. Our point of contention in the above discourse, has been to impress on the reader the fact that the Hindu scriptures, while they acknowledge the occurrence of extraordinary cases of birth and of manifestations of super-human power in several of the Incarnations, do not hold them to be inevitably necessary in the formation of their lives; that they have recorded certain cases as God-incarnations in spite of there being no display in them of such extraordinary births and powers, and that they seem to support the fact that unique experiences had entered and would enter into the lives of the parents of all the Incarnations even though they had taken or would take their birth in this world in the common human way. The humble opinion to which we have arrived, therefore, by our examination of the Hindu scriptures on the subject, is that the theory, which regards super-human births to be necessary to God-incarnations, must have been a later growth; and that the record of the strange experiences that came invariably to the parents of them before and after their birth, and a great deal of which can be explained to have occurred in the natural way with the help of the Yoga philosophy of the Hindus—must have helped a good deal to the growth of the same in the hands of the ignorant and the credulous.

GREEK PHILOSOPHY AND ITS RELATION TO INDIAN THOUGHT.

By Swami Paramananda

(Continued from page 141)

At the moment when the Athenian world was thus permeated with Sophistic doctrines and deeply engrossed in material pleasures, a mighty figure rose in Athens, who despising wealth, ease and fame, devoted his whole life to the quest of Truth for the sake of Itself. This was Socrates, born in 470 B.C., soon after the great Persian war. He was the son of a sculptor and received the usual education of an Athenian youth. It is believed that he followed his father's profession for a time, but it is known that later he took part in two important military campaigns, during which his valour, his great physical strength and indifference to hardship awakened the admiration of his comrades. His ungainly personal appearance and careless dress made him conspicuous among the notably handsome and richly clad men of Athens. Even in winter he walked bare-footed and wore at every season the same homely clothing. He was indifferent not only to luxury, but even to the most ordinary comforts, and had perfect control over his appetites, while his mode of life even more than his teaching were an open protest against the conditions of the times. He wrote no books, he established no regular school of philosophy. He merely mingled freely with his fellow-citizens on the market-place and in the gymnasium, attacking every one with a wit and charm of eloquence which made him so irresistible, that a noted Athenian profligate declared : " I have heard Pericles and other excellent orators, but was not moved by them ; while this Marsyas—this Satyr—so affects me that the life I lead is hardly worth living and I stop my ears, as from the Syrens, and flee as fast as possible, that I may not sit down and grow old in listening to his talk." His quarrel, however, was never with persons, but with error. He frankly admitted his own ignorance and strove to convince other people of theirs. He claimed to follow his mother's profession (that of midwife) in the realm of thought, aiding those in labor with new ideas to give them birth. " My art of midwifery is in most respects like theirs," he says in Plato's Theætetus, " but the difference lies in this—I practise on their souls when they are in labor and not on their bodies." To accomplish this he adopted the dialectic method of questions and answers. Although Socrates became acquainted

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with the philosophy of Anaxagoras and his predecessors, he looked upon all effort to find the cause of the physical universe as futile. To " know one's self" he believed to be the vital aim of life, and in this study he often became so absorbed that he would lose all sense-consciousness. Alcibiades relates that he once stood still for twenty-four hours entranced in thought. He was profoundly religious, believing in a Divine Providence, in the immortality of the soul and the worthlessness of the body.

" When does the soul attain Truth ?" he asks (in Plato's " Phædo"). " We see that as often as she seeks to investigate anything in company with the body, the body leads her astray."

" True", replied Simmias.

" Is it not by reasoning, if at all, that any real Truth becomes manifest to her ?"

" Yes".

" And she reasons best, I suppose, when none of the senses whether hearing, or sight, or pain, or pleasure, harasses her ; when she has dismissed the body, and released herself as far as she can from all intercourse or contact with it, and so coming to be as much alone with herself as possible, strives after real Truth."

In another place Socrates is made to declare : " Religion will never allow me to admit falsehood or to stifle the Truth". It was, so he taught, the duty of every human being to strive to know and his whole ethical philosophy may be summed up in his well-known saying, " Virtue is knowledge, vice is ignorance."

Although Socrates himself did not found a regular school, yet his method of inquiry was adopted and carried out by his various followers, who, in their turn, became the founders of schools. Among these was Aristippus, Anthistenes, whose disciple was the noted cynic Diogenes, Euclid of Megara, Phædo of Elis and Plato ; but Plato alone was fully imbued with the Master's teaching, the others accepted only portions of it and hence differed widely among themselves.

Plato was born in 427 B.C. of an aristocratic family of Athens and after a thorough training in poetry, music, rhetoric and philosophy, he was brought in contact with Socrates at about the age of twenty. He became his ardent disciple and remained with him until the Master's death in 399 B.C. During the ten or twelve years which followed, he travelled continuously, going to Egypt, Sicily, Cyrene, Italy, and perhaps to Persia and Babylon. On his return to Athens, he began to teach in the Academy, a public garden in western suburb of the city, filled with tall plane trees, statues and

temples and named after the hero Academus. Here and in his own adjoining garden he drew round him a large band of disciples whom he taught, like his master, through informal conversations. He also wrote a number of works in the form of dialogues in which he sets forth the teaching of Socrates, emphasizing his master's method of always pushing back from the particular to the general, from the concrete to the abstract. When, for example, people spoke of a person's acts as just or beautiful, Socrates would ask with insistence, "What is justice? What is beauty?" and then would carefully analyze every definition offered until the ultimate idea would be reached.

This tendency to generalization is the most dominant feature in all of Plato's writings. He reasoned that all individual things are transitory, the abstract alone is eternal. He had learned from Socrates that beyond the sense-world was the world of eternal Truth; and that there were certain fundamental principles regarding which there could be no doubt. Therefore he strove to find through the process of dialectic the general terms for real existences, which he designated as "Ideas". These "Ideas" form the basis of Plato's system. They are, according to him, not mere mental concepts, but "the most real existences"—"patterns fixed in nature" as he defines them in his "Parmenides". The greatest of all *Ideas* is the Idea of the Good or God; to know This should be the chief end of philosophy. Man attains knowledge of Him by the attraction which like feels for like, the attraction which the Divine in man feels for the Divinity revealed in Creation as beauty. The longing of the soul to be united with this beauty is love. Love is the link which joins the human to the Divine. This union is to be attained through perpetual contemplation. Beauty, as conceived by Plato, however, is not what merely appeals to the senses; "all that is good is beautiful", he declares in the "Timæus". The true philosopher loves the beauty of the soul rather than that of the body and gradually rises from the love of the phenomenal beauty to the love of Absolute Beauty. As long as man remains a slave to his sense-appetites, he cannot realize Absolute Beauty.

"He attains to the knowledge of them (absolute good and absolute beauty) in their highest purity who goes to each of them with the mind alone, not allowing when in the act of thought the intrusion or introduction of sight or any other sense in the company of reason," (Phædo) ... "for we no longer seek for knowledge in perception at all, but in that other process, however called, in which the mind is alone and engaged with being." ("Theætetus")

It is very difficult to draw a line between the teachings of Plato and Socrates, as they are inseparable. The seed lovingly sown

by Socrates on the fertile soil of Plato's mind, gradually grew and blossomed in the sublime words of the "Republic," the "Phædo" the "Theætetus", and the many other great writings which have continued to inspire mankind over two thousand years. Plato systematized the philosophy of Socrates and carried to the highest point of mastery the dialectic method used by his master. But although in his dialogues he puts all his teachings into the mouth of Socrates, there can be no doubt that he more fully developed and enriched the original Socratic ideas.

This period in Greece shows such kinship with ancient Indian thought and customs in the nature of inquiry, mode of living and system of philosophical education that one cannot help but ask whether there is not some actual relation between the two. As the eminent Orientalist, Sir William Jones, remarks; "It is impossible to read the Vedanta or the many fine compositions in illustration of it, without believing that Pythagoras and Plato derived their sublime theories from the same fountain with the sages of India." The cardinal principles of the Vedic teaching;—the pre-existence and immortality of the soul, the law of Karma, the Divine nature of man, discrimination between the Real and the unreal, the habit of meditation in order to attain the superconscious state, all these appear reclothed in Plato's dialogues. In the "Phædo" we read: "There is an ancient belief, which we remember, that on leaving this world, they, the souls, exist there, and that they return hither and are born again from the dead... I am confident in the belief that there truly is such a thing as living again and that the living spring from the dead... But then O my friends, if the soul is really immortal, what care should be taken of her, not only in respect of the portion of time which is called life, but of eternity!... But now as the soul plainly appears to be immortal, there is no release or salvation from evil except in the attainment of the highest virtue and wisdom." True philosophy, therefore, "is not mere intellectual speculation, but a habit of mind and a manner of living."

Plato's Ultimate Idea of Good corresponds to the Unchangeable, Absolute Existence or *Sat*—of Vedanta; his "realm of Eternal Truth" beyond the sense-world seems to point to a knowledge of the superconscious state. The union of the human with the Divine born of the irresistible "attraction which like feels for like", is the "Yoga" of Indian Sages; and as the Katha-Upanishad proclaims: "He who has not turned away from evil conduct, whose senses are uncontrolled, who is not tranquil, whose mind is not at rest, can never attain the Self even by knowledge", so Plato declares that man merged in the flux of sensuality can never reach the knowledge of God. The ideal of the State and the

philosopher king drawn by Plato in his "Republic" was more than once realised in ancient Indian history,—in the wonderful characters of Yudhisthira, Janaka and others.

Plato was succeeded in the Academy by his sister's son, Speusippus, but his greatest disciple was Aristotle, whom Plato always called the intellect of the school. He was the son of the friend and physician of the king of Macedonia and was partially educated to take up his father's profession, but his insatiable desire for abstract knowledge made him abandon medicine and devote himself to philosophy. In his eighteenth year, (362 B.C.) he came to Athens to pursue his studies and on Plato's return from Syracuse sometime after, he became his pupil, soon making his master aware of his remarkable intellectual power. He remained at the Academy until Plato's death in 347 B.C. He then soon after left Athens and in 335 B.C. we find him back in Macedonia as the tutor of Alexander the Great. Twelve years after this, when Alexander set out on his invasion of Asia, Aristotle returned to Athens and at the age of fifty established a school which he called the Lyceum, because of its proximity to the Temple of Apollo-Lyceus. His habit of walking up and down the shaded paths of the garden as he taught won for him the name of the Peripatetic, which has ever since been attached to his system of philosophy. His school was widely celebrated and from it went out a number of the noted men of Greece. He himself is generally considered the most widely learned man of Greek antiquity as well as the most prolific writer, although he was entirely lacking in the charm and poetry of style so marked in Plato's Dialogues. His chief literary merit lay in his extraordinary precision and exactness in his use of terms. Aristotle, although differing from his master in his conception of "Ideas", added little to the fundamental principles as enunciated by Socrates and Plato, but he extended his field of investigation beyond the confines of ethics and philosophy, and has left works not only on dialectics but also on politics, natural history, and physics. His "History of Animals" was regarded as so important that his royal pupil presented him with the enormous sum of eight hundred talents with which to collect material for his researches. Hegel says: "Aristotle penetrated into the whole mass and into every department of the universe of things; and the greater number of the philosophical sciences owe to him their separation and commencement."

Plato had led men to the realm of "Ideas", Aristotle directed them to the study of nature; Plato had made reason the basis of knowledge, Aristotle gave this place to experience, which alone, he maintained, could furnish the principles of science. While Plato's

chief effort was to reach the abstract, Aristotle sought to know the relation of the particular to the general by a careful building up of evidence through a process of analysis and induction, which led to so high a development of syllogistic reasoning that even to the present day Aristotle is called the father of logic. Hegel and Kant claim that the science has gained nothing since that time. An equally developed system of logic founded by Gautama and known as Nyaya existed in India at least two centuries before Aristotle; and many Oriental scholars have believed that Aristotle became acquainted with it through his pupil Alexander the Great, who invaded India and, it is said, carried both manuscripts and teachers back to Greece. It is more probable, however, that each evolved his system independently.

With Aristotle the most glorious period of Greek philosophy came to a close. Although Zeno, the founder of the Stoic School, was a great teacher, and exercised a powerful influence not only in his own country but in the Roman world—Marcus Aurelius, Seneca and Epictetus being among his followers—still he evolved no new system and added nothing to the philosophical ideals already propounded. Thus we find through our comparative study that although differing in time and method, yet Indian Sages and Greek philosophers alike discovered the same fundamental truths which have lived through the ages and which continue to shed light far and wide, illumining the hearts of mankind.

THE ETHICAL ASPECT OF THE VEDANTA.

BY

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PART VII.

KARMA AND FATALISM.

The aim of all Vedantic teaching is to free the soul from the bondage of Karma. The Gita, II. 39, says :—

बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ।

“ Having which knowledge, O Partha, you will cast off the bondage of Karma.”

It is Karma which binds us to the body through the tendencies which it leaves behind as its effects ; and, as long as we are bound to one body after another in succession, the operative power of those tendencies impels us to further indulgence in desires and the activities resulting therefrom. Such bondage can only be removed in the first instance by doing Karma without love of fruit and, later on, when the mind is thus gradually purified, by the realising of the one existence through the instruction regarding the Atman gained from a gracious teacher. Such instruction and realisation can alone lead us to the bliss of true freedom. There can be no freedom for the individual soul till it realises the one Reality and its own substantial identity with it as the goal of spiritual evolution and the illumination to which it leads.

The Pythagoreans who are said to have received inspiration from Indian sources distinguished “thought” from “perception,” and held that, while the former process dealt with the sphere of abiding Being, the latter stood related to the contrasted world of Becoming or change. This distinction of a higher and lower kind of reality must have enabled the Pythagoreans to have “some dim perception of the problem of freedom.” Janet and Seailles (*Problems of Philosophy*, Vol. I) state their doctrine as follows :—“It was as a punishment for sin and a kind of expiation that the soul was thrown into the body. After death it went to Konnos or Tartarus according to its merit, or was condemned to make new peregrinations through the bodies of men or animals.” This closely resembles the Vedantic doctrine, above stated, of *Karma-bandha*, the bondage of the soul due to Karma. But, according to Janet and Seailles, “this theory seems to imply a notion of freedom.” Zeller, on the contrary, confessedly failed to understand the Pythagorean view when he says :—“We do not know whether the Pythagoreans regarded the union of the soul with the body as being founded on choice, or on a natural affinity, or on the arbitrary will of the gods.” If the soul is “thrown” into bodies or

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“condemned to peregrinate” through them, or made to go to various places, it can have no freedom or choice. Either “it is most probable that the question never arose with them ;” or, if it did, it is most probable that they connected freedom with what they believed to be the higher sphere of “abiding Being,” which they contrasted with the lower world of Becoming subject to the rule of law.

When Zeller, in the passage above quoted, speaks of the “arbitrary will of the gods” as determining the union of the soul with the body, he refers evidently to the doctrine which, in modern philosophical terminology, has come to be known as Fatalism. A writer in the latest edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* refers to “the strictly fatalistic doctrine which is characteristic of Oriental thought and is the negation of all human initiative.” Islam is here especially referred when its *Kismet* or *Nasib* is spoken of as “an absolute power conceived as inexorable and transcending all the physical laws of the universe.” It is also stated that “the most striking feature of Oriental fatalism is its complete indifference to material circumstances ; men accept prosperity and misfortune with calmness as the decree of fate.”

We think there is a good deal of interested misrepresentation in the attitude taken by Western writers, thinkers and preachers in regard to Oriental thought in general, and especially in regard to Islam. According to the late Dr. Bain, Leibnitz distinguishes three kinds of fatalism,—(1) Mahomedan fatalism, which supposes that, if the effect is pre-determined, it happens without a cause ; (2) Stoic fatalism, which taught men to be quiescent, for they were powerless to resist the course of things ; and (3) Christian fatalism,—“accepted by all Christians”—which admits a certain destiny of things regulated by the providence of God. If the distinction made by Leibnitz is accepted as correct, there is hardly much to choose between these doctrines. Regulation by the providence of an omnipotent and omniscient God is not very different from the pre-determination of the effect which is postulated by Islam. Islam is perfectly logical when it holds that what is pre-determined by the infinite divine intelligence happens without the cause,—without any such cause as is capable of being discerned by human intelligence. Islam does not deny divine regulation or omnipotence. In fact, the word *Islam* itself means “resignation to the divine will.” Moreover, we ought also to bear in mind what is said of Mahomedanism by an unprejudiced writer, the late Doctor G. W. Leitner, who says of himself, “My special knowledge of Mahomedanism began in a mosque-school at Constantinople in 1854, where I learned considerable portions of the Koran by heart. I have associated with Mahomedans of different sects in Turkey, India, and elsewhere, and have studied Arabic, the language in which their sacred literature is written.” Doctor Leitner writes as follows regarding the religion of

Mahommed :—"The question of what Mahomedanism really is cannot be summed up better than in stating it to be pure Judaism *plus* proselytism, and original Christianity *minus* the teaching of St. Paul. This as regards its theory; in practice it is far more than modern Christianity in its artificial European aspect,—the Sermon on the Mount translated into daily life."

Moreover the doctrine of fate appears in Christianity in another guise and under another name,—the belief in Predestination. The anonymous writer in the Encyclopædia Britannica already quoted says : "The idea of an omnipotent fate overruling all affairs of men is present in various forms in practically all religious systems." Whether it is present in the Vedanta religion we shall presently proceed to consider. Here we have to deal with the Christian doctrine of predestination. That doctrine is inculcated in two forms,—conditional predestination and unconditional predestination. The Greek Fathers taught only conditional predestination. Man exerts his free will in a right direction, and then divine aid follows. God, being omniscient, pre-ordains the blessings and rewards which are to be allotted to those whom he foresees to be worthy of them, and similarly also pre-ordains the punishments to be meted out to the unworthy. Augustine came forward to oppose Pelagius who held that sin was not an affair of nature, but of will,—that man came into life pure and without original sin or guilt, that the will consisted in the capacity of deciding equally for the good or evil, that what preceded one's own voluntary decision cannot be sin and only what proceeded from a man's will could be attributed to him as sin. All new-born children were in the same state as Adam before the fall, and there was no propagation of sin by generation. Pelagius also held that grace was partly at least due to the capacity of the moral nature (*i.e.*, the freedom) bestowed on all men by God. Against these views Augustine held that the first man contained the whole race, that all men were not only potentially, but really present in him, and so sin is present in all men even before individual sinful acts exist. From the sinfulness and impotency of all men, Augustine deduced his doctrine of absolute or unconditional predestination. Those who believe in the Gospel with a saving faith are not merely elected to be the recipients of the heavenly reward; they are elected to be the recipients of a saving faith. Even the faith of the elect is the gift of God, and all others are left in sin to perish. The number of the elect is fixed and pre-determined in God's plan. Believers are not all of the elect, but only such of them as are chosen by God. Augustine also held that among the elect were several who, irrespective of the time and place in which Christ made his appearance, had lived a just and pious life. Luther and Zwingli also believed in unconditional predestination. Calvin held also, that eternal damnation is pre-ordained for some, and eternal life for others. The doctrine has lived on to modern times, and we find so recent a theologian as

Canon Mozley proclaiming his belief in both predestination and freedom and only demanding that care should be taken to rule out all practical inferences from either which might be shown to be unscriptural or immoral.

We now pass to the Vedanta. The doctrine of Karma has often in the West been confounded with fatalism. Nothing can be a greater mistake. The Atman, in truth, is *asanga*, unattached, and uncontaminated by association with matter. It is the primeval ignorance of the true Self that brings the Jiva into contact with the attractions of the sense-world and give rise to desires which, in turn, give rise to Karma and its effect in binding the Jiva to the wheel of Samsara. But the Jiva's will at any moment is determined only by two influences,—(1) the pre-natal store of *samskaras* (tendencies) which his activities in past births have left behind in his mind and which inevitably influence the present activities and choices of all kinds; and (2) the *samskaras* due to the cultivation of impulses purposively fostered in this birth and which might be calculated either to augment the force of the store of tendencies already organised or to check it with a view to the attainment of a higher spiritual destiny or a definite secular and utilitarian achievement here. In either case Karma—both now and in the course of the Jiva's past career—is entirely of his own making and not dependent on the workings of the will and authority of any outside power acting irresistibly on his senses, intellect, feeling and will. The blessed Bhagavan has taught this same truth in the Gita, VI. 5.

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ।

"The self only is the friend of the self, and the self only is the enemy of the self."

Sankaracharya expands the same idea in the following delightful sloka:—

आत्ममये महति पटे विविधजगच्चित्रमात्मना लिखितम् ।

स्वयमेव केवलमसौ पश्यन्प्रमुदं प्रयाति परमात्मा ॥

"This Paramatma experiences delight by himself seeing merely the variety of the world's life-picture drawn by himself on the vast world-canvas which is a transformation of himself."

Even in the Sankhya system, Pradhana (primordi 1 matter) exists for the sake of the Purusha, not the Purusha for Prakriti or for any one else. Before it starts on its evolutionary course, Prakriti has its energies in equipoise. When once it starts on its process of evolution and as long as that process continues, it works for the benefit of the Purusha (Atman). What Spencer says of evolution—that it is the passing from simple, coherent, homogeneity into compound, incoherent, heterogeneity, a process of integration of what has been differentiated out of the undifferentiated—is true of the Pradhana of the

Sankhya. But what, according to the Evolutionist, is the end and purpose of evolution? No answer is forthcoming, or an answer like Spencer's which is the most astounding and desperate that the human mind can conceive. According to Spencer, "it is alike our wisdom and our highest duty to regard that through which all things exist as Unknowable." At other times, he regards it as a Persistent Power or Force, and identifies it with the God of Religion so as to reconcile religion with science. But whatever the name given to it, so long as we cannot know that through which all things exist, it cannot stand definitely related to the Jiva and his destiny. As Sidgick points out, religious thought and sentiment are reduced by Spencer "to a perfectly indefinite consciousness of the Unknowable, and the emotion that accompanies this peculiar intellectual exercise." The Vedanta, on the other hand, is not a system of agnosticism. The one existence or reality—the Brahman,—is of the nature of Knowledge and experience,—“बोधस्वरूपसत्ता”, as Sankara puts it in his *Svalmanirupanam*. Self-knowledge or Self-attainment is the attainment for which the living self (Jiva) works. There exists no outside Force or Power on whose irresistible will and mandate either the ultimate destiny of the individual (Jiva) or his previous life of preparation for its attainment can be made to depend.

Finally, what is the function of Isvara in deciding the destiny of the Jiva? What help does Isvara render to the Jiva in working out that destiny? What does the Vedanta mean when it holds that Isvara is both Omniscient (सर्वज्ञ) and Omnipotent (सर्वशक्तिमान्)? The answer is threefold. First, he reveals the Veda, its truths and its methods of preparation and enlightenment for the benefit of the world—to enable the Jiva to attain its destiny of perfection. Of course it is easy to say,—are all other systems of thought and life false? We give our reply in the words which Sri Sankaracharya uses in speaking of certain Indian systems of philosophical doctrine: — “आगमेन स्वात्मास्तित्वेऽवगते वेदप्रदर्शितलौकिकलिङ्गाविशेषैश्च तदनुसारिणो मीमांसकास्तार्किकाश्चाहं प्रत्ययलिङ्गानि च वैदिकान्येव स्वमतिप्रभवानीति कल्पयन्तो वदन्ति प्रत्यक्षश्चानुमेयश्चाऽऽप्तेति ।” “When the knowledge of the existence of the Atman has been learned from the Veda and by such secular arguments in proof of it as are specially taught by the Veda, the Mimamsakas and Tarkikas, having found them worthy of acceptance, imagine that these Vedic reasonings which establish the consciousness of the Ego (*aham-pratyaya*) are discoveries emanating from their own minds, and declare that the existence of the Atman can be independently established by perceptive experience (of the senses) and by ratiocination” (Bhashya on Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad). History bears testimony to the fact that Indian teachers and philosophers have from the earliest periods of which we have an authentic record of any value, carried the knowledge of the Indian sages to such

civilised peoples of the West as have shown themselves capable of comprehending their import and importance. The Veda can be, and has been, proved to be beginningless and eternal, and to have no human author. Isvara, also, has to reveal it to the *adhikarika-purushas* or authoritative functionaries whose duty is to maintain the order of the universe. Moreover, the blessed Bhagavan has said in the Gita, IV, that he first taught the Supreme Secret to Vivasvat (Sloka 1), that he was again teaching it to Arjuna (Sloka 3) as the knowledge of it had become decayed and lost through lapse of time (Sloka 2), and that one of his own duties was to manifest himself in the world for the firm establishment of the truth whenever there was a decay of virtue and growth of vice (Slokas 7 and 8). Secondly, Isvara can alone know and determine what are the rewards and punishments due to each Jiva according to his behaviour in each of his innumerable previous births in any part of the immense universe, and also alone has the power over the material universe necessary to distribute its objects in the proper time, place and manner according to the deserts of each and all. Thirdly, Isvara's will is the efficient cause of the manifestation and sustentation of the material universe which is his body and therefore under his control. All these ideas and more are expressed in the following sloka of the Svetasvatara-Upanishad:—

एको देवः सर्वभूतेषु गूढः सर्वव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ।

कर्माभ्यश्चः सर्वभूताधिवासः साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च ॥

“The luminous one who is hidden in all beings, the all-pervader, the innerself of all beings, the overseer guiding all activities, who changelessly abides in all beings, the witness, the knower who is one only (without a second), free from all qualities and changes.”

The same ideas are also expressed regarding himself by the blessed Bhagavan in verses 10, 17, and 18 of Gita, Chapter IX.

We thus see that Isvara is only the helper of the Jiva in building his (Jiva's) own fortune and that he is no slave-driver or tyrant who delights in relentlessly subjecting all to his arbitrary purposes and mandates. The Vedanta happily combines the inevitable results of tendencies stored by past Karma with the counteraction of them effected by present efforts of the human will, and thus harmonises the traditional opposition between the doctrines of free-will and fate.

The Vedanta has also a distinct answer which equally reconciles the old conflict between the various doctrines relating to the correspondence between mental and material changes,—whether that correspondence is one due to the causation of material changes by mental or *vice versa*, or to the harmony pre-established by the divine mind, or to mere chance,—problems hitherto recognised as altogether beyond the power of the human mind to grapple with in a satisfactory manner. The answer of the Vedantin is based upon the recognition

of the fact that there are only two categories knowable by man's intelligence. Sri Sankaracharya says,—

दृग्दृश्यौ द्वौ पदार्थौ स्तः परस्परविलक्षणौ ।

दृग्ब्रह्म दृश्यं मायेति सर्ववेदान्तदिशिदमः ॥

"There are only two substances different each from the other, viz., the perceiver (*drik*) and the perceived (*drisya*). The perceiver is the Brahman (reality) and the perceived is Maya (unreality)."

The seer or witness is always one and the same, the eternal and intelligent reality,—while the material object, whether it be mind or matter, and the changes which are inseparable from its nature and existence are the objects of the seer's intelligent perception. Modern science has shown that the mind is seated in the grey matter of the cerebral hemispheres, and hence that it is as material as the brain which is its organ. Also, when the grey matter is experimentally removed from the brain of animals, these animals, while they continue to live and are capable of mechanical adjustments in response to stimulation, lose their power of mental control over activity. It has also been experimentally proved that, if the grey matter of one of the cerebral hemispheres is removed, the mind is taken away from the corresponding side of the body, and its presence and operation are confined to the other side. For these and other reasons, the human mind is as material as the body or any part of it. Moreover, according to modern science, not only all forms of energy are modes of motion, but also matter is perceived only when certain modes of motion pass into other modes. What are the motions or modes of motion due to, in consequence of which perception of matter arises in us? How are we to account, also, for the fact that law prevails throughout all changes of motion? The answer of the Vedantin is contained in Sutras 1 and 2 of Adhyaya 2, Pada 2 of the Sariraka-Mimamsa Sutras, which criticise the Sankhya doctrine of the non-intelligent Prakriti as the cause of the manifested world. It is enough to quote a passage from each of the Chashyas of Sri Sankaracharya on those Sutras. On Sutra 1 he writes,—“नाचेतनं लोके चेतनानधिष्ठितं स्वतन्त्रं किञ्चिद्विशिष्टपुरुषार्थं निर्वर्तनसमर्थान्विकारान्विरचयदृष्टम्” “A non-intelligent thing which, without being guided by an intelligent being, spontaneously and in an orderly manner produces effects capable of subserving the purposes of some particular person is nowhere observed in the world.” Hence a non-intelligent material cause like the Pradhana of the Sankhyas cannot produce the orderly arrangement (रचना) of the world, unless ruled by some intelligent principle. On Sutra 2, the Acharya says:—“न हि मृदादयो रथादयो वा स्वयमचेतनाः सन्तश्चेतनैः कुलालादिभिरश्वदिभिर्बानधिष्ठिता विशिष्टकार्याभिमुखप्रवृत्तयो दृश्यन्ते । दृष्टाच्चादृष्टसिद्धिः । अतः प्रवृत्त्यनुपपत्तेरपि हेतोर्नाचेतनं जगत्कारणमनुमातव्यं भवति” “We observe that clay and the like, and chariots and the

like—which are in their own nature non-intelligent enter on activities tending towards particular effects only when they are acted upon by intelligent beings such as potters, etc., in the one case, and horses and the like in the other case. From what is seen we determine what is not seen. Hence a non-intelligent cause of the world is not to be inferred because, on that hypothesis, the activity without which the world cannot be produced would be impossible.” We cannot here extract the entire discussion by which this conclusion is finally established. Enough has been said to show that both the production and succession of material causes and effects according to law and the modes of motion and changes in the modes of motion which are seen to appertain to external objects are due to an intelligent being, and that is the Atman or Brahman of the Upanishads. Neither material changes cause mental changes, nor mental changes cause material changes; nor is there any need for the hypothesis of pre-established harmony, or mere chance,—for the harmony is due to the Karma of the intelligent Jiva and the dispensing of the fruits of Karma by an intelligent Supreme Ruler (Isvara) in accordance with the dictates of justice and righteousness permanently proclaimed by him for the guidance, happiness, and advancement of all Jivas incarnating in any part of the material universe.

“I BOW TO HIM.”

BY

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.,

I bow to Him whose fateful will
Sends pulsing through the universe
Life's hellish woe and heavenly thrill,
Its mingled prose and tuneful verse.

I bow to Him whose radiance bright
Lends glory to the sun and skies,
And lights in souls Thought's heavenly light,
And gives perceptive power to eyes.

I bow to Him whose boundless love
Makes Him incarnate on our sphere
To lead us to His realm above
The bourne of Time's revolving year.

I bow to Him whose mercy sweet
Uprises fountain-like through seas
Of sin and flows unto the seat
Of Beauty, Love, Joy, Wisdom, Peace.

TO THE LAND OF THE SNOWS

BY

A. K. D.

(Continued from page 157.)

At about 10 o'clock in the morning of the 5th June we left the extremely wild and rugged scenery of Kedar, to see Badri. In the next two days we covered 40 miles with a jaded march and reached Akhimath (just opposite Guptakashi) long after sunset. Our guide, one of our companions and the coolies could not reach the place, and so they passed the night at an inn 3 miles behind us. We had no bed, no cover. It was a bitter experience indeed. A sweetmeat vender kindly lent us a blanket which was made into bed. But it was very cold and no covering could be procured. What could be done! We lit a good fire in the room and lay promiscuously together in the corner like so many sheep in a pen. At morning we visited the Math—the seat of the Rawal of the Kedarnath. The priests of Kedarnath also live here. There are several images of Siva, Parvati, Mandhata, Anirudha and Usha. Before I came here I thought I would be favoured with the sight of many a gifted seer and spiritual soul deeply immersed in meditation. But alas, what a frustration, when I found not a single soul of the kind there. Close to this place, in an age gone by, existed the capital, named Sonitpur, of the king Vana. His daughter Usha did a great penance here and hence she was carried away by Anirudha to be his spouse. It was she who gave the name to the place. About six miles towards the north-east there is a small lake called Diurital (the second largest in Garhwal) at an elevation of 8,000 feet. It is a picturesque sheet of water about 800 yards in circumference. The sight from its banks is one of the grandest in the hills—one gets a full view of Badrinath, from its base to the summit, rising at a distance of about 15 miles from the spot. Early in the morning the whole snowy range of which Badrinath and Kedarnath are only spurs, is clearly reflected in its water.

On the morning of the 8th we reached a place named Chabbatta in the glade of a thick forest through which we had to pass. From here we saw one of the finest sights in the hills. It formed as it were a dividing line between the northern and the southern hills. On the north, was clearly visible the line of snow-covered hills lying above the route to Kedarnath and some parts of

the Kedarnath itself and also the whole of the Chaukhamba peaks. The peaks of Kedarnath are so precipitous, that they almost looked perpendicular, so much so that no snow can rest on their grey sides. The Chaukhamba peaks appeared like a huge crater of an extinct volcano with walls still standing and hollow inside. On the south, rose range after range of smaller hills green with vegetation extended in parallel lines as far as the distant horizon giving the semblance of a vast ocean with its deep blue billows of stupendous height and standing still. It was an inspiring scene indeed! Close to the left jets up the cliff named Tunganath forming the southern side of the Chandrasila peak (12,071 feet), on which is the temple of Tunganath, one of the five Kedars spoken of before. A mile above from here is a place named Bhimgara (where we halted for breakfast) where Bhima the second Pandava fell down and died in his attempt to go to heaven alive.

On the morning of the 9th we reached Chamoli on the left bank of the Alakananda. While coming here we passed through a village named Gopeswar, which possesses a fine old temple of Siva surrounded by a court-yard where stands a trident of iron with a shaft of the same material bearing on it an ancient inscription now rather defaced by time. It speaks of the victory of Anekamalla, the King of Nepal in the 12th century. Chamoli is a good place and many things are available there. It is the head quarters of a Deputy Collector and has a good bazar. Before 1893 the bazar was on the right bank of the river, but the notorious Gohna flood completely washed it away. It would perhaps be interesting to give a short description here of that terrible flood which devastated a large tract of land in the district. At a spot few miles to the north-east of Chamoli a great landslip occurred in September 1893 forming a vast dam in the course of the river Birehi Ganga, 900 feet high, 11,000 feet wide at the base and 2,000 feet wide at the summit. This locked the water of the river which began to accumulate. Expert opinions spoke that nothing would happen until the accumulated waters surmounted the barrier. All the necessary precautions were taken by the Government. A telegraph line was laid out from this spot to Hardwar to telegraph warnings of the approaching catastrophe. The danger limits of the expected flood were marked out by pillars beyond which all the inhabitants were asked to go. In the following year early in the morning of 25th August, the water reached the top of the barrier and began to flow over it and about midnight the dam collapsed with a loud crash and an enormous mass of water rushed down the Alakananda. The next morning the lake fell down to 390 feet and nearly 400 million

cubic yards of water had escaped. Much damage was done to private and public property all down the river. A permanent lake now exists of the name of Gohna with a proper outlet over the remains of the barrier. It is now by far the largest not only in the district, but in the whole division, being nearly 400 acres in area, that is, three times the size of Naini Tal.

In the following two days we crossed 27 miles and reached the famous Josi Math on the morning of the 11th June. Our road was comparatively a nicer one, and we had to pass through several notable places. A very funny incident occurred on our way and I feel much tempted to recount it. In the afternoon of the 10th we arrived at an inn, but found it too full. So we went forward and reached an inn just at evening. It was wretched, small and more than full. Three of us managed somehow to secure a sitting space there. What could be done for the rest. About a quarter of a mile down, there was a shed just like a pig's sty. We had no other alternative but to fall back to that place. A Sadhu was there with a fire burning before him. He cordially received us and asked the owner to make room for the Narayanas (meaning us), on which the owner, who desired to remain there, left the place for us and we lay there like so many sheep. At midnight a rustle like that of the foot-fall of a beast awoke one of us. Awakening he saw a shadow near him. Voice stuck to his throat in fear and he with great exertion whispered to the nearest companion that a tiger was come. He intimated the fact *sotto voce* to one near him. Thus the fact became known to all. But intense fear held them all spell-bound. For sometime none could move or speak. At last all of us began to yell out hideously. The beast, which was standing at a few yard distance, perhaps felt astonished and remained motionless. We were all half dead with fear. At last the Sadhu asked us to light the lamp. But none had the boldness to get up and do so. So the Sadhu did it himself and went fearlessly towards the beast with the lantern. To our great astonishment it was found out to be a wild buffalo calf which fled away at the sight of the Sadhu. Our terror melted into wild laughter, but we could not sleep again that night.

Joshimath is a nice place. Formerly it was the capital of the local kings whose line is now extinct and was then called Jotir-dham. It is sheltered on every side by a circular ridge and especially so on the north where a high mountain screens off the cold blasts that rush down the Himalayas. It is well inhabited and contains a pretty market of many shops. The *Pujaris* and the Rawal of Badrinath live there. The principal deity of the place is Nrisinha,

Many curious legends are told about this idol. One of them is that one arm of the idol is growing thinner daily and when it falls off in time the road to Badrinath shall be closed by a landslip and a new temple will be erected at Bhabisya-Badri or at Adi-Badri. In front of the temple of Nrisinha there is a large open square having a stone cistern with 2 brazen spouts which yield a never-failing flow of water. A cluster of temples bearing marks of great antiquity extends along one side of the square. In the centre stands the temple of Vishnu. The statue about 7 feet high and supported by 4 female figures, is of black stone and of a very superior style of workmanship. Some of the temples are much dilapidated, having been partially overthrown by earthquakes. To strengthen Hinduism the great Sankaracharya established four monasteries in the four corners of India. The monastery in the north was established here and is called Joshimath. But now not a vestige of its pristine sanctity is seen. There was not a single monk in the building where the monastery stood. Before I came here I built brilliant hopes that I would see this place teeming with Sadhus—real Mahatmas—and resonant with the Vaidic songs. But I was totally disappointed in it. From here begins the Niti Pass to Tibet.

Going a mile steep down from here we reached Vishnuprayag—the third sacred junction on our way. Here the Dhavliganga—a roaring torrent, joins the Alakananda. The confluence viewed from the steps leading to the bathing ghat, is a magnificent spectacle. The scenery around is wild and rugged in the extreme, while the mountains are bare and rocky. Part of the course of Alakananda from this point to some distance up is called Vishnuganga, owing to the existence of a *kund* (pool) sacred to Vishnu, in its waters just below the Vishnu temple built on a tongue of rock at the junction. Pilgrims bathe here. They are obliged to hold on the iron chains and rings to prevent themselves from being washed away as the current is very deep and swift. But despite this precautionary measure some lives are lost every year.

We took rest for the night at Pandukeswar a few miles up from here. The place contains the temple of Yoga Badri, one of the Pancha Badri. The image is metallic and is said to have been brought down from the heavens by Arjuna. There are some famous copper plates preserved in the temple containing inscriptions dating from the days of the Katyuri Dynasty. On the crest of a hill close by a flat piece of rock exists, which is pointed out as the place where Pandu Raja performed penance. The place is famous as the birth place of the Pandavas.

Next morning, we found the rain that had commenced at 10 in the previous night did not cease still. But as there were only 10 miles more to reach the desired spot we ventured out. It drizzled all through the way and our feet were slipping now and again. The path was a steep uphill one and its condition was most wretched on account of the many landslips that occurred and were still occurring. Glaciers had to be crossed in more than one place. But we saw one of the most curious sights. The river was frozen from one bank to the other. The waters gurgled through the arches of snow. The heavy accumulation of moraine spoke of the great firmness of those arches. At places peculiar fantastic shapes of ice were formed by the erosion of rain water. Proceeding about 5 or 6 miles we reached a spot called *Hānuman Chāti* where in the days of yore Baikhanas Rishi performed a great sacrifice. Even now it is said the sacrificial ashes could be dug up. But so extremely wearisome was the way that we felt our strength almost failing; yet nowhere rest could be taken, as the rocks were falling all around. The temple however was visible from a mile's distance, and it is strange to say, no sooner was its spire seen than all fatigue was forgotten in our ardour of getting unto it. Such indeed was the case also with all the pilgrims.

(To be continued).

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE RELIEF WORK.

The news of the terrible famine that is now raging in many parts of the country is not unknown to our countrymen, and our readers have already been acquainted with the fact that the Ramakrishna Mission is trying its best to succour the distress of the starving and has opened centres of relief works in different parts of Bengal and Assam. We are glad to announce that the condition of the famine-stricken people in the Noakhali District and South Tipperah has now greatly improved and the relief centres in these places have been closed. But North Tipperah and specially Cachar have been hapless victims of heavy floods, and the Mission centres of relief are sparing no pains to alleviate the sufferings of the people from this terrible scourge. The havoc committed by the flood specially in Silchar in Kachar District is very serious. Nearly 80 per cent. of the houses in the villages adjoining the town has collapsed, and the loss of the cattle in the devastated area is reported to be very great. The crying needs in Silchar are:—paddy seeds, rice for consumption, reconstruction of houses and fodder for the cattle. The floods in this district were as high as they

were violent. It is, therefore, that though at present all the water has subsided, the flood has left behind it only ruins, with the result that the people are without food and habitation. The miserable plight in which the inhabitants of Silchar and Brahmanbaria are at present placed, demands immediate relief. The temporary relief centres at Kuti, Akhauda, Devagram and Gangasagar have been closed and six new centres have been started at Nasirnagar, Sultanpur, Sulipur, Ashtagram, Gokarna, and Bhotakat. The three old centres at Silchar, Brahmanbaria and Bitghar are working as before. At Silchar paddy-seeds have been distributed, and every attempt is being made to relieve the middle classes and widows in their hours of woe. Cloths were distributed from all the centres, as necessity demanded. The report of the 30th August says that in two weeks more than 283 maunds of rice were distributed in 312 villages. The total numbers of families and persons relieved were 2,886 and 5,383, respectively. Besides this more than 55 maunds of rice were distributed as temporary relief from all the centres.

It is with a heavy heart that we bring to the notice of the kind public the news of the famine in the District of Balasore in Orissa. The attention of the public has not yet been sufficiently drawn to the distress of the people of this district, as being illiterate they could not publish their tales of woe in the newspapers, so as to reach the ears of their benevolent countrymen. Besides this, a terrible famine is threatening also the District of Bankura in Bengal. Here also the Ramakrishna Mission has opened recently some relief centres.

The task before us is indeed very heavy and can never be accomplished without the proper help of the generous public. We earnestly appeal, on behalf of the starving *Narayanas*, to all sympathising souls to lose no time to come to the rescue of the suffering humanity, and hope there will be no want of funds for the service of the hungry and the naked.

Contributions, however small, and cloths, old and new, will be thankfully received and acknowledged at either of the following addresses:—

Swami Brahmananda, President, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Math, Belur P. O., District Howra, Bengal or The Manager, the Udbodhana Office, 1 Mukerjee Lane, P. O., Baghbazar, Calcutta.

GENERAL NEWS.

The 14th. Annual Meeting of the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares was held on the 2nd October 1915 on the newly acquired land of the Home under the Presidency of G. B. Lambert, Esq., I. C. S., Magistrate and Collector, Benares. Nearly 500 people of all ranks and community graced the meeting. The proceedings commenced with the reading of the 14th Annual Report by Rai Ravinandan Prasad Bahadur, the Secretary of the Home which was much appreciated by all. Then at the Chairman's call Dr. I. J. S. Taraporewala, Head Master, Central Hindu Collegiate School, rose and spoke how the usefulness of the Home is increasing year after year. The necessity of such an institution like the Home of Service in a place like Benares is beyond question, and it is the duty of every one to extend a helping hand to enable the Home to carry on the required extension. Four wards for patients requiring isolation from others have been taken in hand, and he wished to see the whole project enumerated in the present report would be carried out at no distant date. After him Professor Sri Prakash, Bar-at-Law, spoke in Hindi on the importance and necessity of organised charity. The Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service is an organisation which deserves support from all, as service is rendered to all irrespective of caste and creed. Babu Amrita Lal Bose, of Calcutta, made a stirring speech for help to the institution. Mr. K. P. Chatterjee followed him and spoke in Hindi. The Chairman next rose and expressed his appreciation of the work of the Home, and hoped that help will be coming to an institution like this. The Secretary then moved hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman on behalf of the Home of Service for the keen interest taken and sympathy shown. The meeting then dispersed.

A woman named Kiransasi Dasi, employed as cook to a Zamindar at Dacca, has given her life's savings, amounting to a thousand rupees, to the Ramakrishna Mission at Dacca.

who has realised Atman transcends all action and re-action of the sense-pleasure, and enjoys that ineffable peace.

The enjoyable—The Atman who is of the very nature of bliss.

The house is open etc.—Sometimes the state of consciousness where Brahman is realised is called metaphorically *Brahmapuram*, the house of Brahman. Yama is asserting here that the realisation of the Atman is not very far off for Nachiketas.]

अन्यत्र धर्मादन्यत्राधर्मादन्यत्रास्मात्कृताकृतात् ।

अन्यत्र भूताच्च भव्याच्च यत्तत्पश्यसि तद्वद ॥ १४ ॥

धर्मात् from Dharma अन्यत्र different अधर्मात् from Adharma अन्यत्र different, अस्मात् from this कृताकृतात् (कृतं and अकृतं) from the effect and the cause. अन्यत्र different, भूतात् from the past च and भव्यात् the future अन्यत्र different तत् that यत् which पश्यसि (thou) beholdest, तत् that वद tell.

(Nachiketas said :)

That which thou beholdest as different from Dharma and Adharma, as different from cause and effect, as different from what had been and what shall be, please tell (me) that.

सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति तपांसि सर्वाणि च यद्वदन्ति ।

यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण ब्रवीम्योमित्येतत् ॥ १५ ॥

सर्वे all वेदाः the Vedas यत् which पदं the goal आमनन्ति proclaim, सर्वाणि all तपांसि (acts of) penance च and यत् which वदन्ति declare यत् which इच्छन्तः desiring ब्रह्मचर्यं the life of Brahmacharin चरन्ति lead तत् that पदं goal ते to thee संग्रहेण briefly ब्रवीमि (I) tell—
ॐ Om इति एतत् it.

(Yama said:)

The goal which all Vedas proclaim, which all penances declare, and desiring which they lead the life of Brahmacharin,—I tell it to thee in brief,—it is Om.

[The goal—The original is पदं which may mean a goal, a state or a word. Sankaracharya has taken it here to mean, "the goal;" but it can very well be interpreted to mean 'word.'

Which all penances, etc.—i.e., which is realised through the performance of penances.

It is Om—Om is called *Sabda-Brahman* as it is the only phonetic symbol of Brahman. In it is the rudiment of all sounds. As there can be no idea or thought without a corresponding 'name,' word or sound, so sound is considered as inseparably associated with ideation, be it manifest or otherwise. The idea of Brahman, if it could be formed at all, is infinitely all-comprehensive and so must also be its sound symbol or counterpart. Om consists of three primary sounds, अ, उ, म;—अ is the first of the guttural sounds, so it is the very first sound that man can utter; म is the last of the labial sounds; and उ is the sound produced by rolling the wind over the whole of the tongue. Hence the conjunction of these three primary sounds can be comprehended to contain the rudiment of all sounds that man can ever give utterance to, and so it can be taken as the fittest sound symbol of Brahman. More comprehensive explanation of Om is given in the *Mandukya Upanishad*, and it has been incidentally dealt with in *Prasna* and *Chchandogya Upanishads*.]

एतद्व्येवाक्षरं ब्रह्म एतद्व्येवाक्षरं परं ।

एतद्व्येवाक्षरं ज्ञात्वा यो यदिच्छति तस्य तत् ॥ १६ ॥

एतत् this अक्षरं syllable (imperishable) एव हि indeed ब्रह्म Brahman एतत् this अक्षरं syllable एव हि also परं the highest. एतत् एव हि this indeed अक्षरं syllable ज्ञात्वा knowing यः who यत् whatever इच्छति desires तस्य his तत् that (सिध्यति is attained).

This syllable is Brahman; this syllable is also the highest. Having known this syllable, whatever one desires, one gets that.

[*Brahman*—Here it means the lower or *Saguna* Brahman.

The Highest—It means the higher or *Nirguna* Brahman.

NOTE—Here Om is spoken of as Brahman itself. It is the symbol of Brahman and so should be meditated upon as Brahman itself.]

एतदालम्बनं श्रेष्ठमेतदालम्बनं परं ।

एतदालम्बनं ज्ञात्वा ब्रह्मलोके महीयते ॥ १७ ॥

• एतत् this आलम्बनं support (or means) श्रेष्ठ the best. परं the supreme; एतत् आलम्बनं this support ज्ञात्वा knowing ब्रह्मलोके in the sphere of Brahman महीयते is worshipped.

This support is the best, this support is the supreme. Knowing this support one is worshipped in the world of *Brahma*.

[*This support etc.*—Here support means the means of realisation of both the supreme Brahman as well as the macrocosmic life of *Brahma*.

Knowing this support—i.e. having fully realised the significance of Om.]

न जायते म्रियते वा विपश्चिन्नायं कुतश्चिन्न बभूव कश्चित् ।

अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥ १८ ॥

विपश्चित् the knowing soul न जायते is not born, म्रियते वा nor dies. अयं this कुतश्चित् from any thing न बभूव did not come into being, (अस्मात् from it) न कश्चित् nothing whatever (बभूव came into being), अयं this अजः unborn, नित्यः eternal, शाश्वतः everlasting पुराणः the ancient हन्यमाने being destroyed शरीरे the body न हन्यते is not destroyed.

The knowing soul is not born, nor it dies. It has not come into being from any thing, nor any thing has come into being from it. This unborn, eternal, everlasting, ancient one suffers no destruction, even the body being destroyed.

[*Note*.—In the 14th *mantram* of this *Adhyaya*, Nachiketas asked Yama to tell him about that entity which is beyond all Dharma and relations and which is uncreated and transcendental. In reply to that, Yama first speaks of Om which is the symbol of Brahman and so a means to the realisation of the Atman. And now in this and subsequent *mantrams* he speaks of the true nature of the Atman.]

हन्ता चेन्मन्यते हन्तुं हतश्चेन्मन्यते हतं ।

उभो तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥ १९ ॥

हन्ता the killer चेत् if हन्तुं that he kills मन्थते thinks, हतः the killed चेत् if हतं killed मन्थते considers तौ those उभौ both न विजानीतः do not know well. अयं this न हन्ति kills not न हन्यते nor is killed.

If the killer thinks that he is killing, and the killed thinks that he is killed, both of them know it not. It kills not, nor is it killed.

[Cf. Bhagavat Gita II. 19, 20.]

अणोरणीयान्महतो महीयानात्मास्य जन्तोर्निहितो गुहायां ।

तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको धातुप्रसादान्महिमानमात्मनः ॥ २० ॥

अणोः than the smallest (atoms) अणीयान् smaller. महतः than the biggest (like the sky) महीयान् bigger, आत्मा the Atman अस्य this जन्तोः of the creature गुहायां in the heart निहितः (अस्ति) is dwelling अक्रतुः the desireless वीतशोकः free from grief धातुप्रसादात् through the purity (tranquillity) of the senses and the mind आत्मनः of the Atman तं that महिमानं glory पश्यति realises.

The Atman, smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest, dwells in the heart of the creatures. The desireless, being free from grief, realises that glory of the Atman, through the purity of the senses and the mind.

[The desireless—i.e. one who has relinquished all desires for enjoyments of this life and of the next as well.

Through the purity of the senses etc.,—Unless the mind and the senses are restrained from their evil ways and made tranquil, the Atman cannot be realised. Desires and other impurities of the mind and the activities of the senses give no respite as it were, to our consciousness to settle in itself to discern its own inner self. Hence is the necessity of keeping the mind and the senses perfectly tranquil for attaining self-realisation.]

आसीनो दूरं व्रजति शयानो याति सर्वतः ।

कस्तं मदामदं देवं मदन्यो ज्ञातुमर्हति ॥ २१ ॥

The Vedanta Kesari

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that 'I am the Atman.'"

—Swami Vivekananda.

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE GREAT MASTER.

BY

Swami Saradananda.

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IX.

The Early Days of Gadadhar.

It is wonderful, always, to watch the gradual unfoldment of a child's mind as it comes into contact with the world outside, day after day. And, in case where the object of that study is no ordinary but a highly precocious one, as the mind of our little Gadadhar, the sentiment of wonder verges often to that of rapturous awe as before a miracle. The child observes, imitates, thinks and struggles to express itself as much as we do, only perhaps with this difference that it does all these things mechanically; or, in other words, it is guided and led into them by the impulse of the habit that has grown upon it all through the long series of its past incarnations. That goes to explain again, how every child-mind looks at things and events of life from an angle of vision, peculiarly its own, since the very day of its entrance into its present incarnation, every child begins to observe the outside world, takes

suggestions from its various phases according to its capacity, and ultimately forms and expresses its own conclusions about them, in a manner quite different from the rest of the world.

The parents of Gadadhar, who had to watch over the growth of an undoubtedly one of the most precocious child-minds of the age, must have noted early with ever-increasing wonder how it used to form its likes and dislikes of persons and things in a manner peculiarly its own, how on many an occasion it used to inquire about them in a way that pointed most certainly to the depth into which it entered within itself in its cogitations about them, and how at times it would flash forth its own views and conclusions about them most unexpectedly, like an elderly man. They had found out moreover, on more than one occasion, that their little Gadadhar would resist most stubbornly if an attempt were made to make him accept ways or do things through fear of punishment, while otherwise he would be quite amenable to reason and love. Thus with the passing of days, they had the pleasure to find that the child of their old age was growing into a healthy little boy, whose unique ways of looking at persons and things combined with its habits of fearlessness, truthfulness, and other virtues promised for him a great future. And did not the wonderful visions that they had of him before and after he was born point to that? Thus with joy and trepidation they performed the ceremony of initiating the boy in the three R's, as soon as he reached his fifth year, and also thus invoked upon him the blessings of the Goddess of learning and of fine arts, the divine Mother Sarasvati. From that day, the little Gadadhar was sent daily to the *pathsala* (lit. reading-room) or the neighbouring village school, which used to have its sittings in the spacious *Natmandap* or the hall for musical and theatrical performances on festive occasions, of the Laha family, the Zamindar or the landlord of the village.

From what we have gathered from the various sources of the early days of Gadadhar's life, we have been struck with the wonderful qualities of the heart that he manifested from the very beginning. All the accounts of these days of his life are unanimous on the point that he used to attract everyone towards him with his winning ways. The elderly ladies of the neighbourhood used to love and regard him as one of their own children, the boys and girls of his own age would always be led by him in their sports and pastimes, and even grown-up people would feel so much attracted after meeting him once that they would invite him into their own families and send him presents as token of their love, every now and then. As an instance of the same, we can relate the visit of our little Gadadhar to a well-to-do family at Bhursubo, a

village situated about a mile to the north of Kamarpukur. The headman of the family was perhaps the richest land-lord within many miles around and had earned a great reputation for himself on account of his liberality and large-heartedness. It is said even to this day, how on more than one occasion he invited to his place a hundred-thousand men of the Brahmin class alone, from many a mile around and made elaborate arrangements for feeding and providing them each with suitable presents! The poor and the lowly always found his hospitable doors open to give them a hearty welcome and his kind heart and hand ready to help them on every emergency. The big tanks that he excavated in and about his village, such as, the 'elephant-tank,' the 'pleasure-tank,' etc., for the benefit of the people, the large mango-groves that he planted and dedicated to the use of his poor neighbours, the temples that he erected in the neighbourhood, and various other things that still bear the stamp of his name—all go to prove that he did not bear the title of Raja in vain.

Now it so happened, that Raja Manick Chandra Banerjee knew Khudiram, the father of our little Gadadhar, from a long time and valued highly the friendship of that poor but proud and austere Brahmin, who had preferred abject poverty to falsehood and the creature comforts of life and had borne it so bravely in silence and submission without demeaning himself by asking favours from his rich but lukewarm friends. He watched his career with great interest, invited him frequently to his own place, was never officious to come forward with his help, having regard to his sensitive disposition, and sought his disinterested advice on many an important occasion of his own life. Thus the two men of rare and genuine merit who were so wide apart from each other as regards the status which wealth created for them in society, met frequently on equal terms and esteemed and respected each other on account of the manly qualities which they both possessed. And thus Khudiram, who always felt himself free in company with Raja Manick, took his little boy Gadadhar with him on one of such visits, thinking it would please his friend to see the little one, with whom he had been blessed so late in life. Now little Gadadhar behaved himself in such a way on the occasion that he became quite a favourite with the Raja and all his household since that day; and they henceforth used to take him over to Bhursubo regularly and loaded him with valuable presents on his return. It is said that Ramjaya, the brother of the Raja, once remarked to Khudiram: "Brother, your Gadadhar is not an ordinary child; the Divinity within shines so clear through his little body and mind that he makes us feel as if we are before the

Divine-child, whom we worship !” And strange as it may appear, our little Gadadhar, who was less than five years old at the time, never felt nervous to go and visit the family of the Raja, all alone, or with a servant whom he did not know before.

So our little Gadadhar knew no fears even from his earliest days, and not only was he not afraid of approaching strangers, but with his radiant smile, his bright answers to questions and precocious remarks, and above all, his loving and endearing ways, would make them feel as if he were of their own kith and kin. It is said that he was fearless in other ways also, and would always feel undaunted where others of his own age became invariably nervous and frightened. As an instance of the kind, we shall narrate here a little incident that happened in the family about this time. We have told the readers already, how all the relatives of Khudiram had the psychic temperament. His wife Chandra, his son Ramkumar, his daughter Katyayani, and even his sister Ramsila, who used to visit the family from time to time, had all more or less the temperament. Of those, the last one, Ramsila, would lose herself so completely in her meditations of the goddess Sitala, as to feel herself identified with the goddess on some days and would speak and behave on such occasions, as one possessed by that higher Being. It is said that she used to look quite different from her ordinary self at these times and always excited the feeling of awe and reverence and fear and wonder in the heart of every one, who saw her, with her predictions and blessings and powers of healing diseases. The family would treat her on such occasions as the goddess herself and would listen and obey her commands implicitly. Now, Gadadhar, who was very fond of his aunt, had the first opportunity of seeing her in one of these strange moods when he was less than five years old. It is said, that he became much astonished at first to find her behaving so differently, but instead of getting frightened remained near and watched her carefully and at last whispered to his mother : “It would be such a fun if the one, who possesses auntie now, would come upon me, for then I shall be able to see things as she has been doing !”

Even from this time Gadadhar showed great aptitude for imitating perfectly the voice and manners of others in fun and proved to his parents that he possessed dramatic powers and a great sense of humour. Again, his father was greatly astonished to find that he possessed such a wonderful and tenacious memory as to be able to repeat everything that he had been once told and to retain it in his mind forever. It was the custom in Hindu families to make the little boys learn the genealogical table of their

Forefathers and little verses in Sanskrit in salutation to various gods and goddesses. They were told, besides, stories from the two great rational epics of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* even before they were formally initiated into the mysteries of the three R's. And little Gadadhar had not only learnt these things, from his father's lips but could repeat besides verbatim, some portions of the Bengali version of the epics by simply hearing his father reading them, even before he learned the alphabet. And we can well imagine how eagerly he looked forward to the time when he would be able to read the sacred epics himself like the rest of the family. He mastered the alphabet quickly and made such strides after joining the school that in less than a year he was able to read the Bengali versions of them as well as all the other Bengali books that he could lay his hands on. Indeed from that time forward he dived deep, daily, in those sacred books, the fountain-head of every Indian inspiration of later times, and the poet in him pondered and brooded over the noble characters and their doings in such a way as to make of them living and moving personalities around him. His powerful imagination would at times spread its golden wings over immense gaps of time and space and carry him over to the doors of the palaces of Ajodhya or at Hastinapur to witness the magnanimous deeds of Rama—his faithful Sita and his devoted brother Lakshmana or the noble doings of the five Pandava brothers. Thus passed the days of our little Gadadhar after he joined the school, with absorbing interest in the sacred books and the characters contained therein and they helped to educate and mould his young head and heart rapidly and in accord with the old Indian ideals, even from this time.

The folklore of the villages around had a deep attraction for our little Gadadhar, besides the great epics. Bengal had always been great for poetical culture and its poetry had flowed mainly through the two distinct sacred channels of the cult of the worship of the Divine motherhood and that of the worship of Krishna and his beloved Radha. The miraculous doings and stories of self-manifestation of the local deities of many villages also, used to attract the imagination of the poets and their verses and hymns were being widely circulated by the swarm of beggars who sang them to the edification of the people as they daily visited the doors of every family of the villages around for alms. Manuscripts of some of these stories and hymns could be found at the time and our little Gadadhar used to get hold of these and made copies of them, some of which are still to be found preserved in the family and in the Ramakrishna Math, at Belur in the district of Howrah in Bengal. Legends, such as that of the Divine-Mother Yogadya

of Kshiragram, who it is said had been brought over by Mahavira, the devoted Monkey-general of Rama after killing Mahi-Ravana, the brother of Ravana, the demon-king of Ceylon, and placed in that village since that time—of the famous image of Siva at Tarakeswar, a village situated at about eighteen miles east of Kamarpukur—or of that of the big tank about ten miles from Khudiram's place and known even to this day as the tank of Ranajit Ray, the man, who, it is said, had such unique devotion towards the Divine-Mother that she appeared in the family for a time as his own little daughter—legends such as these, and their number was numerous, had great fascination for the mind of our little Gadadhar. His young eyes shed tears while he used to read them and his young heart felt a deep yearning for a sight of the Divine-Mother. And thus he passed many hours and days even from this time in trying to imagine the wonderful beauty of the Divine-Mother and Her great compassion towards the devotees or the great love of the Lord Krishna towards the simple-hearted shepherd boys and girls in the shady and beautiful groves of Brindaban.

It must not be imagined however, from what we have said before, that our little Gadadhar became so much absorbed in his study of the sacred epics and the folklore of his age that he took no interest in plays and sports as is natural to a child of his age. With all his high propensities and his precocious mind, he was entirely a child of nature and did instinctively the proper things. Therefore, as it was natural for his vigorous mind to get concentrated deeply on the subject of his study, so it was natural also for it to become the same in sports and pastimes which he enjoyed, and it is said that none of his companions excelled him in climbing trees, in swimming and running and in pursuit of games, such as, 'hide and seek,' 'hadu-du-du,' 'hunsh-hunsh' etc., and none ever excelled him in devising new games and playing all sorts of boyish pranks, such as, robbing orchards, or teasing and fighting people who became angry with them on account of their noisy mirth and fun or in doing things which disturbed the elderly people and which they were forbidden to do. Indeed, in all such matters, our little Gadadhar always had his companions.

As an instance of the kind, we may tell the reader of the incident which took place one day in the ladies' bathing *ghat* at Haldarpukur, the big tank close to the house of our little Gadadhar. The boys were having one of their 'ripping' times in the water on the day, to the great inconvenience of the ladies, when an elderly lady, who was muttering her prayers after her bath, as was the

custom, became very much annoyed with them and told them in angry words to leave the place and have their sport in that part of the tank where men used to have their bath, for she said, it was not proper for boys to be prying about in places where the ladies had their bath. And when little Gadadhar asked her why it was not proper, she scolded him vehemently all the more and threatened to get him punished by reporting his behaviour to his parents. Little Gadadhar, who did not see any impropriety in the affair, came thenceforth daily for a few days to the place and watched the ladies secretly to find out the reason why he was scolded. At last the matter reached his mother's ears, who knowing beforehand that her boy was not amenable to threats, appealed to his heart and asked him whether it was proper for him to do a thing by which she herself as well as all of her sex felt their dignity greatly humiliated, namely, to watch them in their toilette. And little Gadadhar now understood the reason and never did the thing any more.

The all-absorbing interest of Gadadhar in the ideal characters of the epics and his constant brooding and concentration on them brought about however, a most unlooked-for result, as soon as he reached his seventh year. Bengal being the richest rice-producing province in India, the people of her rural villages have always fed their boys with that article of food. Besides the two meals of boiled rice during the course of the day, the boys were given fried rice and fried paddy, sometimes sweetened with molasses, at breakfast and tiffin times. And boys and girls about the age of our little Gadadhar would often carry their simple breakfast in small wicker-baskets and eat them in the open sitting together or walking here and there and chatting with one another. The cottage of Khudiram being on the western outskirts of the village, close to the paddy fields in that direction, Gadadhar would often eat his breakfast as he roamed about in the fields. As he was doing the same one summer morning, he noticed the rise of a thunder-cloud in the distant horizon. It began to spread rapidly, covering the blue expanse of heaven and looked so sombre in its black grandeur that the poetic sense in him became thoroughly roused by it. As if to complete the charm of the scene, just then rose a flock of cranes from the neighbouring fields and in their measured flight spread their snow-white wings as a relief against the deep dark sky, raising such a beautiful contrast that the inmost soul of the boy was thrilled with rapture. He watched and watched forgetting all about his breakfast, until at last his mind was so much absorbed in the contemplation of the beauty of the scene that he lost all consciousness for a while

of all his surroundings and even of his own body ! A kind neighbour happening to walk in that direction, found the boy lying in that condition by the road-side, with his breakfast strewn all around, and carried him home to his parents. He regained his consciousness, however, within a short time and when asked what ailed him at the time, he asserted strongly that it was no ailment whatsoever, only that his mind getting thrilled with a deep sense of pleasure on looking at the beautiful sight became lost somehow in the same. His parents, however, would not believe his statement and taking it to be the first appearance of some serious malady, took him to the physicians and kept him in the house for a few days to get completely rested. But as a second attack of the kind did not come upon him soon, and he looked as strong and healthy as ever, the seriousness of the affair gradually faded away from the minds of the family, and he was permitted ere long to go to the school and do everything else as he had been doing before.

The seventh year, however, had in its store a deep sorrow for our little Gadadhar. For his father Khudiram, whose health had been failing rapidly of late, died while he was on a visit to his sister's place at Salempur on account of the Durgapuja festival, celebrated annually with great eclat by the family. His eldest son, Ramkumar, and his sister's son, Ramchand, for whom he had always the most genuine affection, were by his side at the time and the last words that he ever uttered were a deep and devoted call on his tutelary Deity Raghuvir, in whose hands he commended himself before the supreme moment came. Kudhiram died in 1843 A.D., while he was sixty-eight years old.

SOME ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF ANCIENT INDIAN THOUGHT. *

BY

Professor N. Ramanujacharya, M.A.,

I do not think that I need say anything, by way of apology, for having chosen "Ancient Indian Thought" as my subject. Apart from patriotic considerations, I believe that the Indian speculative systems, on account of their intrinsic merit, are worthy of the attention of all students who are seriously interested in the problems of philosophy and religion. It is well-known, that the philosophy of the Upanishads is recognised by all competent thinkers as the noblest product of the Hindu mind. The problems with which these ancient systems deal are the time-honoured and ever-recurring problems of metaphysics, problems relating to the essential nature of man, his final destiny and the method of its realisation. These problems have ever been of transcendent interest to man. Every man, if he reflects upon life and its destiny must assume some attitude towards the solutions of these pressing problems. It is the nature of his attitude towards them which determines the character of his life and the fulfilment of his destiny as a rational being. This wisdom and insight which the ancient philosophers of India have brought to bear on these questions are, indeed, worthy of admiration, and have lost none of their value, because of their antiquity. The fact that the Vedanta has, for over twenty centuries, continued to satisfy the metaphysical and spiritual aspiration of the Hindu race is certainly a strong and convincing proof of its vitality and of its adaptability to human nature. Even to-day, in the present conflict with the rationalistic thought of the West, the Vedanta is not only able to maintain its ground but has succeeded in producing a salutary change in the attitude of its rival. Western scholars also have expressed, in unmistakable terms, their appreciation of the thoughts of Eastern philosophers. Schopenhauer's opinion on the Vedanta as set forth in the Upanishads is well-known. "In the whole world," he says, "there is no study so beneficial and elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death." The opinion of the German philosopher is endorsed by the well-known Oriental scholar, late Prof. Maxmuller, in the following words: "If

* Lecture delivered at the Philosophical Association of the Pachaiyappa's College, Madras.

philosophy is meant to be a preparation for a happy death or Ethanasia, I know of no better preparation for it than the Vedanta." No student of philosophy, therefore, can hereafter afford to ignore the contributions made by the ancient Hindu thinkers to the world of philosophical thought. I may even go farther and say with Prof. Maxmuller, "If hitherto no one would have called himself a philosopher who had not read and studied the works of Plato and Aristotle, of Descartes and Spinoza, of Locke, Hume and Kant, in the original, the time will come, when no one will claim that name who is not acquainted, at least with two prominent systems of ancient philosophy, the Vedanta and the Sankhya."

The philosophical literature of the Hindus is so wide and extensive that the whole life-time of the student is not sufficient to master it. A good many different systems of speculative thought seem to have prevailed in Ancient India. Omitting the minor ones, we have to take into account at least, a dozen prominent schools, the Charvaka, the Jaina, the four schools of Buddhism, and the six well-known Darsanas of the orthodox Hindu philosophers. It is not my purpose to expound, in detail or with any degree of fulness, the tenets of all these systems or those of any particular school. My object is to place before you, some characteristic features of Indian thought, as a whole, and as it is represented by two of its main sub-divisions, the Hindu and the Buddhist.

First let me refer to one essential characteristic which pervades all these systems. They have all a definite purpose in view. They are all intended to point out to man the supreme goal of life and the method of reaching it. The so-called disinterested speculations of modern thinkers, speculations which can possibly have no bearing on the practical conduct of man in relation to his supreme end, were unknown to the ancient philosopher. He is primarily and directly concerned only with those problems which are connected with the ultimate well-being of man. What is the essential nature of man? What is the supreme end of life? How is it attainable?—are the fundamental questions which he attempts to solve. These, we know are the central problems of philosophy, problems which suggest themselves to every rational being, some time or other; and the answer to which determines the whole tenour of his life and his attitude towards the physical and social environment. All other allied questions, of Metaphysics, Ethics, Psychology, and even Epistemology are treated as of only secondary importance. But they are not ignored altogether. They are also discussed in connection with these central problems and only in so far as they are able to throw light on them.

In the treatment of his subject, the ancient philosopher like the modern thinker, follows the synthetic method, which, we are all aware, is the only method possible in Metaphysics. The analytic method of science is of no avail in our attempt to solve metaphysical problems. But there are some admirable features in the Hindu philosopher's method which we sadly miss in the writings of the modern thinker. The modern philosopher writes volumes after volumes, but after all leaves us completely in the dark with regard to his fundamental principles. He never cares to bring together the results of his speculations so as to form a consistent system, nor is he prepared fearlessly to carry out his principles to their ultimate logical consequences in practical life. On the other hand, the Hindu philosopher begins his speculations with a clear statement of his fundamental principles and the sources of knowledge (*Pramanas*) and then proceeds to elaborate his system, bit by bit, till at last we have the whole presented to us in a clear and lucid manner. Nothing is left uncertain or obscure. We have before us all the parts of the system in their relations to one and another and to the whole. Even Prof. Maxmuller is so impressed with these features that he has given expression to his feeling of admiration in the following passage: "What I admire in Indian philosophers is that they never try to deceive us as to their principles and the consequences of their theories. If they are idealists, even to the very verge of Nihilism, they say so, and if they hold that the objective world requires a real, though not necessarily a visible or tangible substratum, they are never afraid to speak out. They are *bonafide* idealists or materialists, monists or dualists, theists or atheists; because their reverence for truth is stronger than their reverence for anything else. The Vedantin, for instance, is a fearless idealist, and as a monist, denies the reality of anything but the one Brahman, the universal Spirit which is to account for the whole phenomenal world. The followers of the Sankhya, on the contrary, though likewise idealists and believers in an unseen Purusha (Subject) and an unseen Prakriti (objective substratum), leave us no doubt that they are and mean to be atheists, so far as the existence of an active God, a maker and ruler of the world is concerned. They do not allow themselves to be driven one inch beyond their self-chosen position. . . . Kapila never refers to Him (God) in his Sutras. As a careful reasoner, however, he does not go so far as to say that he can prove the non-existence of such a Being. But he is satisfied with stating, like Kant, that he cannot establish His existence, by the ordinary channels of evidential knowledge. . . . Whatever we may think of such views of the world as are put forward by the Sankhya, the Vedanta, and other systems of Indian philosophy, there is one thing which we cannot help admiring, and that is the

straightforwardness and perfect freedom with which they are elaborated. However imperfect the style, in which the theories have been clothed, may appear from a literary point of view, it seems to me the perfection for the treatment of philosophy. It never leaves us in doubt as to the exact opinions held by each philosopher. We may miss the development and the dialectic eloquence with which Plato and Hegel propound their thoughts. But we can always appreciate the perfect freedom, freshness and downrightness with which each searcher after truth, follows the track without ever looking right or left."

In our examination of the schools of Indian thoughts we may leave out of account the Charvaka system. It is a crude form of materialism. Though it appears to be very old, being referred to in the Upanishads as the sacred doctrine of the Asuras, yet it does not seem to have played any significant or conspicuous part in Ancient Indian speculation. The remaining schools may be divided into two different types, the Hindu and the Buddhistic which are characterised by essential differences in their fundamental principles, their methods and their conclusions. The Buddhist, accepting only two sources of knowledge, sense-perception and reasoning, believes, with the modern thinker, that it is possible to construct a complete system of philosophy barely with the help of the intellect. The orthodox Hindu philosopher on the other hand, holds that the unaided intellect is powerless in the field of metaphysical speculation, and that without the help from revelation, it could do nothing. However, the two schools agree with regard to the following particulars : (1) The cosmic process which constitutes what we call the phenomenal universe is without beginning or end ; and it is subject to Law. (2) Man, whatever his essential nature may be, is at present, a part of the cosmic process, and is subject to a series of births and deaths, under the control of the law of Karma. (3) The cosmic process is essentially such that, under no possible or conceivable conditions, it can lead man to permanent happiness. (4) To attain the supreme goal of life whatever it may be, man must necessarily extricate himself from the cosmic process in which he has, somehow, got himself entangled. The view that salvation consists in getting out of the cosmic process is an essential characteristic of all forms of Eastern thought and constitutes the fundamental principle which underlies the life of renunciation (*Nivritti Marga*) so strongly advocated by the Eastern thinkers as the only means to the attainment of salvation.

Of these two typical forms of the speculative philosophy, the Buddhistic may be regarded as the empirical or positive aspect of Indian thought. All the different phases of empirical thinking

which characterise the speculations of more recent thinkers, like Hume, Mill and even Professor James have been anticipated centuries ago, in the speculations of the Buddhistic philosophers. In the History of Philosophy, it was the Buddhist who made the first attempt to construct a system of philosophy on barely empirical lines. And like his successors in philosophical speculation in Modern Europe, he found out at last that his empirical principles could not take him far and that could only lead to atheism or at best, to some form of scepticism, neither of which could be expected to satisfy the deeper ethical and spiritual instincts of human nature.

But it must be remembered that Buddha himself did not teach any systematic philosophy. He purposely excluded all metaphysical speculations from his teachings on the ground that they are not only incapable of satisfactory solution but absolutely unessential for the purpose of human salvation. He also rejected the ritualistic side of Brahmanical religion as useless and even pernicious. His object was to construct a simple ethical creed, which could appeal to all, even to the ordinary mind, and which does not require the authority of revelation or of any subtle metaphysical theory. All things are transitory, life is full of misery, the root of misery is the desire for worldly life (*Thrishna*) and the eradication of desire is essential to salvation, these are simple truths which do not stand in need of the authority of revelation or of any subtle metaphysical reasoning. Observation and reflection are sufficient to convince any one of the truth of these simple propositions. Buddha therefore relied more upon reason and reflection for the acceptance of his teachings. He rejected revelation and all other forms of authority as will be seen from the advice he gives to his disciples in his Kalana Sutta : "Do not believe in what you have heard. Do not believe in traditions, because they have been handed down by many generations. Do not believe in anything, because it is rumoured and spoken of by many. Do not believe merely because the written statement of some old sage is produced. Do not believe in any conjectures. Do not believe in that as truth to which you have become attached by habit. Do not believe, merely on the authority of your teachers and elders. After observation and analysis, when it agrees with reason and is conducive to the good of one and all, then accept it and live up to it."

A purely ethical creed, like that of Buddha, divorced from metaphysics and religion, can satisfy neither the reflective nor the ordinary mind. After all, ethical life must find its ultimate justification only in a system of metaphysics. Ethics, metaphysics and

religion are so intimately connected that it is impossible to separate them from one another. The disciples of Buddha noticed this defect, and in spite of Buddha's instructions to the contrary began to speculate about philosophical problems, and the four Buddhist schools of philosophy, Vaibhasika, Sautrantika, Yogacharya, and Madhyannika are the result. The Buddhist believes that these schools represent different stages in Buddhist thought which finds its culmination in the speculations of the Madhyannika School. I have no time to enter into the speculations of these philosophical schools in detail. But I shall refer to one fundamental principle (अणुभङ्गवादः, the principle of transitoriness of things) on which all these four systems are confessedly based.

It is undoubtedly one of the teachings of Buddha that all things are transitory (सर्वे भावा क्षणिकाः). But he wanted to lay stress only on its ethical significance, namely that it is impossible to expect permanent happiness in a universe of incessant change containing only perishable things. But this simple truth, which, in its ordinary signification, every one will be prepared to accept without hesitation, was raised to the dignity of a philosophical first principle; and on that feeble foundation, was erected a huge superstructure of systematic philosophy. Buddha's teaching that all things are momentary was understood to mean that everything in the universe, be it an object or an idea, exists only at the moment when it is before consciousness and then disappears. The next moment something else, something altogether new, which may or may not resemble the previous one, appears before us, and shares the same fate and so on. When we observe the same object for two successive moments, it is said, that we are in fact observing two different entities, which only resemble each other and which resemblance we mistake for identity. We do not know whence these objects and ideas come and whither they go. The Madhyannika who represents the extreme form of Buddhist thought maintains the view that these objects and ideas come from nothing and go to nothing.

Thus according to the Buddhist, there is no permanence anywhere. All things external and internal are characterised by change. The notion of an abiding self (*Atman*), and that of *Prakriti*, a permanent substratum to account for our sensory experience are both illusions. We have at best only two series of changes, objective and subjective, which somehow correspond in our cognitive experience. The dualist, Vaibhasika, accepts both these series of changes as ultimate, while the Sautrantika tells us that both are subjective and internal, and that the real objective is but an assumption to account for one class of subjective changes,

the sensations. The Yogacharya goes farther. He denies the existence of the object altogether. He is a pure Idealist. He argues that the mind can be aware of only its own subjective changes. It cannot go beyond the circle of its own ideas; and the supposition of a substratum for qualities, in other words, of an external cause for sensations, is unnecessary and illogical. The knower and the known are not distinct; they are inseparable from knowledge (*Buddhi*) but are thought of as distinct on account of our ignorance—

अविभागो हि बुद्ध्यात्माविपर्ययसितदर्शनैः ।

प्राज्ञप्राहकसंविप्ति भदेवानिव लक्ष्येत ॥

He agrees with modern empiricists, in his conception of the mind as a succession of ideas (*Buddhi santhana*) or a stream of thought as Professor James has put it. He even accepts the existence of a plurality of minds. But however the conception of the mind as a succession of ideas is, according to Yogacharya, not ultimate. The ideas themselves are like waves on the surface of a stream which has a smooth and gentle current flowing underneath. The mind, in its ultimate and essential nature, therefore, should be conceived as a stream of pure objectless thought, thought in the abstract (विषयोपरागशून्य बुद्धिसन्तानः). But the Madhyannika goes farther. He tells us that there is no evidence either for the existence of formless thought or for the existence of other minds. It is only a mere succession of ideas, that we are aware of, in experience and we have no reason to suppose that it is either ultimate or eternal. The succession is itself perishable. The ultimate reality, in the full sense of the term reality is only the eternal unconditioned void or nothingness (नित्यसिद्धनिरुपाधिकशून्य). Thus, in the philosophy of Buddhism, we are slowly and gradually led to the ultimate conception of the universe as a mere empirical succession of ideas and sensations floating in a permanent void. In the Indian Madhyannika we have an audacious nihilist. No thinker, in modern times has dared to go to that dangerous extreme. Hume's scepticism is nothing when compared with the appalling conclusions of the Madhyannika philosopher. Hume was prepared, at least, to admit a contradiction between his conclusions and the instinctive beliefs of the human mind and did not go farther. But this daring thinker, the Madhyannika, tells us that these instinctive beliefs are, undoubtedly, illusions born of *Vasana* (original habit) and that the philosopher to attain his ultimate end must root out such beliefs, by frequent meditations upon the unconditioned void, the highest reality.

We have seen that the Buddhist thinker does not believe in the existence of the supersensible sphere and consequently denies all possibility of metaphysics. The orthodox Hindu thinker, on the contrary affirms the existence of the supernatural and the possibility of its experience by the human consciousness. He ascribes the sceptical conclusions of the Buddhist philosopher to a radical error in the fundamental principles from which he starts. Sense-perception and inference are not the only sources of knowledge as the Buddhist thinks. It is only a small portion of our knowledge that is derived from these sources. The major portion of the knowledge that each man possesses is derived from testimony (शब्दः) only ; and consequently the orthodox schools accept three sources of knowledge, perception, reasoning and testimony. It is also held that each of these instruments of evidence has its own legitimate sphere in which alone its voice has authority. The sphere of the intellect is confined to the outer world of sensible experience. Its sole purpose is the interpretation of the physical world, to meet the practical necessities of objective life. In the field of the supersensible, in the region of the ultimate essences of things only revelation which is but a form of testimony, has authority. In the Vedanta Sūtras Sri Badarayana expressly denies the possibility of rational metaphysics on the ground that reasoning or logic has no firm foundation (तर्कप्रतिष्ठानाद्). In the third aphorism of the Brahma Sūtras he tells us that for the existence of Brahman, the Supreme Being, the Scripture is the sole authority. Sankara, Ramanuja and other commentators of the Brahma Sūtras, discuss, at length, all the so-called rational proofs for the existence of God and expose their logical weakness and inadequacy. Thus, according to the orthodox view in matters metaphysical and spiritual, we have no other alternative than to depend on revelation. Reason has no voice in the matter. Its sphere is elsewhere. But it is not altogether excluded. Its aid is sought for in the interpretation of the Scriptures and systematising their teachings so as to form a consistent whole, a work which reason alone can be expected to accomplish satisfactorily.

But it is needless to say that the evidence afforded by testimony is not and cannot be regarded as final. Testimony is not direct experience. The evidentiary value of a testimony depends only upon the possibility of its verification, the acceptance of some higher power of the mind by which the teachings of revelation may be realised and made part of our direct experience. All the Hindu schools of philosophy held that there is a higher faculty *yogadrishhti* by which spiritual truths could be intuited directly and face to face. It is a power which, they say, is latent in every human

mind and which can be developed by certain methods of concentration and meditation. Kanada refers to it as *yogaja dharma* (a power developed by Yoga practice). The Upanishad calls it the *Thuriya* state, a fourth state of consciousness, different from the three ordinary states of waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep. The whole body of Yoga literature, which forms no inconsiderable part of the vast religious and philosophical literature of the Hindus, is devoted to the theoretical and practical aspects of the Science of Yoga, which is intended for the cultivation of this higher faculty. Patanjali has treated the subject in all its different aspects detailing the various stages in the practice of Yoga, and the higher powers of the mind which manifest themselves at every stage. This is the well-known *Yoga Mārga* (the path of Yoga) the path of realisation which is regarded as one of the means for the attainment of ultimate salvation ; Sri Krishna, tells us that it is the most difficult of all the paths. It is intended only for those daring souls who have sufficient scriptural knowledge and Vairagya and who have also the leisure and patience to go through the difficult mental and physical exercises inculcated in the science of Yoga.

Now, it is clear from what has been said above that the Hindu orthodox thought, is not, and was never claimed to be wholly rational. Rational thought, according to the orthodox view is of no avail in religion and metaphysics. Unless it is supplemented by revelation or by direct spiritual illumination it will surely lead us astray. The idea of *Yoga Drishhti* (Spiritual Intuition) is therefore, the central concept of ancient Hindu thought, and the truth of the Vedantic teachings depends ultimately upon the reality of this higher power of the human mind.

It is well-known that the existence of such a power has been a matter of universal belief in all periods of history. The mystics of all ages and countries have testified to its reality. Often times even in individual experience, the operation of the faculty has compelled its recognition. The reasoning power sometimes, unable to cope with a difficult problem drops the matter out of consideration, in utter weariness and despair. But when the external senses are at rest, as in sleep, dream or reverie, the solution of the problem is suddenly and unexpectedly thrust before our consciousness. In such cases, we cannot say that our normal intellect has anything to do with the matter. It is difficult to explain such experience otherwise than by the supposition of a higher faculty in the human mind. Even Western thought is gradually coming round to the recognition of this higher power of the human mind. Investigators in the field of psychical research tell us that they have discovered facts which are altogether

inexplicable by the ordinary conception of the human mind. In orthodox circles Mons. Bergson contends for the recognition of intuition as a higher faculty than reason. He tells us "There are things which intelligence is able to seek, but that by itself it will never find. These things instinct alone could find; but it will never seek them."

Count Keyserling, in a lecture on East and West, refers to this recent trend of thought in the following passage, "The thinkers of the 18th century denied the existence of anything beyond the senses; they denied the existence of anything except the outside world. It seemed for a while as if the soul was lost for ever. But, then, there appeared the hero of critical thought, Emmanuel Kant. He refuted both sensationalism and rationalism by saying that there are limits to the intellect, that the sphere of reality is wider than the sphere of possible intellectualities. So by the elimination, so to speak, the way was shown back to the source whence all life springs. True, the source was not at once realised. Kant himself failed to obtain an adequate conception of the metaphysical reality. His immediate followers Fichte, Schelling and Hegel caught the right point of view in the beginning but they proceeded too rashly and so became lost. Eventually they did but repeat the ancient error of Scholasticism by trying to construct the world out of pure Reason. This in its turn, produced another reaction, an echo of the thought of the 18th century. But this was the last stage in error. The curve has been steadily ascending for the last 30 years. We have already realised what science can do and we have learnt what it cannot do. We have discovered what is the real purpose of metaphysics and what are its limitations. We begin to see ever clearer and clearer what is the real root of both Ethics and Religion. And the moment we obtained a clear glimpse of the reality within ourselves, lo! there dawned upon us the understanding of the ancient wisdom of the East." In these circumstances we have no reason to treat the Hindu theory of *Yoga-drishti* (spiritual intuition), as either a hoax or a mere dream. The Yoga literature deserves to be seriously studied and investigated by all who are interested in the welfare of the world and their own spiritual advancement.

There is one other characteristic feature of Hindu thought to which I should like to refer before I close. Hindu thought as it is manifested in the six schools of philosophy shows a gradual development. From the physical and the metaphysical pluralism of the Nyaya philosophy, we can trace a gradual progress towards unification till we reach the Monism of the Vedanta. Competent

authorities are of opinion that these different systems are not really conflicting. If we take into consideration, the purpose and the stand-point of each system, and also the *Adhikari* (the class of students) for whom it is intended, we can satisfy ourselves that their differences are only apparent and could be reconciled. Vignana Bhikshu who has written elaborate commentaries on the Sankhya, the Yoga and the Brahma Sutras has made an attempt to reconcile the different schools of Hindu philosophy from the stand-point of the Vedanta of Badarayana. He has shown that the Nyaya, the Sankhya and the other schools are not, as we might, at first sight, be led to suppose, mutually conflicting, and that the differences in their views are due to the fact that they had different ends in view. In fact the Vedanta alone could be called strictly orthodox. It is the only system that is based entirely on the teachings of the Upanishads. Badarayana alone starts with the object of systematising the philosophy of the Upanishads and other Hindu scriptures. Kanada and Gautama had for their object the examination of the various sources of knowledge and methods of reasoning, which, as you are aware, led to the origin of Indian logic as a science. The primary object of the Sankhya was to study cosmology and that of the Yoga to reduce to a system the principles and practices of the science of concentration. None of the schools except the Vedanta had in view the construction of a systematic philosophy, on the basis of the revelations contained in the Upanishads. That task was undertaken by Badarayana, who has given to the world, as the result of his labours, the sublime spiritual philosophy of the Vedanta, which, as you all know, has won the warmest appreciation of all the serious thinkers both of the East and the West.

Although the Vedantic philosophy is confessedly based on revelation, yet Badarayana did not overlook its rational features. He has carefully discussed the conclusions of his philosophy from the rational stand-point, the stand-point on which the modern thinker entirely relies. He has attempted to show that the Vedanta, even from the stand-point of reason, is more rational than the so-called rationalistic systems of the Jain and the Buddhist, and more orthodox, that is, more in harmony with the Hindu Scriptures, than all the other schools of Hindu thought which claim to be orthodox. There is no wonder, therefore, that the Hindus have accepted the Vedanta as the basis of their religious faith and the inspirer of all their spiritual and social ideals.

I have said that the Vedas and the Upanishads are claimed to be revelations by the Hindus. The same claim may be urged, in a similar manner, in favour of the scriptures of other nations. Is

there any sure test for examining the claim of a book to be regarded as a revelation? The Vedantin does not pretend to know of any sure criterion by which we can decide the truth of a revelation. It is only (*Swanubhava*) self-experience that can decide the question. However the attitude of the Vedantin is obvious. He does not hold that there has been only one revelation for the whole humanity. "Countless are the incarnations of God" says Sri Suka in Sri Bhagavatha. "Manifold are the Vedas," says Badarayana in the Mahabharatha. The Vedantin, therefore, while admitting the possibility of other revelations cannot adopt or advise a better course than that which Sri Krishna suggests in the Bhagavat Gita;

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ।

"It is better to die in the observance of one's own religion, for the religion of another bringeth fear."

THE ETHICAL ASPECT OF THE VEDANTA.

BY

Professor K. Sundararama Iyer, M. A.

PART VIII.

THE CONCEPTION OF SVADHARMA.

The Gita insists in the most impressive manner on the importance and necessity of *Svadharmā*,—i.e., one's own Dharma or duty. Every man should do such work only as is in accord with his natural capacities and endowments. It is the only kind of work that will conduce to our true happiness and welfare here, and to our soul's evolution towards its appointed ultimate destiny of freedom from Samsara through *Chitta-suddhi* or the purification of the mind from desires and aversions. The human mind has an irresistible tendency to follow its momentary inclinations and interests. If all people were to be left free to direct their energies wherever the transient impulses and changing passions of the hour incline them, then there would be practically no scope for ethical and spiritual improvement through purposive personal exertion (*Purushakara*); and the teaching of the Sastra, and especially the Adhyatmic teaching of the Vedanta, will also be rendered nugatory. Hence the blessed Bhagavan gives the following warning to those who are bent on achieving the goal of existence as declared in the Sastra,—(III. 84 in Gita):—

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।
तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ ॥

* "The desire and aversion (natural to men) give the senses a settled inclination towards their several objects. One should not pass under subjection to them, for they are one's enemies."

In order to enable men to resist the impulses due to the tumult of desires and aversions springing from their unrestrained vulgar nature, and to convince them that it is necessary and desirable to exert themselves in accordance with the injunctions of the Sastras so as not to swerve from the *Sreyomarga* (श्रेयोमार्ग)—the path which leads to spiritual bliss and peace—Sri Krishna gives the following warning to those who, yielding to the allurements of the world, imagine that one may practise the dharma (duty) prescribed for another in preference to his own, on the ground that even the former is a dharma and so is also prescribed in the Sastra :—(Gita, III. 35):—

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥

"One's own duty, though not of the highest quality or discharged to perfection, is better than another's duty, however well performed. Death in (performing) one's own duty will lead to bliss; (the taking up of) another's duty carries with it the fear (of going to hell)."

Hence we see that the Gita clearly lays down that every member of the Aryan society should duly pay heed to the injunctions and prohibitions constituting duty, and that no one should take a line of his own under the impelling force of his worldly passions and desires.

Before we pass further, we have to distinguish between *Sva-dharma* (or Dharma) and *Vritti* or work taken up as means of livelihood or gain. The former is that which is calculated to lead men gradually on to *Sreyas*,—the bliss of higher spiritual worlds and the supreme bliss of the Atman; the latter can only bring to us the mercenary and economic gains of this world and is calculated to degrade the man of higher (or *Sattvika*) nature and lead him down into the realms of spiritual darkness and death. The Mahabharata (*Santi-Parva*, Chap. 188, Slokas 11, 12, 13) points out that Brahmins, by abandoning their own Dharmas and by adopting other occupations as means of livelihood (*Vritti*) under the influence of worldly desires and passions, attained *Kshatrata*, *Vaisyata*, *Sudrata*,—i.e., the dispositions and attributes (the *Gunās*) of the corresponding Varnas. The passage referred to is,—

कामभोगप्रियास्तीक्ष्णाः क्रोधनाः प्रियसाहसाः ।
त्यक्तस्वधर्मा रक्ताङ्गाः ते द्विजाः क्षत्रतां गताः ॥
गोभ्यो वृत्तिं समाख्याय पीताः कृष्युपजीविनः ।
स्वधर्माज्ञानमुत्तिष्ठन्ति ते द्विजा वैश्यतां गताः ॥
हिंसानृत्तप्रियास्तुब्धाः सर्वकर्मोपजीविनः ।
कृष्याः शौचपरिभ्रष्टाः ते द्विजा शूद्रतां गताः ॥

"Those Brahmanas that were fond of indulging desires and enjoying pleasures and full of cruelty and wrath, and were inclined to do courageous deeds, while unmindful of the Dharmas for their own class and full of passion (*Rajoguna*) acquired the quality of Kshatriyas (*Kshatrata*). Those Brahmanas filled with Rajas and Tamas who did not attend to their own Dharmas and who took to the occupation of cattle-rearing as their means of livelihood (*Vritti*) acquired thereby the quality of Vaisyas (*Vaisvata*). Those Brahmanas who became fond of injury to other creatures and of untruth and possessed of avarice, and also engaged in all kinds of activities as means of livelihood, fell away from all pure Dharmas and became possessed of Tamoguna, and acquired the attributes of Sudras (*Sudrata*)."

In fact, these Brahmins became *Brahmabandhus*, a low kind of Brahmins such as abound in our own time—Brahmins merely by birth or blood connection, Brahmins who have never had the opportunities, or put forth the exertions, for developing the mental tendencies (*Samskaras*) which lie stored up in the heart. The mercantile spirit which adopts a calling merely as a source of gain or means of livelihood is what degrades the spirit of man. The Indian sacred authorities, therefore, insist upon every one of us pursuing only such an occupation as is suited to the inner store of tendencies in the mind which the Jiva has brought with him on his entrance into the world and which has determined the nature of the embodiment and environment which the caste into which he is born provides for him. It is only this occupation that is known as Svadharma. Abhinavagupta says:—"स्वधर्मो हि हृदयादनपायी स्वरसनिगूढ एव" "Svadharma is inseparable from (the store of tendencies in) the heart and it is hidden in regard to its value and import." What Sri Krishna calls "*Sahajam Karma*," "action originating in one's birth" (Gita, XVIII. 48) is what is here described as "inseparable from the store of tendencies in the heart." The blessed Bhagavan also teaches, (Gita, XVIII. 45.)—

"स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः।"

"Worshipping Him by their own Karmas, men attain to perfection."

The Lord calls on every one of us to regard his Svadharma as an *Archana* (worship) to be offered to Him,—not as a means of livelihood or source of gain. This is the real meaning of the command to do one's duty without the desire to appropriate the resulting gain. Only Svadharma practised in this sense can be truly said to be done without the desire of fruit. Sri Krishna also says,—

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः।

"The man who is constantly engaged in the performance of his Svadharma attains to perfection (*Samsiddhi*)."

Sri Sankarācharya explains the word *Narah* (नरः) as "अधिकृतः पुरुषः" "the qualified man." The *Samsiddhi* here (which is the same as the *Siddhi* in XVIII. 45 above quoted) is explained to mean "ज्ञाननिष्ठायोग्यतालक्षणां संसिद्धिः" "the spiritual attainment which qualifies man for the acquisition of self-knowledge." The qualification (योग्यता) here is that all desires and passions should be brought under control by the continued performance of Svadharma as the Lord's worship and as his inviolable command. Svadharma is thus the commencement of the spiritual life of resignation which is to lead the Jiva to the final goal of deliverance from the bondage of Samsara. So long as men take thoughtlessly and selfishly to whatever work promises to yield wealth and power as its fruits, there can be no peaceful resignation to the will of the Lord, no recognition of one's true function in life and no performance of it as a worship of, or love-offering to Isvara; and hence confusion, strife and misery must prevail among men.

Three questions have now to be considered—(i) what is the antecedent cause, condition, or circumstance which determines the Svadharma of each individual member of Aryan society? (ii) what is the authority or agency which declares the appropriate Svadharma of each individual? (iii) and what is the distribution of Dharmas adopted and enjoined by that authority? These topics we take up in order.

I. We shall consider two statements made in the Bhagavad-Gita. First, we have in III. 27,—

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः।

"Karmas of all kinds spring from the Gunas of Prakriti." Again, we have in XVIII. 41,—

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परंतप।

कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गुणैः॥

"O Parantapa! For Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras, Karmas have been distributed according to the Gunas springing from Svabhava."—In both contexts, the Gunas are said to determine the Karmas of the four Varnas, but in the first sloka the Gunas are stated to spring from *Prakriti*, while in the second one they are stated to spring from *Svabhava*. So *Svabhava* and *Prakriti* are the same. Sri Sankarācharya,* in his interpretation of XVII. 41, gives two possible meanings of *Svabhava*, viz., (1) Isvara's *Prakriti* or *Maya* (or *Pradhana*), the primordial undifferentiated matter before the rise—at creation—of the three Gunas, i.e., "the transformations of *Prakriti* from which spring activities (Karmas) of all kinds," (2) the *Samskaras* or

* We follow the latest—and what we regard as the most correct—edition published by the Nirnaya-Sagara Press, Bombay, with eight commentaries.

impressions stored up in the mind in previous births which, when they become mature, give rise to the Gunas which, in their turn, give rise to activities corresponding to the predominant element among them—Sattva, Rajas, or Tamas. In the first interpretation, Svabhava refers to the unmanifested and undifferentiated condition of matter before the beginning of creation when the three Gunas are in a state of equipoise. Creation means the disturbance of this condition and the rise of the various forms of matter and of the various bodies in which one or other of the three Gunas preponderates. Karmas vary in accordance with the inherent preponderance in various bodies (or embodied individuals) of one of these Gunas at the time of creation. The Hindu theory of Eugenics as formulated by Manu (Chap. IX. 34) is,—

विशिष्टं कुत्रचिद्बीजं स्त्रीयोनिसुखेव कुत्रचित् ।
उभयं तु समं यत्र सा प्रसूतिः प्रशस्यते ॥

“In some cases the seed (of the male) is the important factor (in determining the merit of the offspring), and in some the womb (of the female); but where both the seed and the womb belong to the same (order or Varna), the offspring is most highly regarded.”

So, in the Aryan society consisting of the four pure Varnas and composed of individuals born of parents belonging to the same order or Varna, the bodies transmitted in lineal succession from father to son always possess the same Gunas, and hence the Dharmas appropriate to them—not the Vrittis taken up as means of livelihood under the random impulse of momentary needs and passions—remain, as they must, always the same.—Even if we understand Svabhava in the *second* of the meanings above assigned, there is no change in regard to the Dharmas associated with them and the activities natural and appropriate to such bodies and the Gunas preponderating therein.

How, then, are we to understand the following statement in the Gita, IV. 13,—

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।

“The four castes (Varnas) were created by me according to the differences of Guna and Karma.”

This refers to the fact that, at the time of *creation*, the four castes were created along with the rest of mankind and the world. This same fact, *viz.*, the *creation* of the four Varnas at the commencement of the world, is also referred to in sloka 4 of Chap. 188 of the Santi-Parva.

ब्राह्मणाः क्षत्रिया वैश्याः शूद्राश्च द्विजसत्तम ।

ये चाऽन्ये भूतसंघानां वर्णास्तांश्चापि निर्ममे ॥

“He also *created* Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, Sudras, and also others, *viz.*, the other classes of creatures forming various groups of living beings.”

The Guna and Karma referred to in the above sloka (IV. 13) of the Gita must necessarily refer to those which existed *before creation* and which determined, as their results, the Varna of those who came into existence at the time of creation. Creation cannot, for obvious reasons, be in accordance with the Gunas and Karmas arising *subsequent* to creation. Sri Sankaracharya, in his Bhashya on this sloka, refers to the process of creation as given in the Purusha-Sukta to show that the differences of Varna due to *creation*, referred to in both places, are the same,—*i.e.*, differences *created* by the Lord in accordance with the Guna and Karma of the Jivas in their previous incarnations.

II. What is the agency or authority which distributes the Karmas appropriate to the Gunas severally predominant in the various bodies of the Jivas? In the Gita, XVIII. 41, the words “कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि,” “Karmas have been distributed,” occur. Not only are certain Karmas set apart and prescribed for each Varna, but certain Karmas are also prohibited, and these are known as *Vikarma* (Gita. IV. 17.) The Mahabharata (*Raja Dharma*, Chap. 69) says in regard to the Kshatriyas,—

दद्याद्राजस्य याचेत यजेत न च याजयेत् ।

नाध्यापयेदधीयीत प्रजाश्च परिपालयेत् ॥

“A Kshatriya, O King, should give but not beg, should himself perform sacrifices but not officiate as a priest in the sacrifices of others. He should never teach the Vedas, but should study them (under a Brahmana preceptor). He should protect the people.”

Similar injunctions and prohibitions exist also in regard to Brahmanas, Vaisyas, and Sudras. If Varna is determined simply by taking up certain functions or occupations, and if all men can take up at pleasure whatever occupations they like, simply because they can obtain worldly gains thereby, how can the Sastra enjoin the prohibitions above stated on the various Varnas. It is because these prohibitions have been disregarded at various times under the ungovernable impulse of self-interest and passion that we find, in the hearts of men of various high castes and even among the Brahmanas, a combination of both good and evil tendencies (*samskaras*); and so they are often led into evil courses, and there are also many in whom the evil tendencies predominate so much that they drag the very name of Brahmin in the mire and cast discredit on the entire class in such a manner as to induce some people to persuade themselves that the social system of the Hindus is itself a limb of the devil and has always been a snare and a sham. The remedy is not to embark on an impossible crusade against an institution which has defied for untold ages the action of adverse forces and even the natural decay arising from the unchecked inroads of time,—but for social opinion to take the steps needed to enforce the Shastraic injunctions and

prohibitions on men of all castes. Even in the degenerate epochs which have passed and are passing over us, the Brahmins—however degraded and however inclined to violate the prescriptions of the Sastras—have not altogether neglected the chief Dharmas which they are by birth called on to observe. The Mahabharata (*Santi-parva*, Chap. 188, Sl. 14) says :—

इत्येतेः कर्मभिर्यस्ता द्विजा वर्णान्तरं गताः ।

धर्मो यज्ञक्रिया तेषां नित्यं न प्रतिषिध्यते ॥

“Those Brahmanas who take up these different occupations and thereby acquire the attributes of other castes are never denied the right to (the performance of) their own (shastraically enjoined) Dharmas and Yajnas.”

Such men are only degraded members of the Brahmin caste—merely Brahmins by birth,—*Brahma-bandhus*, as they are called. But they have not ceased to be Brahmins. Prohibited occupations and associations have only degraded them, but it is always possible and easy for them to abandon these sources of degradation and to undo the mischief thence arising. There is no burden from the past which a steady purpose and honest, manly effort following on sincere repentance—aided, too, by the ever-watchful beneficence and tenderness of the blessed Bhagavan—cannot remove. The fateful hour will soon strike when the divine helper will enter on the scene, and then we are freed from those fetters of ignorance which cause misery and hatred and shall regain the knowledge and bliss of our long-forgotten Self,—the Love which is Freedom, the Freedom which is Love.

But all this reformation and this recovery of our lost Self are only possible by the faithful observance of Svadharma. We thus return to the topic already started,—What is the agency for distributing the Karmas or Svadharma appropriate to the Gunas preponderating in each individual Jiva? In his Bhashya on the Gita, XVIII. 41, Sankaracharya has the following interesting discussion:—

ननु शास्त्रं प्रविभक्तानि शास्त्रेण विहितानि ब्राह्मणादीनां शमादीनि कर्माणि ; कथं उच्यते सत्त्वादिगुणप्रविभक्तानीति । नैष दोषः ; शास्त्रेणापि ब्राह्मणादीनां सत्त्वादिगुणविशेषापेक्षयैव शमादीनि कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि न गुणानपेक्षया इति शास्त्रप्रविभक्तान्यपि कर्माणि गुणप्रविभक्तानीति उच्यते ॥

“*Objection.*—How is it that, when the Sastra has distributed and prescribed the duties of tranquillity (Sama) etc., for Brahmanas and others, you say that they are distributed according to Sattva and other Gunas.”

“*Answer.*—This objection is not valid. Tranquillity and other duties have been distributed for Brahmanas and others by the Sastra only in accordance with Sattva and other Gunas, and not without regard to them ; and so, even if they are distributed by the Sastra, they are said to be distributed according to Gunas.”

Thus the Svadharma of the various castes have been distributed by the Sastras so as to be in accord with the Gunas. The Sastras are the commands of the Supreme Lord, and he is alone competent to declare what are the *dharma*s corresponding to the natural tendencies which each individual brings with him into the world at birth. Only these *dharma*s—and no others—are calculated to ensure his continued progress towards that purification of the heart (*Chitta-Suddhi*) which is the sure precursor of that realisation of the Self, which is to lead on to the goal of deliverance from the misery of Samsara. No one should take a line of his own under the impelling force of one's own worldly desires and turbulent passions. Such a course may, or may not give one what passes for success and prosperity among worldly men, but it will surely endanger and ruin one's future destiny beyond the life here. This will become clear if we consider the Lord's declaration in Gita, XVI, 23 and 24.

यश्शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।

न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।

ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥

“Whoever, having discarded the injunctions of the Sastras, according to his own desires attains not the qualifications (needed for gaining the end of life), nor happiness, nor the highest place hereafter (Svarga or Moksha). Therefore the Sastra is for you the source of knowledge regarding the distinction between what should be done and what should not be done. You are competent to act here only after knowing what Karmas are prescribed (for you) by the Sastra.”

The Sastra—i.e., Sruti and Smriti, as Sri Sankaracharya points out in his Bhashya on sloka 1 of Chap. XVIII—prescribes the duties for the several castes. A man must first know to what caste he belongs before learning from the Sastra what duties are prescribed for him. The caste must be known before the Karma, and so it is wrong to say that it is the Karma which determines the caste. If men are at liberty to change their occupations according to the desires and impulses of the moment, where is the need to go to the Sastra to know the prescriptions and prohibitions it enjoins? What, also, is the significance of the statement that Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, etc., were created by God himself at the commencement of the world along with other objects of creation. The doctrine of *Svadharma* loses all its meaning when a man is allowed to change his Karma at his will and pleasure according to the changing impulses and fashions of the moment. We must not, also, fail to appreciate the true import of Sri Krishna's declaration to Arjuna (Gita III. 81) :—

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकल्पितुमर्हसि ।

धर्म्यादि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत्क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥

"Consider, too, what is your Svadharma. It is not desirable that you should give it up. To the Kshatriya, nothing but *his own Dharma* of fighting in a righteous cause can lead to Sreyas (*Moksha*)".

If any one is at liberty to change his own occupation whenever he chooses, how can the Lord be justified in declaring that, to the Kshatriya only, fighting in a righteous cause is Svadharma and can alone lead to Moksha. And, lastly, what is to prevent one from changing one's occupation as often as one chooses? Can any distinction, then, be at all reasonably drawn between what is Svadharma and what is not?

III, What is the Shastraic distribution of Svadharms? It is contained in Gita, XVIII. 42--44.

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिरार्जवमेव च ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम् ॥
शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दायि युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् ।
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षत्रकर्म स्वभावजम् ॥
कृपिगौरव्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम् ।
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् ॥

"Tranquillity, restraint of the senses, penance, purity, forgiveness, straightforwardness, knowledge, realisation, and belief (in the continued existence of the Jiva after death), form the duties springing from the inborn tendencies of the Brahmins. Valour, glory, courage, resourcefulness (in emergencies), never running away from (the field of) battle, making gifts, the masterful temper which can command obedience (to Dharma), form the duties of Kshatriyas which spring from their inborn tendencies. Agriculture, tending cattle, and trade form the duties of Vaisyas springing from their inborn tendencies. And rendering service (in obedience to command) is the duty of the Sudras which springs from their inborn tendencies."

Finally we have to deal briefly with a question of importance,—viz, why does not Sri Krishna here include, among the Svadharms of the Brahmins, the duties assigned to them by Manu (I. 88)?

अध्यापनमध्ययनं यजनं याजनं तथा ।
दानं प्रतिग्रहं चैव ब्राह्मणानामकल्पयत् ॥

"Teaching the Veda and studying it, performing Yajnas and assisting others to perform them, the making of gifts and the receiving of them, he (Brahma the creator) assigned to the Brahmins."

The answer is to be sought in the sacred authorities themselves. Manu states in the sloka just previous (I. 87) his reason for assigning separate occupations for separate Varnas. It is, in his own words, "सर्वस्यास्य सर्गस्य गुप्यर्थं" "to protect (the interests of) the entire created universe." Manu has chiefly in view the merely social and economic interests of the Aryan people. The Gita, on the other

hand, is avowedly an *Upanishad*, and so teaches the methods of realising the Atman beyond all bounds of Samsaric existence. Sri Krishna makes no reference to the secular and unspiritual occupations mentioned by Manu for Brahmins,—as they are the most spiritually advanced, if we have regard to the inner tendencies (*Vasanas*, *Svabhava* already referred to) which are stored up in their hearts and which can easily be utilised, as they ought to be, for the gaining of the *true* aim of life. Of course, we here refer only to such of them as have not become hopelessly degraded into the state of Brahma-bandhus. In regard to the other Varnas, the same teachings, methods, virtues and perfections are available for them too, but the obstacles before them are greater, in so far as their inherent tendencies are concerned. In exceptional cases, indeed, these obstacles can be, and have been, overcome. But the *normal* course of spiritual evolution for the Jiva is to pass through the four Varnas in an ascending order until the Svadharms of the Brahmin can be developed to the utmost extent possible. Then only does Vairagya become possible to the extent insisted on by Sri Sankaracharya among the fourfold qualifications of the true disciple of the Vedanta. Then only can the aspirant after the self-realisation which ensures freedom from Samsara,—who must, by preference, be a Sannyasi, as stated by Sri Sankara in his Bhashya on Gita, IX. 22—fearlessly enter upon the task of devoting himself incessantly to the process of meditation (*dhyana*) after entirely throwing himself to the Lord's mercy and solicitude for the bare means of livelihood then needed and without any care or effort of his own. And here we conclude by quoting the blessed Bhagavan's gracious assurance to such true Sannyasins in the Gita (IX. 22),—

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगवेगं बहाम्यहम् ॥

"To those (seers of the highest reality) who, meditating on me as non-different (from their own true self) and worshipping me devotedly, are ever united to me, I take on myself the burden of securing (without any effort of theirs) the acquisition of what they have not on hand (among the necessities of life) and the safe preservation of what they have."

GENERAL NEWS.*

The enlightenment of the Twentieth Century civilization and the marvellous achievements of science concentrated in the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, are producing a far-reaching influence which is calling people from the remotest parts of the world.

Of the many congresses and conventions on the varied programme of the Exposition, the Congress of Religious Philosophies, held on July 29, 30 and 31, was by far the most interesting.

First on the programme was "Christian Day," devoted to the expounding of different denominations of the Christian faith. The inaugural address by Rev. Charles F. Aked on "The Faith of a Universalist," and an intensely interesting lecture "The Philosophy of Atheism," by Miss Emma Goldman, deserved the hearty applause accorded them by the audience.

On July 30, which was called "Hindu Day," various speakers discussed the different phases of Hinduism. A paper on "Zoroastrianism" was read by Fredon D. Birdi. K. D. Shastri, M.B., delivered a fine address on "The Philosophy of the Vedas," which brought forth interesting questions and discussions from the audience. Swami Prakashananda of the Rama Krishna Mission, and in charge of the Pacific Vedanta Centre of San Francisco, gave a most brilliant and eloquent address on "The Universality of Hinduism." It was presented in a most charming way and quite electrified the audience! The audience was composed mostly of Christians, and many of them who had come to criticise the Oriental faith, were deeply impressed with the broad and universal teachings of Hinduism, and found, by the generous reception and applause which greeted the speaker during his lecture, that not a few in the West are realising truths outside of Christianity. According to J. C. Misrow, M.A., of Stanford University, the lecture was the best exposition of Hinduism given in America since the memorable address by Swami Vivekananda at Parliament of Religions in 1893.

The convention closed successfully with "Oriental Day," when Buddhism, Mohammedanism, Theosophy and other Philosophies were freely discussed by representatives from all parts of the world.

Swami Prakashananda, while acting as Vice-President of the International Buddhistic Congress, which was held on August 2-7, gave two inspiring addresses on "Relation of Vedanta to Buddhism" and "Ethics of Buddhism."

After a brief visit to San Francisco, Swami Paramananda of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, Massachusetts, has returned to Boston via Los Angeles and the South-West. While in San Francisco he delivered two very successful lectures. One on "True Spiritual Culture—The Crying Need of the Day at Pacific Vedanta Centre, and the other on True Universality and Tolerance" at the Hindu Temple. We regret that his visit was so brief, for many were eagerly expecting to hear more of his edifying addresses on Vedanta Philosophy.

(अयम् आत्मा this Atman) आसीनः sitting दूरं far व्रजति travels. शयानः lying down सर्वतः everywhere याति goes. मदामदं (मद+अमद) joyful and joyless, देवं the effulgent one मदन्त्यं besides myself कः who ज्ञातुं to know अर्हति is capable.

Though sitting still, He travels far ; though lying down, he goes everywhere. Who can know besides me, that effulgent Being who rejoices and rejoices not ?

[Though sitting still, etc.—Though in its absolute nature the Atman is transcendental and beyond all motion, yet in the relative aspect it is all-pervasive and all motion.]

He goes everywhere.—i.e., He is all-pervading.

Besides me—i.e., besides the capable souls like me.

Who rejoices and rejoices not—i.e., in his relative aspect he enjoys the world but in his absolute nature he is the Sakshin, the mere witness of the world-process.]

अशरीरं शरीरेष्वनवस्थेष्ववस्थितं ।

महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥ २२ ॥

अनवस्थेषु impermanent शरीरेषु in bodies अवस्थितं existing, अशरीरं bodiless महान्तं the supreme विभुं all-pervading आत्मानं the Atman मत्वा knowing धीरः the wise न शोचति does not grieve.

The wise does not grieve, having known the bodiless, all-pervading supreme Atman who dwells in (all) impermanent bodies.

[Note—The above translation is given in accordance with the commentator. But the first line of the *mantram* can be translated also as follows : The wise who knows the Atman as bodiless within the bodies, as unchanging among changing things, etc.]

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।

यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तन् स्वां ॥ २३ ॥

अयम् this आत्मा Atman प्रवचनेन by the study of the Vedas न लभ्यः (नवति) cannot be attained, न मेधया nor by intellect, न बहुना nor much श्रुतेन by hearing (the sacred scriptures) ; एषः this (Atman) यम् whom एव alone वृणुते chooses तेन by him लभ्यः is attained ; तस्य his एषः this आत्मा Atman स्वां its own तन् form विवृणुते reveals.

This Atman cannot be attained by the study of the Vedas, nor by intellect, nor even by much hearing the sacred scriptures; by him It is attained whom It chooses,—this his (own) Atman reveals Its own (real) form.

[Whom it chooses—Different commentators have interpreted the यम् and एषः of the text in different ways. Sankaracharya has taken the former to mean 'which' i.e., which Atman the aspirant seeks, and the latter as 'this aspirant'; so according to him, the whole sentence means: "It is attainable by that aspirant alone who seeks this Atman." But the Dwaitic commentators have taken just the opposite view. They interpret एषः as 'the supreme Atman (God)' and यम् as 'whomever'; i.e., 'It is attained by him alone whomever God chooses.'

This his own Atman etc.,—i.e., the Atman which is in himself, reveals its true nature to him. This passage explains the real significance of the attaining of the Atman.]

नाधिरतो दुश्चरितान्नाशान्तो नासमाहितः ।

नाशान्तमानसो वापि प्रज्ञानेनैवमाप्नुयात् ॥ २४ ॥

दुश्चरितः from wickedness अधिरतः the unrestrained, न neither, न अशान्तः nor the unrestrained (from the sense-activities), न असमाहितः nor the unmeditative, न वा अशान्तमानसः nor with unpacified mind प्रज्ञानेन by knowledge अपि even एनम् this (Atman) आप्नुयात् can attain.

Neither the unrestrained from wickedness, nor the unrestrained, nor the unmeditative, nor one with unpacified mind can attain This even by knowledge.

[Attain This even by knowledge.—i.e., to such a man, even intuitional perception (प्रज्ञानं) of the Atman becomes impossible. Or, प्रज्ञानं may mean here in its etymological sense, i.e., "well-reasoned (intellectual) knowledge."]

यस्य ब्रह्म च क्षत्रं च उभे भवत ओदनः ।

मृत्युर्यस्योपसेचनं क इत्या वेद यत्र सः ॥ २५ ॥

यस्य whose ब्रह्म the Brahmana च and क्षत्रं the Kshatriya च also उभे both ओदनः food भवतः become. मृत्युः Death यस्य whose उपसेचनं condiment, curry. सः He यत्र where (अस्ति is) (तत् that) इत्या thus कः who वेद knows.

(Otherwise,) who thus knows where He is,—He, whose food are the Brahmana and the Kshatriya, and Death but condiment.

[Who thus knows, etc.,—i.e., besides the one who has the aforesaid proper qualifications, who else can know, etc.

He, whose food etc.,—i.e., in whom all distinctions merge and disappear, and in whom even Death is swallowed up, He being the eternal life.

The purport of the Mantram is :—

How can the ignorant with all physical consciousness know of that Atman, the supreme unity, where merge all distinctions of caste and creed and in whose contemplation Death itself becomes nought.]

The End of the Second Chapter.

॥ तृतीया बह्वी ॥

CHAPTER III

ऋतं पिबन्तौ सुकृतस्य लोके गुहां प्रविष्टौ परमे परार्थे ।
छायातपौ ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति पञ्चाग्नयो ये च त्रिणाचिकेताः ॥ १ ॥

लोके in this world (in this body) सुकृतस्य of good deeds ऋतं the result (*lit.* the truth) पिबन्तौ enjoining, गुहां in intelligence परमे in the supreme परार्थे in the cavity of the heart प्रविष्टौ the two who have entered (तौ तिष्ठतः there are the two). ब्रह्मविदः the knower of Brahman (तौ them both) छायातपौ (इव) like light and shade वदन्ति say. ये who च likewise पञ्चाग्नयः the house-holders who maintain the five kinds of sacred fire त्रिणाचिकेताः those who have performed the Nachiketa sacrifice three times.

There are the two in the world entered into the intelligence in the supreme cavity of the heart, enjoying the results of their good deeds. The knower of Brahman call them as light and shade ; likewise also (say) those house-holders who perform the Nachiketa sacrifice three times.

[There are the two—i.e., the Jivatman and the Paramatman—the individual soul and the cosmic soul.

Enjoying the results of their good deeds.—Here the Paramatman also is coupled with the Jivatman in enjoying the fruit of the deeds of the latter ; but this should be taken only as a metaphorical expression, as we often speak in the plural, when we mean one. The truth is that the Paramatman, the inner immutable essence of the Jiva as well as of the whole universe, is never attached in any way with the works of the former, nor with the modifications of the latter. It is the eternal witness of all life-activity for which is responsible only the Jiva with all its *upadhis*, viz., the mind, the senses, the *pranas* and the physical body.

Those house-holders—The house-holders are enjoined to maintain the five kinds of sacred fire, viz. — अन्वाहार्यपचन or दक्षिण, गार्हपत्य, आहवनीय, सध्य and आवास्य ; hence a house-holder is commonly called पञ्चाग्निः. Or, it may mean here those who are conversant with the Panchagni Vidya as described in Chchando-gya Upanishad, V. 4-8.

The Vedanta Kesari

“ Let the lion of Vedanta roar.”

“ Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that ‘ I am the Atman.’ ”

—Swami Vivekananda.

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CASTE AND PRIVILEGE.*

BY

Swami Vivekananda.

Our society is built on caste divisions. All societies are so built. There is, however, some difference between other societies and ours.

In nature, there is the constant working of two great forces. It is the conflict of these two mighty forces that is bringing about variety and relativity in the universe. In human society these two forces have always produced and will always produce variety in the shape of castes. Along with this division of society into castes, inequality of privileges has made its appearance like the shadow of death.

Of these two forces, one is in favour of inequality of privileges and the other standing against it is trying to break it down.

Variety is the soul of nature ; and this variety of castes will never cease to exist in society. That is to say, according to the difference in culture and ability there will always be difference in occupation. As for instance, one man is fit to rule a society, and

* Translated from the original notes in Bengali.

another only to sweep the streets. That on the score of this difference the man who is capable of leading society should have the advantages of all worldly comforts and the street-sweeper should die of starvation is the root of all social evils. If the present number of castes in India increase by a hundred thousand more, it would prove beneficial rather than injurious, because the number of industries in a country varies in proportion to the number of its castes. But the battle is being fought against inequality of privileges. According as a nation loses ground in this battle, does its misery increase. The more a nation gains ground in it, the higher it ascends in the scale of progress.

What society calls 'politics' is the battle fought between the privileged classes on the one hand and the unprivileged on the other.

Being defeated in this battle of inequality of privileges, India has fallen down almost dead.

Hence it is clear, that the possibility of bringing about India's equality with other nations is beyond any conceivable distance of time. Until India succeeds in establishing equality at home, there is no hope of her getting to life again.

In short, the division of society into such castes as Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, etc., is not a fault, but inequality of privileges has been the cause of enormous crimes.

Therefore our object is not to destroy 'caste', but to establish equality of privileges. Our most solemn resolve in life is to help all castes from the *pariah* upwards to gain equal rights to religion, wealth, worldly prosperity and liberation (*Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha*).

With the light coming from the West, India is just looking a little brighter. Accounts of the most tremendous exertions and determined battles that are going on in the West against inequality of privileges are slowly inspiring hopes into the most depressed life of our slumbering nation. The common rights of men, the glory of the soul, these ideas are slowly making their way into our veins by straight or devious courses. Those castes that were deprived of their privileges are reclaiming their lost rights. At this time secular and religious education, if kept confined within certain castes, will surely die out. It will culminate in the disappearance of India's most ancient and spiritual civilization and consequent extinction of the Hindus as a nation.

A river takes the course of least resistance. In society the current of these influences that make for good likewise flows of itself along the course most free from obstacles. Therefore society should always be led along the path of least resistance.

"Nothing can injure the strong and powerful (who are) like all-consuming fire." Society moves along the line in which it is led by powerful bodies possessed of purity, unselfishness and culture. The more we possess these, the greater will be our influence over society.

THE DESTINY OF MAN AS UNDERSTOOD IN THE EAST AND THE WEST.

[It is proposed to write a series of articles which can throw some light on the beliefs in the East and the West regarding man and society in its ultimate as well as practical significance. They are primarily intended to be thought-provocative rather than scientific expositions of the subject. The point of view is purely Eastern and seeks to evaluate the contents of human experience in terms furnished by the East itself. The Western conceptions and beliefs are brought in more as a relief and back-ground to those of the East. The present writer believes that a deeper and profounder study of Eastern ideals will reveal the superiority of the Eastern conceptions of life and society over those of the West on all fundamentals that are vital to the well-being of man.]

It is recognised at all hands that for the proper understanding of the real spirit of a people and their ideal that leads the van towards the fulfilment of their destiny, it is absolutely necessary to have a full comprehension of its mental life as portrayed in its literature; for, there alone we can find the full history of progress and stagnation of its inner life, and mark the tendencies that determine its course. Hence, to understand in a proper light the ideals and institutions of India, we must go to its literature, especially to those of its sacred lore of the past that determined and are still determining its course of life. For, if all literature is valuable for its power of suggestion, much more so are the sacred books of the Hindus. And it is most gratifying to find that serious attempts are being made in India and outside to unravel its treasures and test its genuineness with a critical study. Nobody can deny, in this rationalistic age of the twentieth century, the supreme importance and practical utility to such critical study of the ancient thoughts for their suitable adaptation to our modern time and for right comprehension of the past. But it carries with it an unavoidable limitation of its own. Hitherto it has been the custom in India to place an implicit reliance in the traditional exegesis for what the Hindus consider as the proper understanding of their scriptures. But the new school of critical study means to cut a new line of exegesis, rejecting the old.

The *Sampradayika* commentators who were so much more intent

on the practical aspect of their teachings must have read, it is argued, their own experiences in the texts of our scriptures. But this does not in the least lay them open to the charge of dishonesty or the conscious attempt to hoodwink others. Even in the case of such secular works as Shakespeare the same thing has happened, but thereby the value of Shakespeare as a work of art has not suffered. Of course there are those who are sticklers to the letter and try to forget the spirit. But have not the modern critical interpreters too fallen into the same error as that of the commentators? Even a scholar like Mr. Tilak when commenting upon the teachings of the Gita, has caricatured in many places the ideas, beliefs and convictions of the traditional commentators who have advocated Karma Sannyasa according to their own belief.

It is commendable, no doubt, that these interpreters have freed themselves from the dominating influence of traditional commentators; and it is a laudable attempt to make a critical study of a text following the principles of the historical method. But this method emphasises more the external and purely philological, literary and perhaps the thought-aspect of the truth as enshrined in the texts, but does not take into account the experience, the vision and the need that called forth such a work. If the latter is also taken into consideration, the conclusions arrived at by the historical method could be checked and the criticism that is indulged in against those who have interpreted it along the lines of personal realisation, will be given up.

For example, the critico-historical method has established that the Gita is a text book on Karma Yoga. This conclusion can be easily seen to be correct if we study the beliefs, convictions and moods of those who are of the activistic temper. Their professions, their actions, their justifications for their conduct—all will be similar to what is in the Gita, though they need never have heard of the Gita. If we study books as interpreters of human experiences and as indicators of the moods which were habitual to their authors we shall not go far wrong, and instead of trying to stick up to the form in which they have been expressed, we are sure to seek the spirit and intention of the author and endeavour to realise for ourselves what is contained therein by breaking up those concepts into the texture of our mobile experience which is so many-sided that it cannot be confined within the covers of any book.

If we thus view all literature, then the critico-historical method should be subordinated to the psychological study of the human mind in its concrete relations to life as a whole.

Such a study will reveal to us two types of mind among human beings,—the one, the reflective, contemplative

Two types of minds:
the Jnani and the
Karmi.

and meditative temper, and the other, the active, assertive and forceful one. Kapila in his *Sankhya Sutras* ascribes to *Buddhi* four

properties, viz., *Jnana*, *Vairagya*, *Aishwarya* and *Dharma*. *Jnana* and

Vairagya go together, as do *Aishwarya* and *Dharma*. The *Jnani* is generally engaged in eliminating desire and follows the path of *Vairagya* or Renunciation: while the *Karmi*, certainly aims at *Aishwarya* or mastery over all personal desires and endeavours to direct them in the channels of *Dharma* or *Loka-Samgraha* as the Gita would put it.

The *Jnani's* temper is well-adapted for suggestion, instruction, and enlightenment. His life will be abstemious, pure and good; but he will not engage himself in preaching, in organising, and guiding others. He works by means of ideas and is able to uplift a person to a higher level of thought. But that will not be his seeking, but must be sought for by those who need it. The thought-atmosphere which he creates in the neighbourhood has a marvellous potency about it and the elevated thoughts and feelings which are attained by his concentration and austerity will have a depth, a profundity and power which it is very doubtful that the man of action could ever attain. "Be good" is the rule of his life and he radiates goodness, truth and purity. It is the mistaken vision of the modern educated Hindu that attributes to him selfishness. He is the negation of all self and has made every part of his personality translucent with the light of the spirit.

The *Karmi*, the man of the activistic temper, works by his impressive domination and example. He is self-sacrificing and undergoes all privations for uplifting, and guiding those around him. He teaches them how to act as the other man how to think. He engages himself in preaching, organising and guiding others just as the other man is patiently training up pupils in concentration and mind-control. He studies the *finesse* of all social relations and tries to manipulate social conditions for the betterment of man. But the other takes hold of the individual and makes him self-reliant, free from the limitations of social and material life. One tries to change the environment, material and intellectual, in order that the personality may adapt itself to it; but the other tries to change the inner vision and attitude towards life, and thus makes him modify his intellectual and material nature.

The *Jnani* does not and cannot ignore completely the point of view of the *Karmi* unless he wants to attain

Paramahansa (Mystic) and the Siddha-Purusha (Superman).

ineffectual spiritualism; neither can the *Karmi* ignore the *Jnani's* point of view unless he wishes to fall into arid materialism. The

Jnani's goal is the Spiritual man, the *Paramahansa*, entirely free from all limitations, individual and cosmic. The *Karmi's*, is the *Siddha-Purusha*, who is master of mind and body, but possessing for that reason the limitations that result from the relation of mastery, the *Super-man* of Nietzsche but shorn, of course, of his grosser qualities.

These two ideals, when worked out from the standpoint of national well-being gives us the Asiatic social structure of the caste-system and the European yet-to-be realised system of *Satvika* Socialism. Ours is the simplification of social life in material relations and the opening out of the individual's heart to the beauty and grandeur of the super-personal life of the spirit, while the slow travail of Western Society is towards the forging of closer and deeper bonds of material relations, but of course of a finer and finer kind, till the vision of a spiritual life and a community of spirits stands forth in all its splendour and dazzling beauty. A few only amongst Western thinkers have conceived of such an ideal but there is a vagueness and haziness that surrounds it.

But in India the Bhakti Schools have this inter-social ideal emphasised and has left it to the *Advaiti*, the ideal of complete subsumption into the Universal Spirit. But the inter-social relations emphasised by the *Bhaktas* in the East are those based upon our common humanity whose very essence is *Dharma* but the inter-relations that prevail in the West in belief and practice are more of a material nature endangering the very existence of a happy social life. "To rule, to guide and to feed" is not so great as to love, to instruct and to enlighten. One helps the outward man but the other, the inner man which is nearer to the spirit than the other. Those modern critical interpreters of India would be doing, incalculable harm if they should consecrate, following the wake of the West, such material activities as the accumulation of wealth, food or the physical prowess as of equal or greater value to those of thought, instruction and preaching.

Western people base all their practical schemes of life on the necessities of human life on earth but do not know, as yet, of the possibilities of personalities in superphysical realms. The *Bhaktas* emphasise these very inter-social relations in a spiritual world and consider the physical as a passing, perishing existence. "We are sojourners in this land" is the view of all Indian orthodox schools and none have been so materialistic enough as to recommend the concentration of one's endeavours for the prolongation of physical life and the expansion of it to the magnitude which physical matter is capable of. But this is exactly what Western people are doing and what the Theosophist, himself a Westerner to the core, has been trying to do, though unconsciously, to the detriment of the Hindus' true spiritual instincts.

Besides, *Mukti* means complete freedom from the bonds of *Prakriti*, in its aspects fine and gross, mind and matter. It is not a life in *Prakriti*, but it is a life beyond *Prakriti*. It is the attainment of spiritual anarchism and phenomenal annihilation, and not the absolutism or heirarchism

which are only possible in *Prakriti* and not beyond her. No one in India ever considered *Mukti* as attaining *Brahma-hood*, the rulership of gods and men; it is an ambition all the same, similar in kind to that of the present Kaiser for world-dominion.

From the above it is clear that the Hindu people have chosen *Jnana* and *Bhakti* as the best and efficient means for attaining *Mukti* and that Karma has been subordinated in all its individual domestic and social aspects to the bare needs and necessities of physical life. The higher intelligence and the finer energies of the soul were conserved for the attainment of *Mukti* and not spent in the amelioration of social, domestic and individual life to such an extent as to debase the soul of man and make him more akin to the savage and the beast than towards the true manhood and godliness. The Hindu has so far succeeded as to have developed all the fine human virtues, such as sympathy, love, mildness and charity to a greater extent than any other race. The humanising activity has gone on for centuries in India; and the problem in India is not to raise the brute or savage to the stage of a human being, but to raise the human to the stage of a God.

Why then should we not assimilate all the material knowledge and method of the West only in so far as it will help us to maintain ourselves in a sane and well-regulated comfort, but subordinate it to the highest purpose of our manhood and our intrinsic Hindu nature? We need not compete with the West in trying to create political, economic and social efficiency in all its material aspects so as to threaten the very existence of other nations by the intensity of our rivalry and the ruinous nature of the jealousy which is its natural offspring. Ours is the function to humanise the institutions of the West, and thus hand on to the younger civilisations the old ripe experience of our forefathers gathered through millenniums which have yet preserved our race-identity.

The work of recovering for ourselves in its entirety the old ancient ideals has yet to be done. No conclusions arrived at by the study of Western institutions should ever be considered as standards for interpreting our own. We should try to evolve the sociology of our own land by patient and sympathetic study, but it shall be only by the assimilation of the scientific method that we are in need of. Any suggestion for improvement, any innovation from the established practices should be based on an independent study. We should try to divest ourselves of all prejudices which a study of Western Literature might have created in us. It is as silly to judge the East by Western standards as to judge the West by Eastern criteria.

Of course, such a study has been conducted by some individuals. Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda, the Theosophists to a partial extent, especially Mrs. Besant in her earlier days of unbiased judgment, Sister Nivedita, Professor Sundararama Iyer, Mr. Tilak and many others besides have attempted to do it. But a more systematic effort by an organised society of Hindu scholars and thinkers will be productive of much good. It is hoped that the Hindu University will be a centre for such a momentous work of universal value.

THE ETHICAL ASPECT OF THE VEDANTA.

BY

Professor K. Sundararama Iyer, M. A.

PART IX.

KARMA AND MODERN STATE ORGANISATION.

The question is often put,—“If the Vedantic gospel of Karma is accepted in its entirety by the Aryan people for whom it is intended, how should we view the efforts now being made to introduce into India the modern social and national organisation of the West?”

The spiritual ideals of the Vedanta and the goal of life which it has in view have always been scripturally connected with a form of social and state organisation which existed in its entirety in this country at an epoch of history now receding into a dim and distant antiquity and of which we can only form a shadowy outline from the literature that has been transmitted to us, sometimes in a more or less mutilated form owing to the inroads of time or the equally inevitable canker of human caprice or cunning. That organisation was intended to help forward the highest form of social purity, of international or inter-racial harmony, and of the highest level of ethical and spiritual excellence for the individual. In this opinion we are confirmed by the reckoning at the bar of history of the failures of Western civilisation and the innumerable transformations it has undergone in its attempts to achieve the same or similar aims for those who gave it their willing allegiance in Western lands. The strength and efficiency for its own purposes of the Indian social organisation can be seen to emerge from its wrappings even in its present condition of decay and will be clear to those who have had the goodness to follow our argument so far and will do so in the future. It is its *tolerance* and *easy accessibility* that the world has to thank for the fact that India has become a veritable museum of ethical and spiritual types in all stages of decline. The Western world has never realised the truth declared by a living

Western writer in the following remarkable sentence:—“The world does not need learned men or geniuses; what it needs is thoughtful men, moral men.” The ancient Aryas went further and found out that the world ever needs Rishis—the men who have seen the glory of the Self within and who, therefore, can alone be trusted to enlighten man regarding the conditions, social and political, under which true purity, peace, and progress can be made to exist both for individuals and communities of men. The appearance of Rishis as of old ceased in India because the rules of Brahmacharya laid down for the regulation of the individual failed to be observed even in the best families on account of the moral decadence and the intellectual infirmities of the men of later ages; and the tendency to deteriorate is now in process according to the method of geometrical progression. It is the function of the Rishi to declare the law regarding the constitution and working of society (Dharma). The Rishi alone can face with true insight and decide its destinies from time to time in accordance with the dictates of Dharma. Swami Vivekananda's remedy for all present evils in India is,—“We must revive the old laws of the Rishis.” “We must initiate the whole people into the codes of our old Manu and Yajnavalkya with a few modifications here and there to adjust them to the changed circumstances of the time.”

Men, however, feel to-day that the dawn of a new day comes no longer from the East, but from the West. The rage is all for revolution and reconstruction on Western lines. The Vasanas (latent tendencies to action) of men are all working in this direction, and the unsettling effects are pouring on us in an irresistible flood. The Puranic idea that the time-spirit of the Kali-yuga must work for the growth of sensualism and strife among men seems to be confirmed not only by the course of events in India, but by the social phenomena observable throughout the world to-day. Men's innate tendencies assuredly work themselves out if no contrary ones can be set up to counteract them or are not strong enough for the purpose. Hence, those tendencies which make for *new* forms of thought and life are now in the ascendant and are advocated on all sides. Those which make for the Western ideal of progress are predominant, while those which make for the Eastern ideal of Vairagya or Dharma are getting relegated to the background. It is thus certain that we shall count among us in increasing numbers the kind of men who are qualified and prepared for the introduction and working of the Western machinery of National and State organisation.

We are also aware that it is easy to satisfy a superficial mind that Western modes of thought and life are the best for all

men and all societies. For, externally, they are associated with a good deal of activity, individual and social. Look at the West,—the strenuous life and movement, the self-confidence with which men and nations engage in trade-competition and military and naval conflict with a view to achieve a world-empire. The only form of self-expression and self-manifestation worth men's striking for and striving for with all their might is that which can be estimated by external standards of measurement and therefore numerically counted so as to prove the fact of progress even to the masses of common men and which will contribute to the filling and thrilling of the hearts of the ruling democracy with the emotions and joys arising from the exercise of power and lordship in the world. Viewed from this standpoint, the life of the spirit,—the life which consists in self-control and self-discipline, the life which substitutes *sattvic* ideals for the glories of this world—must seem to the unspiritual mind to be an expression of the *tamasic* part of human nature. The truth is that this merely external likeness between what is *sattvic* and what is *tamasic* is only a *seeming*, and no *real*, resemblance; and it consists in the absence of the strenuous worldly activity which leads to pomp, glory, and wealth. If, however, we take into account the *inner* world of the *sattvic* man or community and compare it with that of the *tamasic* man or community, we shall see there all the differences which the blessed Bhagavan records in several slokas of the Gita in Chapters XVII and XVIII where he compares the two natures in regard to *sraddha*, *buddhi*, *dhṛiti*, *jnana*, *tapas*, *ahara*, *dana*, *karma*, etc. The *sattvic* side of human life and the gentle and simple fruits of the spirit are offered with devotion and humility at the lotus feet of the blessed Bhagavan for his gracious acceptance and with no other motive than to gain the supreme joy of looking upon his glorious form and of finding a humble place among those who, as his humble and loving devotees, obey his every bidding in his heaven of peace far above the tossing tempests and tumults of the shoreless ocean of *Samsara*.

The Vedantin has to recognise that, where men necessarily have to act in accordance with the store of latent tendencies, they are after all better than those whom the blessed Bhagavan refers to as *Mithyacharas* ((मिथ्याचाराः)), the hypocrites who, while their minds are filled with desires and aversions of all kinds and therefore thoroughly impure and unfit for the gaining of the true knowledge of the Spirit or of the higher spiritual worlds of Brahma and the like, have acquired the power of restraining the merely external organs of action and remain idle and indifferent to the duties of life. Even the man who has a knowledge of the distinction between

what is good and bad in the world around us and in the principles of conduct is inevitably subject to the working of the *Samskaras* (inherent tendencies) latent in his heart. The blessed Bhagavan says (Gita, III. 33) :—

सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।

प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥

“Even the man of discrimination (between good and evil) acts in accordance with his inborn (latent) tendency; all living beings follow their latent tendencies. Of what avail are the attempts to check them (made by myself or others)?”

The word *ज्ञानवान्* (man of discrimination) is not here to be understood as one who has gained the realisation of the highest Self. For the latter has reached the complete purity of mind (or freedom from all desires and aversions) needed for the shining in it of the enchanting vision of the Supreme Reality, and so he must long ago have reached the state in which merely worldly tendencies have been curbed. Sankara says of him in his Sutra-bhashya :—

“नावगतं ब्रह्मात्मभावस्य यथापूर्वं संसारित्वं शक्यं दर्शयितुं, वेदप्रमाणजनित-
ब्रह्मात्मभावविरोधात् । नहि शरीराद्यात्माभिमानिनो दुःखमयादिमत्त्वं दृष्टमिति
तस्यैव वेदप्रमाणजनितं ब्रह्मात्मवगमे तदभिमाननिवृत्तौ तदेव मित्याज्ञाननिमित्तं
दुःखमयादिमत्त्वं भवतीति शक्यं कल्पयितुम् । नहि धनिनो गृहस्थस्य धनाभिमानिनो
धनापहारनिमित्तं दुःखं दृष्टमिति तस्यैव प्रव्रजितस्य धनाभिमानरहितस्य तदेव
धनापहारनिमित्तं दुःखं भवति । न च कुण्डलिनः कुण्डलित्वाभिमाननिमित्तं सुखं
दृष्टमिति तस्यैव कुण्डलावयुक्तस्य कुण्डलित्वाभिमानरहितस्य तदेव कुण्डलित्वाभि-
माननिमित्तं सुखं भवति ।” “It is impossible to show that one who has realised the Brahman as his self is subject to the recurring cycle of births and deaths as before,—for it is contrary to the knowledge of Brahman as his self which has sprung from the source of true knowledge called the Veda. For it is not possible to assume that, because we see that one who is subject to the egotistic identification of one's body, etc., with the self is subject to grief, fear, etc., the same person, when that egotism has been got rid of through the realisation—by means of the source of true knowledge known as the Veda—of the Brahman as his self, will continue to be subject to grief, fear, etc., arising from false knowledge. A rich householder loving his wealth is seen to be subject to grief when that wealth is taken away from him; but the grief due to the loss of his wealth does not exist when he has renounced his secular life and become an ascetic and has no longer his former love of wealth. Again, we see that a person who possesses a pair of ear-rings enjoys the pleasure springing from the proud consciousness of their possession; but the pleasure due

to the egotistic consciousness of his being the possessor of the ear-rings does not exist when he has lost the ear-rings and is without the conceit arising from his being their possessor." But to return to the present topic. Every one has necessarily to act in accordance with such of his latent store of tendencies as become predominantly active. So, in an age when those tendencies which make for the love of secular aims and possessions is predominant in men's minds, we see that most men care only for activities which lead to secular progress. Of course, if the state as it ought to be is truly comprehended—i.e., if the state is conceived, constructed and directed, not as an end in itself, but as a means to the triumph of the eternal law of righteousness and the attainment of the realisation of the Self by every individual belonging to it—all will be helped to act in accordance with such tendencies only as lead to the fulfilment of the highest destiny of the souls incarnating among the human race. But modern states are mostly imbued with the spirit of self-assertion, and this must give rise, as it has frequently done, to a conflict of passions which can only be decided by the arbitrament of the sword. Besides, there prevails among many Western peoples the idea that certain races alone are fit to survive in the course of social evolution and that till then the idea of harmony and good-will among nations and societies cannot be made the basis of state-policy and state-direction. The late eminent philosopher, Herbert Spencer, has said:—"From war has been gained all that it had to give." "That social evolution which had to be achieved through the conflicts of societies with one another has already been achieved; and no further benefits are to be looked for. Only further evils are to be looked for from the continuance of militancy in civilised nations." How erroneous Spencer was in his views of the past and present of humanity is clear from the daily-expanding world-conflict now going on in Europe. Spencer certainly did well to point out that "persistent militancy, maintaining adapted institutions, must inevitably prevent, or else neutralise, changes in the direction of more equitable institutions and laws; while permanent peace will of necessity be followed by social ameliorations of every kind." But we must not fail to realise that, while it is nothing short of Satanic to assert that the law of force and self-assertion is as sacred and imperative in its demands on humanity as the law of love and self-conquest, there must be an ultimate centre of force within each state and for the entire civilised world to put down by the strong arm of power, tempered indeed by mercy, the ebullitions of unthinking brutality and fanaticism in communities or individuals. Hence the Indian sacred authorities—including the Vedanta as represented by the Gita—provide for a

class in whose Svadharma (social functions originating in inherent capacity) war is a leading feature. A society organised on the Vedantic basis of Varna (caste) includes a warrior-caste of Kshatriyas. This is a great ethical advance over the social organisation of European communities. There we see whole nations armed,—not merely a small section of the community forming a military caste. Under the system of social organisation favoured by the Veda the evil of war gets minimised by confining it to a small, though important, section of society. Moreover, the eternal law of Dharma—discovered by the Rishis in their Samadhi or super-conscious moments of meditation—is made supreme over all men and all human conditions. Even the ruler is subjected to its supremacy, so that it cannot change with a change in the views or whims of the ruler for the time being, nor pass away with the passing away of the ruler imposing them. On the other hand, in the modern civilised world—as a learned writer has pointed out—"With dogged intolerance the foolish majority raises its will to the dignity of law." Hence, as even the late Brahmo preacher—Babu Protap Chunder Mozoomdar—once conversing with Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, said of the peoples of Europe,—“As a general rule, *Rajas* or worldly activity is the one thing everywhere;” and he then added, “much the same is observable in America.” To this Sri Ramakrishna replied:—"The attachment to work which you say is the chief characteristic of the European and American people marks all human communities. But remember it is a mark of the earliest stage of life. Work for the sake of one's own worldly good—riches, honour, fame—is degrading. Worldly activity (*Rajas*) will only bring on increasing ignorance (*Ignorance*). It will make you forgetful of God and attached to woman and gold. Therefore the attachment to work that is observable in Europe and America—an attachment leading to spiritual degradation—is to be condemned." Still the vast majority of men are only moved either by the love of gain for the individual or by the love of power for the nation or community; and this cannot be helped in this iron age of Kali. As already seen, the blessed Bhagavan has himself said in the Gita (III: 38) “निग्रहः किं करिष्यति” “Of what avail are the attempts to check them (made by myself or others)?”

Does this mean that Aryavarta should abandon its mission in the world,—its consistent love of Dharma as a means to the gaining of the knowledge of Brahman? That would be to stultify itself. That would bring us only eternal disgrace and ultimate ruin,—the ruin of all that we have lived for and clung to even during all the revolutionary troubles of our past history. The blessed Bhagavan

has told us in unmistakable terms what to do in order that we may arrest the degeneracy occurring from time to time ; and all who can, must unceasingly endeavour to follow his injunctions. In the history of every community disturbances must occur from time to time to cause the disruption of the continuity of the national life ; and even such disturbances may occur as threaten to plunge it in the depths of moral degeneracy and perversity. This state of things may be due to extraneous influences or the rise of strange personalities whose strength of will, gifts of sympathy, and superior sagacity enable them to gain an ascendancy over their fellows and command their homage in such a manner as to turn them away from the established moorings and sometimes to shatter the very foundations of society. But any such society, if it has still any vitality, has been in a position to command the services of men of enlightened discrimination who can help to avert misfortune and to arrest degradation so as to maintain the ideal or the mission which, by its symmetry, simplicity or sublimity, has gained the universal adhesion of the best elements of society from age to age and proved the inspiration for all its characteristic virtues and its noblest achievements. To all such as can rise above the play of the transient impulses or the keener gleam of momentary interests, the blessed Bhagavan has conveyed through the Gita a noble practical precept which, if followed, can effectually save society from the danger of perishing and restore to it the unity of aim and continuity of life which it needs. The Gita, IV. 15, says :—

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ।

“Therefore do thou also perform Karma as did your ancestors in the more ancient days.”

Sri Sankaracharya explains “पूर्वतरं कृतं” negatively to mean “नाधुनातना कृतम्” “not practised by those who are now living.” Madhusudana Sarasvati gives, “अपि पूर्वं युगान्तरेऽपि कृतम्” “practised in every ancient times, even in a different Yuga.” His idea is that the more remote the past epoch to which we look for the ancestors whom we are to follow as our exemplars, the better for us. For, their conduct is more likely to be in accordance with the teachings of the Veda and thus we shall be saved from the danger of following the innovators and disturbers of to-day whose intrusive personalities threaten to cause disruption, disgrace and ruin. Nilakanta also explains पूर्वतरं to mean “वेदोक्तं वा त्वयि न केनचित्कल्पितम्” “told in the Veda, and so not invented by any one now.” To us, Aryas, nothing can be more beneficial than to follow the precepts of the Veda as truly interpreted in accordance with the accepted sources

of authentic tradition and the rules of interpretation recognised by the Purva-Mimamsa school. This course is also the safest and wisest to follow. For, we shall thus place ourselves on a line with the promise of complete religious neutrality and freedom for all proclaimed by our rulers, while we do not lose our chances either of influencing the spiritual progress of humanity in the future, or of safeguarding to ourselves the ultimate goal of spiritual freedom and bliss through the steady observance, in all its successive phases of evolution, of that life of Dharma which is to lead on to its attainment.

TO THE LAND OF THE SNOWS.

BY

A. K. D.

(Continued from page 188).

Singing glory to the Lord we entered the cherished land.* Our priest provided a room for us and also fire to warm ourselves. He tried to afford us all the comforts he could. Every evening he would send us sufficient *prasad*. Our morning meal consisted of sweetmeats bought from the bazaar. *Prasad* is sold here as in Puri, and so men generally do not cook ; moreover, as in Puri, there is no caste distinction here as regards the *Prasad*.

The pilgrims have to undergo certain preliminary rites before worshipping the image of Badrinath. They have first to perform their ablutions in the five sacred springs, namely, Rishiganga, Kurmadhara, Prahladadhara, Naradakund and Taptakund. The first four are extremely cold and so they are simply touched. The last one is hot and proves very genial to the shivering pilgrims. It is a tank measuring about 240 square feet covered over with a roof of planks. It is fed by a thermal spring by means of a subterraneous communication, terminating in a spout of the form of a dragon's head. The water is exceedingly hot. Therefore for the purposes of bathing its temperature has to be lowered by the admixture of cold water from another spring. Next, they have to touch and bow down to five sacred stones, viz., *Naradasila*, *Barahasila*, *Narisinhasila*, *Garudasila*, and *Markandeyasila*,—all of which lie in the adjacent places. Then the pilgrims go to see and worship the image of Badrinath.

The temple stands on the right bank of the Alakananda and occupies the highest position of an open valley over three miles long and one mile broad, being equidistant from

two high peaks—Nara in the east and Narayana in the west. The original building is said to have been erected about the eighth century by Sankaracharya, but that and several later ones have been swept away by avalanches. The present temple looks like that of Kedarnath, only it is more spacious and has a compound. In this compound there are rooms containing the images of several Gods and Goddesses and the kitchen where food is cooked for Badrinath. In the principal temple there is an altar called *Ratna-vedi* in the middle of which sits Badrinath—a nicely cut image of black stone about three feet high. During the day it is clothed with rich gold brocade and adorned with many gold and silver ornaments. A golden *chatra* and a bright mirror hang over its head. The dress and the ornaments are worth about Rs. 15,000. On the right side are the images of Kuvera and Ganesha and on the left are those of Nara and Narayana. The naked image, which the pilgrim hankers to see, is to be seen in the morning when the image is bathed and at evening just before the temple is closed. But no one is allowed to be present at these moments unless some liberal fee is paid to the priests. The God is offered *bhoga* (meal) twice a day—one in the morning and another in the afternoon. The morning *bhoga* consists of condensed milk and is distributed amongst boys; at evening a grander *bhoga* is offered, which consists of *Khichari* rice, *dall*, *curry*, fried vegetables, and many other varieties of dishes. These are all sold afterwards to the pilgrims. The head of the *pujaris* is called Rawal, and none but he is allowed to touch the image. The sole management of the secular affairs of the temple rests with him, subject to the control of H. H. the Raja of Tehri-Garhwal. He gets a pay of Rs. 100 a month. The Rawal must be a Nambudri Brahmin of Malabar and must possess certain specified qualifications. The pilgrims make three kinds of offerings: *thali bheta*, *atka bhoga*, and *gadi bheta*. The first one is made to the God and is placed in a vessel near the spot whence they see the image. It may be in the form of cash, ornaments, shawls, etc. Most of the pilgrims make this offering only. The second one is paid in money for food (cooked in the temple kitchen) to be offered to God. The third is paid to the Rawal's *gadi* or throne in honour of him. All these go to swell the temple funds.

The temple is closed on the *Dewali* day in November and opened again on the *Akshayatri* in May, during which time the temple and all the surroundings lie buried in snow. A few utensils only are shut up inside, but all the treasure is taken down to Joshi Math. The *pujaris* also repair to that place, but all the priests or *pandas* go to their homes at Devaprayag. It is said that

before Sankaracharya these *pandas* used to live at Hardwar. He persuaded them to migrate to Devaprayag. These *pandas* press the pilgrims too much for money.

There is a free hospital, a free dispensary, and a Post and Telegraph Office in Badrinath. It contains many *dharmsalas* and charities for the relief of *sadhus* and indigent pilgrims and these are maintained by the Gwalior, Kashmir and Palwal States and the Kali Kamli *Sadhus*. The height of the place is 10,400 feet.

A few yards to the north of Taptakund is a place called Brahma Kapal where the pilgrims have to perform *sraddha* ceremony for their dead relations. The *pindas* (food for the departed) consist of boiled rice that was previously offered to Badrinath and *tulasi* leaves. The place is as famous here as Gaya is in the south. The Sastras say that the departed attains liberation if his *sraddha* is performed here and that Gaya *sraddha* is not necessary for him then.

For me, in the heart of my hearts I felt the holiness of the place. In fact, I perceived I was beyond myself with a feeling of inexpressible bliss. Here Vyasa, Narada, Uddhava and legions of Rishis, Munis, and Yogis performed severe penances in previous *yugas*. Here the famous fight between Arjuna and Siva in the disguise of a hunter took place in the epic age. The spiritual note raised by them still vibrates in the place. One only needs come here and see.

There are five Badrinaths within a certain area: The Badri-Bisal, the Yoga-Badri, Bhabisya-Badri (13 miles south-east of Joshi Math), Briddha-Badri (at Akhi Math) and Dhyana Badri (10 or 12 miles south of Joshi Math). The tract containing these is called Vaishnava Kshetra and regarded as very sacred. About three miles to the north on the other side of the Alakananda is Vyasagruha where the famous Mahabharata—the greatest epic—was written. Two miles more to the north is the Basudhara falls which is held sacred by the people. Some five miles ahead of Badrinath is the famous Alakapuri, the kingdom of Kuvera, the god of wealth. The Alakananda rises from here and hence its name. The confluence of the Alakananda and Saraswati rivers just below the village Mana some three miles off, is called Keshavaprayag, where is a temple of Vishnu. Here too, is the residence of the Yaksha Manibhadra who was vanquished by the second Pandava, Bhima. Satyapath—a lake and glacier—is situated 18 miles north-west of Badrinath. It is triangular in shape, each of the corners being named Brahmaghat, Vishnughat, and Maheswarghat. The circumference is about three quarters of a mile and snows are visible all round. It takes four days to go there and return. As there is no vegetation on

the way, the pilgrim has to take firewood and cooked food with him. There is nothing on the road or on the sides of the lake but the caves, to take shelter in.

On the 14th June we left Badrinath and next day at evening we reached Pipalkoti. Some of the hills we crossed contain much mica and shine brilliantly in the sun. At one place we saw the hill-side opposite to us burst out suddenly with a loud report as that from several muskets fired at a time; but we could not find out any cause for it. We saw also our pathway destroyed in many places by landslips. We arrived at Chamoli on the morning of the 16th. The route from here takes a different course. We had no longer to retrace our old path. In the afternoon we reached the fourth Prayag—the confluence of Alakananda and Nanda. The slender blue Nanda is no match for the boisterous Alakananda, and is kept down on one side as it were, from slight I must tell here that the hill-men are very hospitable, and we had many proofs of it. We are in fact very grateful to them for all the kind care they took of us.

The next morning we reached the fifth or the last Prayag on our way. It is the meeting point of the Alakananda and Karnaganga. It was here that the great sacrifice of Karna was celebrated in the previous *yuga*. There are a few temples at the place, one being very old, erected by Karna. Next evening we came to Mehelchauri at the border of the Garhwal District. Here our coolies left us and new coolies were appointed. The next day and half of the following one we roamed in the Almora District, and then entered into the Nainital District. We had to travel two days in that district before we got at the Ramnagar railway station. The sight of the railway greatly delighted me. But the thought that it would soon separate me from the exhilarating scene amidst which we lived for a month pained my heart.

For, I did not expect to see once more those lofty mountains which spoke of the stupendousness of creation, those virgin snows which assumed different hues in the different parts of the day, those meandering brooks and mighty torrents that dashed reverberating through the ravines, those towering trees and super-abundance of flowers which lent majesty and grace to the limitless woodlands, and those long shadows which brought back to the mind many a fanciful dream. Is it possible for one to leave without a heavy heart those vivid and beautiful scenes of Nature, that heart-stopping silence, that cool, fresh and holy air which incessantly whispered to his ears a tale of divine love and divine presence? But there was no alternative for me. With a heart full of mysterious reverence, I bowed down to the spirit of the mountains and got into the train

that was ready and were brought in a couple of days to the din and clamour of the busy selfish life of the metropolis.

Reader, if you are a Hindu you should see the Himalayas, the cradle of your religion. It is necessary for you. The memory of what you will see will sweeten your life with a joy that may be called almost transcendent. The travel is neither tedious nor expensive. It is enough if you can walk ten miles a day, and it is not difficult perhaps for you to spend a hundred rupees to earn such a joy that will stand you for the whole of your life.

(Concluded.)

VEDA AND CASTE.

By

R. Krishnaswami Sastri, B. A.

III.

(Continued from page 92.)

We shall now proceed to discuss Mr. Sastri's interpretation of the term *Varna* which forms the central pillar of his new theory of caste. According to him, the term *Varna* originally meant spiritual aspiration and that it has come to mean colour owing to the spiritual degeneracy of the people. He seeks support for his view from a mantra of the Rig Veda (III-34-9) which runs as follows:—

“ससानात्मा उतसूर्यससान इन्द्रः ससान पुरुभोजसङ्गाम् ।
हिरण्यमुतभोगं ससान हवीदस्युन् प्रार्य वर्णमावत् ॥

Mr. Sastri translates the last *pada* into “Having slain the Dasyus, he protected the Aryas, the Varna.” This interpretation is untenable for the following reasons:—

(a) Sayanacharya takes *प्रार्य* as an epithet qualifying, not as a substantive in apposition to *वर्ण*. According to him, the last *pada* of the mantra will stand in translation as follows.—“Having slain the Asuras, he protected the three twice-born castes.” If *Varna* and *Arya* both meant devout as distinguished from the Dasyus (or undevout) there would have been no necessity for using both the terms when either would have sufficed.

(b) Again, Mr. Sastri's interpretation is, in our view, forced and inconsistent with the general trend of the course of thought and expression in the Rigveda. For, the last *pada* of the 4th Mantra of the 12th Sukta of the 2nd Mandala runs as follows:—“*यो दासवर्णमधरे गुराकः*” Here *Dasam Varnam* is the exact correlative of the term

Aryam Varnam in the Mantra under discussion. Mr. Sastri places *Aryam* and *Varnam* in apposition so as to suit his theory that Aryas are the Varna or the illumined. A similar interpretation can—or must—be placed also on *Dasam Varnam* which will mean the Dasas who are *varna* or illumined. So interpreted, the distinction between the Aryas and Dasas, the illumined and the unillumined, the devout and the undevout, loses its significance altogether and Mr. Sastri is landed in a maze of confusion from which he cannot extricate himself. Our readers—and Mr. Sastri too—must now be able to appreciate the danger of originality; or, Indian tradition—had he condescended to seek its aid—would have saved Mr. Sastri from the absurd predicament into which he has, as we have just shown, been landed.

(c) In the Bhagavad Gita which, in Mr. Sastri's view, "is a reiteration of the long-lost pristine original Vedic religion," it is stated that Arjuna had great dread of *Varnasankara*. The Lord Himself was conscious, like Arjuna, of the evil of *Varnasankara* and the necessity of preventing it, when He said "सङ्करस्य च कर्तास्यामुप-ह्न्यामिमाः प्रजाः" (III-24). Such expressions would be quite out of place if Mr. Sastri's interpretation of *varna* were to be followed; for then there could be nothing of *Varnasankara* among people who belong to the same race or homogeneous community, and only differ in illumination or occupation as Mr. Sastri contends.

(d) Mr. Sastri attempts to support his interpretation by referring to the word *वर्णी* which in common literary use in Sanskrit means "a religious devotee." We reply that this word has no connection with the term *varna* under discussion. *Varna* has many significations in Sanskrit. It means (1) a letter of the alphabet, (2) colour, (3) *vrata* or religious observance, (4) fame, (5) praise, (5) caste, etc. Evidently Mr. Sastri takes meaning No. 3 (i.e.,) *vrata* to support his interpretation of *varna* as illumined or "devout." Why this particular meaning should be taken is not clear. We may as well take the first meaning and then *Varni* would mean merely one who is literate thereby excluding the idea of "spiritual aspiration." On this basis we may draw a conclusion regarding Aryas as mere literates—a conclusion quite as valid as that reached by Mr. Sastri which makes out Aryas to mean the spiritually illumined or the devout.

(e) Lastly, the following *Sruti* passages may be quoted in this connection. In the Taittiriya Brahmana it is said "ऋग्व्यो जातं वैश्यं वर्णमाहुः" (They say that the Vaisya Varna sprung out of the Rigveda). The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (I. 4.13) says "स शौद्रं वर्णमसृजत" (He created the Sudra Varna). These two passages simply give the lie direct to Mr. Sastri's novel interpretation of *Varna* according to which Varna and Brahmana are synonymous. For these reasons, we reject Mr. Sastri's new theory as unfounded and erroneous. We

shall now proceed to a consideration of Mr. Sastri's new theory of Brahmanahood which he seeks to support by an imposing array of Vedic passages. Mr. Sastri appears to have ransacked the entire range of Vedic literature for the purpose. A most cursory examination will, however, show what slender foundation there is for Mr. Sastri's new theory in the Vedic scriptures. Mr. Sastri's procedure affords a striking illustration of the extreme facility with which he wrenches passages out of their context and twists words out of their natural meaning for buttressing a preconceived theory.

Mr. Sastri says:—"The ancient Vedic communities believed that Brahmacharya or Yagadiksha, a life of spiritual devotion and discipline made any one a Brahmana and conferred on him the social status of a Brahmana." In this connection he quotes Satapatha Brahmana (III. 2-1-40), which he translates as follows:—

"Now as regards what he says 'this Brahmana has been consecrated.' Before this his birth is uncertain. For they say that Rakshasas follow after women and that it is Rakshasis who inject seed into them. So then he is certainly born (a Brahmana), who is born from Brahman (Sacred Science, Veda), who is born from *yagna*. Wherefore also let him address a Rajanya (Kshatriya) or a Vaisya as a Brahmana, for he is born a Brahmana who is born from *yagna*." We shall show that this passage lends no support whatever to Mr. Sastri's novel theory of Brahmanahood.

(a) In the first place, the rule "Let him address a Rajanya or a Vaisya as a Brahmana" itself clearly presupposes the separate existence of the three castes; Brahmanas, Rajanyas and Vaisyas must exist as separate castes before the honorific term *Brahmana* can be applied to the two other castes. That the term *Brahmana* as applied to a Rajanya or Vaisya is a mere honorific one, will presently be shown in our discussion of the Aitareya Brahmana passage quoted by Mr. Sastri. We can, therefore, confidently assert that unless this distinction between Brahmanahood due to birth and that conferred by *yagna diksha* is recognised, the entire passage will lose its significance.

(b) In the second place, our interpretation is also borne out by such passages as "वसन्ते ब्राह्मणोऽग्नीनादधीत, ग्रीष्मे राजन्यः शरदि वैश्यः" (Taittiriya Brahmana, Ashtaka 1, Anuvak 2). This passage affords clear proof that caste precedes *Yaga diksha* and that it is not *yaga diksha* alone that confers Brahmanahood. The castes must be already existing before this rule can be applied. Mr. Sastri cannot explain away this passage by his favourite dictum that "this injunction presupposes only the existence of a Brahmana class as distinguished from other classes and not strictly the Brahmana caste." We leave it to our readers to judge what could be the correct interpretation of this passage. We are really astonished to see that a Pandit of Mr. Sastri's attainments should fly in the face of such explicit *sruti* passages

and have recourse to strained interpretations of scriptural texts. Evidently, Mr. Sastri's overmastering zeal for propagating an alien ideal of reform has landed him in this predicament.

(c) It should also be noted in this connection that the three twice-born castes are alone considered eligible to perform *yagna*. The Sudra is not only not referred to but there are passages which explicitly state that a Sudra is utterly unfit to perform *yagna*. In Satapatha Brahmana (III 1-1-9-10) it is declared that the three Dwija classes alone are *यज्ञियाः* (fit to perform *yagnas*) and that a Dikshita should not even speak with a Sudra. The Taittiriya Samhita distinctly says "तस्माच्छूद्रो यज्ञेऽनवकृत्सः" (Therefore is a Sudra unfit to perform *yagnas*). In his Bhashya on the Mimamsa Dharsana (VI. 1-25 to 38), Acharya Sabara Swamin has conclusively established that a Sudra has no eligibility either to study the Vedas or perform *yagnas*. We hope we have thus proved to the hilt that there is not an iota of scriptural support for Mr. Sastri's confident dicta that "Yaga diksha or a life of spiritual devotion and discipline made any one a Brahmana and conferred on him the social status of a Brahmana" and that "the portal of true Vedic culture may be thrown open to the Sudras and even to the outcastes."

In further support of his theory that *yagadiksha* alone confers Brahmanahood, Mr. Sastri quotes the following passage from the Aitareya Brahmana "सहदीक्षमाण एव ब्राह्मणतामभ्युपैति" and he translates it into "He (the Kshatriya) when consecrated attains Brahmanahood." A casual reference to the context would, however, have led Mr. Sastri to pause before erecting an imposing superstructure on this innocent Vedic passage. Mr. Sastri's theory is untenable for the following reasons:—

(1) The text under discussion occurs in the 5th Khanda of the 84th Adhyaya of the Aitareya Brahmana. To arrive at a correct interpretation of the text, it should be read along with the preceding Khandas of the same Adhyaya. The Adhyaya begins with the statement that the four castes were created at the very beginning of creation. Then in the form of a narrative it is stated that *यज्ञ* (sacrifice) went away and was pursued by the Brahmana and the Kshatriya with the respective implements of their castes. The Brahmana reached *यज्ञ* while the Kshatriya returned without accomplishing his purpose. For, frightened by the weapons of the Kshatriya *यज्ञ* ran away; *यज्ञ* thus remained with the Brahmana. Then the Kshatriya approached the Brahmana and prayed to be allowed to take possession of *yagna*. The Brahmana advised the Kshatriya to lay aside his weapons, assume Brahmanical garb, and then approach Yagna. The Kshatriya obeyed and reached Yagna. Hence even a Kshatriya when he takes up the garb of a Brahmana is allowed to share in Yagna. It is in this connection that the text under discussion occurs. The reason why a

Kshatriya, on being consecrated attains Brahmanahood, is clearly stated in the sentence which immediately follows the text under discussion and which Mr. Sastri has conveniently ignored. It is as follows: "सहदीक्षमाण एव ब्राह्मणतामभ्युपैति, यत्कृष्णाजिनमभ्युहति यदीक्षितव्रतं चरति, यदेनं ब्राह्मणा अभिसंगच्छन्ते" (Only on taking Diksha does he attain Brahmanahood, the reason being that he clothes himself with the skin of the black antelope, that he observes the *vratas* prescribed for Dikshitas and that Brahmanas gather round him). Thus the very text relied upon by Mr. Sastri furnishes the most convincing refutation of his new theory of Brahmanahood.

(2) Again, the Brahmanahood attained by a Kshatriya at the time of Diksha is only temporary. When the sacrifice is completed the Kshatriya reverts to his original status. This fact is plainly stated in the 6th Khanda of the 84th Adhyaya of the Aitareya Brahmana. In the Upasthana Mantra, the Kshatriya is made to say "क्षत्रं प्रपद्ये क्षत्रियोभवामि": (I enter the *Kshatra* and I become a Kshatriya). The concluding rites of the *यज्ञ* are performed by the Kshatriya as a Kshatriya and not as a Brahmana. (उद्वस्यति क्षत्रियः सन्).

That the Brahmanahood conferred on a Kshatriya by Diksha is only temporary is also stated in the Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad (I.4-11) "तस्माद्यद्यपि राजा परमतांगच्छति ब्रह्मैवान्तत उपनिश्चयति": (Though at the time of the Rajasuya sacrifice the king attains the highest dignity, he at last takes refuge in the Brahmana caste. In his Vartika on this passage, Sri Sureswaracharya says "यतोऽतो यद्यपि क्षत्रं ब्राह्मण्यं प्रतिपद्यते । परमत्वं तथाप्यन्ते राजसूयक्रतोः पुनः ॥ उपनिश्चयति ब्रह्मगुणभावेन पूर्ववत्". Innumerable passages like these can be quoted to prove the baselessness of the new theory of Brahmanahood. We do not, however, like to weary our readers by multiplying quotations.

Another passage which Mr. Sastri has eagerly clutched at for propping up his theory occurs in Satapatha Brahmana (115-4) "सद्योहत्वा ब्राह्मणाय ब्रूयात् । यज्ञं यज्ञेऽभिजायते ॥ तस्मात्सद्य एव ब्राह्मणायानुब्रूयात्." (The teacher may, however, teach a Brahmana (the Savitri) at once, for the Brahmana belongs to Agni and Agni is born at once therefore he should teach the Brahmana at once.

On this Mr. Sastri says "To a Brahmana the Savitri Mantra may be taught at once—the implication being that the Brahmanacharya of from three days to one year's duration means those who are not Brahmanas, that is to say, who have not already been leading a Brahminical style of life." We deny the legitimacy of Mr. Sastri's inference. According to the Sastras the three twice-born castes are alone eligible to receive the Savitri Mantra. Unless Mr. Sastri brings forward texts in support of his assertion that the Mantra may be taught "to Sudras

and even to outcastes," the validity of his reasoning cannot be allowed. We invite Mr. Sastri's attention to the following Vedic text :—

“पशुहवा एतच्छमशानं यच्छूद्रः तस्माच्छूद्रसमीपे नाध्येयः” (The Sudra is a moving शमशान or cremation ground, and hence the Vedas should not be studied in his presence). That one whose very presence is declared inauspicious for Vedic study is *ipso facto* ineligible to undergo the ceremony of Upanayana will be patent to the meanest understanding. We may, therefore, take it as conclusively proved that Mr. Sastri's new theory of Brahmanahood is nothing but an unwarranted assertion based upon a complete misunderstanding and misinterpretation of Scriptural texts.

In this connection we may be allowed to point out that, according to the Sastras, the terms ब्राह्मण and ब्राह्मण्य have four different significations. If Mr. Sastri had paused to look into this matter with unprejudiced eyes he would not have entered into the present controversy regarding a well-established fact. Now what are the four significations just referred to? They are :—

(1) ब्राह्मण्य due to birth. That the Vedas recognise birth as the sole criterion of caste will be convincingly proved in the sequel. The passages from the Taittiriya and Aitareya Brahmanas discussed above should also be referred to.

(2) ब्राह्मण्य due to Upanayana and the initiation into the Savitri Mantra. This is the Brahmanahood mentioned in Satapatha Brahmana II. 5-4-12):—

“आचार्यो गर्भी भवति हस्तमादाय दक्षिणम् ।
तृतीयस्यां स जायते सावित्र्या सह ब्राह्मणः ॥”

“By laying his right hand on (the pupil) the teacher becomes pregnant (with him). In the third (night) he (the pupil) is born as a Brahmana with Savitri”.

(3) ब्राह्मण्य conferred by यज्ञदीक्षा.

This has been pointed out in the Aitareya Brahmana passages already discussed.

(4) ब्राह्मण्य consequent on the realisation of the Supreme Self. This fact is stated in Upanishadic passages like “अथ ब्राह्मणः” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad III-5-1). In his Bhashya on this passage Sri Sankaracharya says “निरूपचरिते हि तदा तस्य ब्राह्मण्यं प्राप्तम्”. “Only then, Brahmanahood, in the real sense of the term can be said to have been attained by him.” Sri Sureswaracharya also says in his Vartika:

“इमामवस्थां संप्राप्य सर्वो ब्राह्मण उच्यते ।
ब्राह्मण्यं गौणमन्यत्र पूर्वभूमिपुनोजसा ॥”

“On reaching this stage (of realisation) every one becomes a Brahmana. As applied to the previous stages of the aspirant's life, the term of Brahmana conveys only a figurative and not its primary sense.”

A frank recognition of these different uses of the term ब्राह्मण in our sacred writings is sure to remove the many misconceptions prevalent in our midst regarding the system of caste.

In summing up the results so far arrived at, we may be allowed to assert that Mr. Mahadeva Sastri has totally failed to establish his case. The methods of interpreting texts which he has adopted is radically wrong and opposed to all sound and recognised canons of Vedic exegesis. The vehemence of his language and his contumelious attitude towards opponents simply serve to expose the inherent weakness of his position. The novel interpretations which he has placed upon the words वर्ण, धर्म, and ब्राह्मण are quite unable to bear the weight of the speculative edifice built upon them. In short, his new theory of caste collapses like a house of cards.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA HOME, MYLAPORE, MADRAS.

The former building of the Ramakrishna Home, Mylapore, Madras, having cracked extensively, we were compelled to dismantle it, and an attempt is now being made to put up a new one for the Mission residence either on the same or the adjacent site. As the Mission is entirely dependent upon the benevolent help of its friends and devoted public, we have to collect funds among them to erect the new Mission building. We have great pleasure in acknowledging with hearty thanks the receipt of the following munificent donations for the said purpose from our friends.

	Rs.
The Hon'ble Mr. Justice K. Srinivasa Iyengar	...
M.R.Ry. R. M. M. S. T. Vairavan Chettiar, (first instalment)	1,000
" A friend from British North Borneo...	1,000
" C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, B.A., B.L. (first instalment)	250
" K. Balasubrahmanya Iyer, B.A., B.L.	...
" A. Krishnaswami Iyer, B.A., B.L. (first instalment)	100
" M. Subbaraya Iyer, B.A., B.L.	...
" M. L. M. Ramanathan Chettiar	...
The Hon'ble Mr. Justice T. V. Seshagiri Iyer...	50
M.R.Ry. P. A. Venkatarama Iyer, B.C.E.	...
" V. V. Bhashyam Iyengar...	35
" C. Ranganatha Mudaliar	...
Sir V. C. Desikachariar, Kt.	25
	...
	20

The present estimate of the new building is about ten to twelve thousand Rupees, and we appeal to our friends to help us in raising the sum. All donations will be duly acknowledged by me in the pages of our organs.

In this connection, we are glad to inform our friends that Mr. R. Srinivasa Iyengar (retired Executive Engineer) and Rao Sahib A. V. Ramalinga Iyer, Superintending Engineer, Madras, have accorded their professional advice unstintedly till now and have also kindly consented to render all help towards the construction of the new building. We convey our grateful thanks to them both.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION,
Mylapore, Madras.

SWAMI SHARVANANDA.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FAMINE RELIEF WORK.

In our previous report we brought to the notice of the public the news of the outbreak of terrible famine in the districts of Balasore and Bankura. Since the beginning of September the Government has come forward to succour the distress of the people of Brahman-Baria subdivision with doles of rice, gratuitous relief and agricultural loans, and so we have directed our relief work to more helpless places. It is gratifying to note that the condition of the people in Silchar has slightly improved and our centres of relief have stopped work for the present to recommence it, if necessary, in future. We have distributed till now in the Silchar District, 159 maunds, 19 seers of paddy-seeds to 49 villages, where cultivation has been commenced. We have also tried here to help the distressed families belonging to the middle classes. Clothes were distributed as usual from all our centres.

In response to a piteous appeal from the President of the Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Katalipara, Faridpur District, we sent Rs. 200 for the relief of distress brought about by floods and famine. A further sum of Rs. 100 was given to him subsequently. The centre has stopped the work of relief after carrying it out for four weeks.

In the district of Balasore distress is prevalent everywhere but the pinch of scarcity is felt the keenest in Thana Basudevapur, Bhadrak and Dhamnagar. The Government is working in Thana Basudevapur. Besides the centre at Bant, we have opened another at Agarpura.

The situation in Bankura is most critical. For the last two years crops were most unsatisfactory, but this year the distress has reached its climax. People are leaving in large numbers for other districts in the hope of getting employments but only to return to the same fate through starvation without finding work. Heads of families in many places have deserted their homes unable to bear the heart-rending sights of their dear ones suffering the death-pang in the jaws of starvation. So violent is the famine in this district that inspection is almost quite unnecessary. The ghastly spectacle of the hollow-eyed famished people reduced to "absolute skeletons" bears an undoubted testimony to the terrible scourge smiting the inhabitants all over the district. The real gravity of the situation can never be gauged from a distance—suffering exceeds all possible imaginations of it. Though the Government is trying to ameliorate the condition of the people, yet so virulent is the type of the famine raging here that there is enough scope of work for any number of charitable organisations. The authorities at Bankura have handed over to the Mission the charge of 27 unions of the district, and we have opened six main centres of relief at Bankura, Bishnupur, Kaniamara, Sonamukhi, Onda and Indapur.

At the entreaty of the people of Bhairab Thana in Mymensing, a relief centre has been started with a sum of Rs. 900.

With great pleasure we announce the receipt of the sum of Rs. 750 from the Baghbazar Social Union, and that of Rs. 250 from the Literary Section of the Tala South Suburban Association to our Famine Relief Fund.

We all know how our benevolent countrymen have opened liberally their purse in aid of the War Fund to mitigate the sufferings of the people in Europe, that the monstrosity of an internecine war has brought over them. But here, in our own home, our own kith and kin are actually dying in want of a morsel of food,—the reason for which they themselves are not responsible. So can our countrymen remain silent without a prick of conscience?

Need we appeal to them to help their own blood out from the jaws of death? Before this harrowing tale of woe, do they require further appeal? If they do without blushing, we again earnestly appeal to our benevolent friends and countrymen to help us to save some of our own blood, our own kith and kin, from the necessity of dying through starvation.

Contributions and clothes, old and new, will be thankfully received and acknowledged at either of the following centres :—

(1) Swami Brahmananda, President, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Math, Belur P. O., District Howrah, Bengal. (2) The Manager, The Udbodhana Office, P. O. Baghbazar, Calcutta.

Call them as light and shade—The relation between the individual soul and the Supreme Soul is described here as one between light and shade, an object and its image. The one is real and the other is only its shadow. Or, the simile may refer to their contrary natures : One is bound and the other eternally free.]

यः सेतुरीजानानामक्षरं ब्रह्म यत्परं ।

अभयं तितीर्षतां पारं नाचिकेतं शक्नेमहि ॥ २ ॥

ईजानानां for those who perform sacrifices यः which सेतुः bridge (तं that) नाचिकेतं the Nachiketic sacrifice शक्नेमहि (we) are capable of performing. (अपि च and also) तितीर्षतां for those who want to be emancipated (from the bondages of life) अभयं free from fear पारं the bourne (shore) यत् which अक्षरं the imperishable परं the supreme ब्रह्म Brahman (lit. the greatest) (तदपि ज्ञातुं शक्नेमहि we are capable of knowing That also.)

We are capable of performing the Nachiketa sacrifice which is the bridge for the sacrificers, and (also we can know) the imperishable Supreme Brahman which is the bourne free from fear for those who want to be emancipated.

[Which is the bridge, etc.—i.e., which takes the sacrificers to immortal heaven of Brahma beyond this world of mortal life.]

आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु ।

बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥ ३ ॥

आत्मानं the soul रथिनं the master of the chariot who sits within it विद्धि know ; शरीरं the body तु again रथं the chariot एव verily ; बुद्धिं the intellect तु again सारथिं the charioteer विद्धि know मनः the mind च and प्रग्रहं the reins.

Know that the soul is the master of the chariot who sits within it, and the body the chariot. Consider the intellect as the charioteer, and the mind the reins.

इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान् ।

आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥ ४ ॥

इन्द्रियाणि the senses हयान् horses आहुः (they) say ; विषयान् the sense-objects तेषु to them (the senses) गोचरान् the path. आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं (आत्मा, इन्द्रियाणि and मनः, तैः युक्तं) united with the body, the senses and the mind (तम् आत्मानम् that Atman) भोक्ता enjoyer इति thus मनीषिणः the wise आहुः say.

The senses, they say, are the horses, and their roads are the sense-objects. The wise call Him the enjoyer (when He is) united with the body, senses and mind.

[Note—The real essence of the soul, the pure Intelligence, the Atman, can never be the agent, nor an enjoyer of the fruits, of any action. It is only when an apparent union between Him and the mind, the senses and the body, is brought about through *Avidya*, that He appears as the agent or enjoyer of an action. The mind through the senses and the body acts or enjoys; and this feature of the mind is erroneously imputed to the Atman, as its own inherent nature, intelligence, is superimposed on the mind. This is called in the Vedantic language as *इतरेतर अध्यास* 'the mutual superimposition.' So when the pure Atman is thus super-imposed with the attributes of the mind, the senses and the body, He gets the name Jiva,—the doer of Karma and the enjoyer of its fruits. It is this false shadow of the Atman, the Jiva, that undergoes all troubles of life, such as birth and death.]

यस्तु विज्ञानवान्भवत्युक्तेन मनसा सदा ।

तस्येन्द्रियाण्यवश्यानि दुष्टाश्वा इव सारथेः ॥ ५ ॥

यः who तु again सदा always अयुक्तेन unrestrained मनसा with mind, अविज्ञानवान् devoid of right understanding भवति is सारथेः of a charioteer दुष्टाश्वाः wicked horses इव like तस्य his इन्द्रियाणि senses अवश्यानि uncontrollable (भवन्ति become).

One who is always of unrestrained mind and devoid of right understanding, his senses become uncontrollable like the wicked horses of a charioteer.

यस्तु विज्ञानवान्भवति युक्तेन मनसा सदा ।

तस्येन्द्रियाणि वश्यानि सदश्वा इव सारथेः ॥ ६ ॥

यः who तु but सदा always युक्तेन restrained मनसा with mind, विज्ञानवान् having right understanding भवति is, सारथेः of the charioteer सदश्वाः good horses इव like तस्य his इन्द्रियाणि the senses वश्यानि controllable (भवन्ति are).

But he who is always of restrained mind and has right understanding, his senses are controllable like the good horses of a charioteer.

[Note—As a clever charioteer restrains the horses of a chariot by intelligent manipulation of the reins, so one can bring the senses

under control through proper discrimination (*Vijnana*) and the employment of will-force (*Manas*).]

यस्तु विज्ञानवान्भवत्युक्तेन मनसा सदा शुचिः ।

न स तत्पदमाप्नोति संसारं चाधिगच्छति ॥ ७ ॥

यः who तु but अविज्ञानवान् without the right understanding अमनस्कः thoughtless, of uncontrolled mind सदा always अशुचिः impure, भवति is, सः he तत् that पदं goal (state) न आप्नोति never attains, संसारं the rounds of birth and death च and अधिगच्छति gets into.

And he who is devoid of proper understanding, thoughtless and always impure, never attains that goal, and gets into the round of births and deaths.

यस्तु विज्ञानवान्भवति समनस्कः सदा शुचिः ।

स तु तत्पदमाप्नोति यस्माद्भूयो न जायते ॥ ८ ॥

तु but यः who विज्ञानवान् intelligent (has the proper understanding) समनस्कः with controlled mind सदा always शुचिः pure भवति is, सः he तत् that पदम् goal आप्नोति attains यस्मात् whence भूयः again न जायते is not born.

But he who is intelligent, ever pure and with the mind controlled, reaches that goal whence none is born again.

विज्ञानसारथिर्यस्तु मनःप्रग्रहवान्नरः ।

सोऽध्वनः पारमाप्नोति तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥ ९ ॥

यः who नरः the man विज्ञानसारथिः has intelligence as his chariot-
eer, मनःप्रग्रहवान् has the mind as the (well-controlled) reins, सः he अध्वनः of the journey पारं the end, विष्णोः of Vishnu तत् that परमं the supreme पदं place आप्नोति attains.

The man who has intelligence for his charioteer and the mind as the (well-controlled) reins,—he attains the end of the journey, that supreme place of Vishnu.

[Note—As a man can reach his destination by his chariot, only when his driver is clever and drives the horses with proper control by means of the reins, so the Jiva in the body can attain the immortal state of Vishnu, the supreme goal of life, only when intelligent discrimination controls the mind and guides the senses.

Vishnu—The all-pervading Atman.]

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा ह्यर्था अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः ।

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्बुद्धेरात्मा महान्परः ॥ १० ॥

महतः परमव्यक्तमव्यक्तात्पुरुषः परः ।

पुरुषान्न परं किञ्चित्सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥ ११ ॥

इन्द्रियेभ्यः than the senses अर्थाः the objects पराः superior, अर्थेभ्यः than the (elements of) objects च and मनः the mind परं superior, मनसः that the mind तु again बुद्धिः the intellect परा superior, बुद्धेः than the intellect महान् the great आत्मा Atman परः superior. महतः than the Mahat अव्यक्तं the Unmanifested परं is superior, अव्यक्तात् than the Unmanifested पुरुषः the Purusha परा (is) superior पुरुषात् than the Purusha परं superior न किञ्चित् nothing (अस्ति is); सा that (Purusha) काष्ठा the end, सा that परा the supreme गतिः goal.

The objects are superior to the senses, the mind is superior to the objects, the intellect is superior to the mind, the Great Atma is superior again to the intellect. The Unmanifested is superior to the Great (Atma), and the Purusha is superior to the Unmanifested. Nothing is superior to the Purusha ;—that is the finale, that the supreme goal.

[The objects are superior, etc.—Here 'the objects' mean the five rudimentary matters (*Pancha Mahabhutas*), out of which have come all the objects perceived through the senses. These rudiments of matters are reckoned here as superior to the senses, because the senses or the sense-organs are, like all other objects, made of them. The cause is subtler, and more pervasive than the effect ; and so, in this sense, the *Bhutas* may be called as superior to the senses.

The mind is superior to the objects,—Because it perceives the latter and is subtler than the gross rudimentary matters (*Sthula Mahabhutas*). Mind is the product of the subtle matter (*Sukshma Bhuta*).

The Great Atma—i.e. Hiranyagarbha, the macrocosmic soul, who is considered as the aggregate of the individual souls.

The Unmanifested i.e.—The primal matter—Energy, Prakriti, whose first offspring is Hiranyagarbha.

Note—Here, superiority is ranged in the scale of subtlety of existence.

The Vedanta Kesari

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

"Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that 'I am the Atman.'"

—Swami Vivekananda.

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[No. 9

MAYA.

(Adapted from the teachings of Swami Ramakrishnananda).

Maya means mistaking one thing for another. The rope is mistaken for a snake. This is Maya. It is the cause of all pleasure and pain. Its beginning cannot be traced, but still it has an end. If it is questioned, how can that whose beginning is not traceable have an end, the reply is that it is possible. Take, for instance, an individual. Before he was born, he existed in his parents, his parents in their parents, and so on *ad infinitum*. Yet if he dies issueless, the beginningless series comes to an end. Similarly Maya, though beginningless, has its end, so far as the person who has reached the 'desireless state' is concerned. Maya is like an old courtesan appearing on the stage with a varnished face resembling a young beautiful woman whom every man would like to court. Her charms and wiles are too fascinating for an on-looker to resist. The nature of Maya is such that she will unceasingly play her pranks with this person so long as he is unable to detect her sapped, hollow, haggard and wrinkled face ; but the moment she finds that he has detected her hollowness and that he through this knowledge, could withstand her wiles and charms, she at once begins to nourish and look after him as a mother would

do after her child. Instead of tempting him she would make his path to spirituality smooth and pleasant, which previously had been rugged and beset with insuperable difficulties. The world around us is also this Maya. It appears beautiful and promises happiness. We run after it, trying to reach it through our senses, and struggle hard for it for years and years together, till at last it dawns on our consciousness that it was after all a wild-goose-chase. We cease to run, pause to consider whether it was not after all a shadow that we were running after. The world too then ceases to fascinate us, but, on the other hand, opens our mind to the treasure within by suggesting retreat and closure of the gate-ways of the senses. Then the happiness which we were in search of outside, will be discovered within our own self, as the man with a weak sight first considers that the lamp in a room is burning outside the room, but soon detects his mistake when the doors of the room are closed and the lamp is seen still shedding its beams illuminating the room.

THE ETHICAL ASPECT OF THE VEDANTA.

BY

Professor K. Sundararama Iyer, M.A.

PART X.

THE ORIGIN OF CASTE.

The question of origins occupies a most prominent place in the modern age, owing to the scientific temper which pervades its intellectual atmosphere and achievements. It is strange, however, that many contract a kind of disease of research under the impulse of a morbid capacity roused in them by emotions and interests, the very reverse of what is calculated to promote the passionless spirit of inquiry which is needed for achieving success. In India, the question of caste was first pushed into prominence, chiefly because the Christian Missionary found it the chief obstacle to the conversion of the Indian people. Now, however, the Missionary Herod is out-heroded by the social rebel and revolutionist whom modern education has roused to activity without enlightening his mind or quelling the tumult of his passions. The fever of partisanship and the democratic belief in the strength of mere numbers have overcome the love of truth and the untiring patience which collects and investigates facts in order to reach a defensible conclusion. We must not, however, abandon the hope that the intellectual unrest now so visible in Indian life is only a transient agitation

of the surface and not an ineradicable gangrene eating into the heart of the Hindu social organism. "Truth alone triumphs, not untruth,"—is the dictum of the Eternal Veda. We are, therefore, bound ardently to serve the cause of truth, and contribute what we can for its final victory.

A famous Orientalist—M. Barth—writing on "The Religions of India" speaks of caste as "a question which I have purposely evaded as being hitherto unsusceptible of a satisfactory solution." He writes :—"I did not entangle myself in this question, because of its exceeding obscurity. In fact, we have already a Brahmanical theory of caste, in regard to which we should require to know how far it is true to facts before we venture on explanations which might very readily prove of no greater validity than a work of romance." Others, however, feel no such qualms of conscience, and are prepared to prove that "the Brahmanical theory of caste" is not "true to facts." Some go further and assert that caste is a late invention of the devil of self-interest and self-aggrandisement. That this last explanation is the most irrational and lying of all is made clear by a fact which must be patent to every impartial student of Indian history,—a fact which is as true to-day as at any former time, *viz.*, the circumstance mentioned by M. Barth that "they (the Brahmins) never formed a body governed by common interests." In these days when partisanship based on common interests furnishes the inspiration for almost all kinds of social activity, the truth of this observation, though it holds good as much as ever, may not be easily granted. Also, as it has been said of Buddhism that "for a long while, they (the Brahmanas) furnished the new religion with its chief teachers," so it might be said of every form of Indian "Protestantism" that its chief teachers were mostly drawn from the Brahman caste. The theory, therefore, that the origin of the four castes is to be traced to the Brahman's love of ascendancy and ardent pursuit of self-interest falls to the ground.

Let us now turn to the so-called "Brahmanical theory of caste,"—the theory proclaimed in the Vedas, the Mahabharata, the Gita and all other sources of the Vedic religion. This theory has kept the field for ages in India against all attacks. For, as we have already pointed out, its rational and spiritual basis is to be found in the conception of *Svadharmā* already fully treated by us. Hence, also, the truth contained in the following observations of M. Barth :—"Caste is not merely the symbol of Hinduism ; but, according to the testimony of all who have studied it on the spot, it is its stronghold. It is this, much more than their creeds, which

attaches the masses to these vague religions and gives them such astonishing vitality." The theory proclaimed by one and all of our sacred authorities is that the castes were *created* at the commencement of the world, and not merely historical formations originating in social needs or struggles.

M. Barth rightly says of this theory :—"We should require to know how far it is true to facts before we venture on explanations which might very readily prove of no greater validity than a work of romance." It may at once be conceded that we have no means of proving it by direct evidence, apart from the Veda and the Vedic literature. Mr. Muir says concerning the Hindu sources of information regarding caste that "the most common story is that the castes issued from the mouth, arms, thighs, and feet of Purusha or Brahma" (*Sanskrit Texts*, Vol. I, p. 159). In India we have what is called "भूयोनुग्रहः" "the method" of establishing a conclusion by finding out which of the possible alternatives is supported by the majority of the available authorities." This is what Mr. Muir calls "the most common story." As this is conceded, we need not be frightened by his further statement that "the sacred books of the Hindus contain no uniform or consistent account of the origin of caste." The burden or duty of reconciling all other accounts with the "most common story" is cast upon us; and we are absolutely sure that the instructed human mind is not unequal to the task. We do not refer to the ingenuity which skilfully evades a difficulty, but the enlightened skill in argument which springs from an adequate knowledge of all the authorities on the subject and of the established methods of Vedic and Scriptural interpretation. We will illustrate by an example. Mr. Muir refers to this passage :—"भूरिति वै प्रजापतिर्ब्रह्माजनयत् भुव इति च त्रं स्वरिति विशम्" "Saying Bhuh, Prajapati generated Brahma; saying Bhuvah, he generated the Kshatra; and saying Svah, he generated the Vis." Mr. Muir regards this account of the origin of the three higher castes from the words Bhuh, Bhuvah and Svah as irreconcilable with the account which says that they were sprung from the mouth, arms, and thighs of the Purusha. But to the merest tyro engaged in the pursuit of Vedic studies, the reconciliation is easy and is based on the authority of Sri Sankaracharya. There is a similar Vedic passage, "स भूरिति व्याहरत्स भूमिमसृजत्" "Uttering Bhuh, he

* The Purva-Mimamsa Sutra bearing on this topic is "विप्रतिषिद्धधर्माणां समवाये भूयसां स्यात्सधर्मत्वम्" "Where we have a number of conflicting features, that which is common to the larger number must be accepted."

(Prajapati the Creator) created the Earth." (*Taittiriya Brahmana*). Sri Sankaracharya quotes this passage in his *Sariraka-bhashya* and explains it as follows :—"प्रजापतेरपि स्रष्टुः सृष्टेः पूर्वं वैदिकाः शब्दा मनसि प्रादुर्बभूवुः, पश्चात्तदनुगतानर्थान्ससर्ज" "Before the creation, the Vedic words became manifest in the mind of Prajapati the Creator, and that after that he created the things corresponding to those words." So, the above Vedic passage means that the Earth was created by Brahma after the word Bhuh became manifest in his mind. So, we can say that the earth sprang from Brahma and from Bhuh, both together being the antecedent co-operating causes needed for the creation of the earth—from both or either, just as we say that a man is sprung from both parents or from any one of them. Similarly the passage (above quoted from the *Satapatha Brahmana*) which says that the Creator generated the three higher castes from Bhuh, Bhuvah and Svah means that they were created by Prajapati after these words (Bhuh, etc.), became manifest in his mind, and so they can be said to have sprung from both Prajapati and from Bhuh, etc., or from either.

Again, Mr. Muir finds it difficult to reconcile the passage which says that Brahmans and others were sprung from "different Vedas" with the "common story" that they issued from various limbs of Brahma. Now, it is well known that the words Bhuh, Bhuvah, Svah (known as the three Vyahritis) stand for the three Vedas. The full *Taittiriya-Brahmana* passage already quoted is as follows :—"स भूरिति व्याहरत्स भूमिमसृजत् अग्निहोत्रं दर्शपूर्णमासं यजुषि" "Saying Bhuh he (the Creator) generated the Earth the Agnihotra and Darsapurnamasa rites, and Yajus." In explaining this passage, Sayana says :—"भूरादि व्याहरत एव लोकत्रयरूपेण परिणताः" "Bhuh and other Vyahritis became transformed into the three worlds (together with Agnihotra and other rites and the three Vedas)." Bhuh, Bhuvah, and Svah became transformed into the three Vedas. The same idea is also expressed by Manu as follows :—

अकारं चाप्युकारं च मकारं च प्रजापतिः ।

वेदत्रयाभिरदुहन्मूर्ध्वः स्वरिति च ॥

"Prajapati (the lord of creation) milked out from the three Vedas (as their essence) the sounds A, U, M, and the Vyahritis Bhuh, Bhuvah and Svah."

We have already explained the statement that the three higher castes were sprung from Bhuh, Bhuvah and Svah. So, we see

clearly the meaning of the further statement that they were created from "different Vedas." When Bhuh became manifest in the mind of the Creator while creating the Brahmins, it is equivalent to the Yajur-Veda becoming manifest in his mind. So, we can say that the Brahmins were sprung not only from Brahma, but from Bhuh and the Yajur-Veda; and similarly also in the case of Kshatriyas and Vaisyas respectively. The man truly learned in the lore of the Vedas can thus easily find the explanations of all difficulties forthcoming; and it is absurd to suppose that, because Mr. John Muir and others of that ilk find the reconciliation and explanation of Scriptural passages impossible to themselves, the Vedas are inconsistent with each other or that no satisfactory explanations of the difficulties experienced by imperfectly educated men (and especially foreigners) can be found by the trained and skilled experts of Aryavarta. It would be well for all these men of imperfect knowledge to follow the example of M. Barth who candidly avows:—"I did not entangle myself in this question on account of its exceeding obscurity."

Before proceeding further with our present topic, we may illustrate once more how the Orientalist becomes thoroughly unreliable when he abandons our traditional methods. Mr. Muir interprets the following statement in the Taittiriya-Brahmana—"देव्यो देवर्षो ब्राह्मणः असुर्यः शुद्रः"—to mean "The Brahman caste is sprung from the Gods, the Sudras from the Asuras." This is an absurd blunder. For the passage occurs in a context which speaks of a sacrifice of which one item is a mock representation of a fight between Devas and Asuras to secure the Sun. The Vedic context requires a Brahman and a Sudra to represent the Devas and Asuras respectively; and a wet skin which is supposed to stand for the Sun forms the bone of contention, as it were, between them. So Sayana correctly interprets the passage above quoted to mean—"देवस्वरूपो ब्राह्मणः, असुरस्वरूपः शुद्रः": "The Brahman represents the Devas, and the Sudra represents the Asuras." There is no question here of the origin of the two castes referred to, and so the Oriental scholar so-called turns out once more a miserable simulacrum and thoroughly worthless guide. There is no need to pursue this part of our subject further. From what has been said it is clear that the Vedas do not make inconsistent statements regarding the origin of caste. The so-called inconsistencies pointed out by Mr. John Muir and others are due to the want of accurate and reasoned knowledge regarding the contents of the Veda and the true meanings of the various passages of the Veda relating to this topic.

We now turn to another aspect of this question *viz.*, whether the Rig-Veda, which is the oldest literary monument of the Aryan faith according to the Western Orientalist and the Westernised Indian mind, can be quoted as an authority in support of this theory of the origin of the castes from the Creator. According to the traditional view, all genuine Srutis have equal authority, whatever the time at which they were discovered to the enlightened vision of a Rishi by divine grace and transmitted by oral tradition to our days through a succession of disciples. Let us now, however, following the results of the Western methods of research, be content to regard the Rig-Veda as the earliest literary document of the Hindu race. Does the Rig-Veda confirm the "common story" of the creation of the castes by the Purusha or Brahma the creator? Certainly,—is the answer of its Indian interpreters. Some Western scholars, however, hold that *only the Purusha-Sukta* contains it, but that—as compared with the rest of the hymns of the Rig-Veda—it is comparatively modern in its language, metre, and style, and that therefore it cannot be considered a genuine part of that Veda. But Dr. Martin Haug says of this view, "There is no sufficient evidence to prove that. On the contrary reasons might be adduced to show that it is even old." Moreover, we have to take into account the fact pointed out by the French scholar De La Saussaye that "we have always to distinguish between the contents and the composition of the hymns." According to him "this hymn describes how the world was formed out of the limbs of an original man, which conception is proved by comparative philology to be very ancient." It is about the *contents* of the Rig-Veda that we are here vitally concerned, and not much with its date or such merely external features of it as style, metre and language. The contents of the Rig-Veda being thus shown to belong to a "very ancient" period, the existence of castes amongst the Hindus must be referred also to the same remote antiquity.

Finally, it is not right to hold that the existence of the divisions of caste is only to be found in the Purusha-Sukta, and nowhere else in the Rig-Veda. Professors Macdonnell and Keith make the following emphatic pronouncement on the subject in their recent work, "The Vedic Index":—"It seems certain that in the Rig-Veda, this Brahmana or Brahmin is already a separate caste differing from the warrior and agricultural classes." It is easy to make quotations of passages from the Rig-Veda, but we deem it superfluous after this clear statement of unquestionable facts by these valued Western savants who have only recently fully weighed the *pros* and *cons* of the evidence before them and rejected the

hastily-formed judgments of their predecessors in the field of Sanskrit scholarship.

Some think that the conception of the creation of the four castes in the Rig-Veda has an allegorical sense, and is not to be understood literally. Colebrooke says that "the allegory is for the most part sufficiently clear." But Muir holds that "it is not clear whether we are to suppose verse 12 to declare that the three castes were the three members, or, conversely, that the three members, were, or became, the three castes." According to Dr. Martin Hang, "this passage is the most ancient and authoritative on the origin of Brahminism, and caste in general." Thus there is a wide discrepancy in the views of scholars. But we hold that, in a case like this, there need not be an irreconcilable conflict between the allegorical and historical interpretations. There is nothing incongruous in our understanding this hymn as *both* describing the creation of the four castes from the limbs of Brahma and at the same time indicating the nature of their functions according to the limbs of the Purusha appropriate to each of them. The Vedic commentator, Bhatta Bhaskara, has found no difficulty in accepting both the literal and allegorical interpretations of the passage of the Purusha-Sukta which relates to the origin of the four castes, as perfectly consistent and harmonising with each other. He says :—"ब्राह्मणादीनां मुखादिभ्यः उत्पन्नत्वात्तत्तद्भावे ते कल्पिताः" "As Brahmins and others have sprung from the face, &c., they are represented as such (*i.e.*, as being face, &c.)." We must not forget the fact that the object of the hymn is to speak not only of creation in general and the creation of the four castes, but of the air, the Sun and Moon, the Sky, Indra, Vayu, Agni and other Devas, animals wild and tame, horses, sheep, cows, &c.

Furthermore, we have to pay heed to the important fact brought to light by the new science of comparative religion,—*viz.*, that the fourfold caste system existed amongst the ancient Zoroastrians. Not only Oriental scholars in the West, but the late Dr. Rajendralala Mitra, the foremost of the scholars of Modern India who have been trained in the methods of Western research, have pointed out that the ancestors of the ancient Persians and Hindus lived together as a single community, and they separated owing to the growth of irreconcilable differences in their ideals and modes of living,—the Zoroastrian taking to a settled agricultural life much earlier than the Hindus who remained nomadic. If the fourfold caste system was common to both the Persians and the Hindus after their separation, then they must have inherited it from their common social life

before that event. Mr. J. Muir, after mentioning Dr. Martin Hang's view that "the (caste) system is already known in the earlier parts of the Vedas, or rather was presupposed," writes as follows (*Sanskrit Texts*, Vol I., p. 293) :—"This view he (Martin Hang) supports by a reference to the Zend Avesta, in which he finds evidence of a division of the followers of Ahura Mazda into the three classes of Atharvas, Rathaesthas, and Vastrya-fshuyans, which he regards as corresponding exactly to the Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and Vaisyas of India. The Atharvas, or priests, in particular formed a class or even a caste; they had secrets which they were prohibited from divulging; they were the spiritual guides of their nation, and none but the son of a priest could become a priest—a rule which the Parsis still maintain. From these facts Dr. Hang deduces the conclusion that the nation of which both the Indo-Aryans and the Perso-Aryans formed a part had been divided into three classes even before the separation of the Indians and the Iranians." Dr. Hang is stated (by Muir) to add in conclusion :—"From all we know, the real origin of caste appears to go back to a time anterior to the composition of the Vedic hymns, though its development into a regular system with insurmountable barriers can be referred only to the latest period of the Vedic times." The French scholar already once quoted, De La Saussaye, also says :—"More especially among the Persians the same four Hindu castes are mentioned (*Yasna* XIX. 46). From this we can naturally see that this division cannot be the product of any specially Hindu development, but existed already in the oldest, at least Indo-Persian, times." Thus, there is nothing inherently impossible in a Rig-Veda hymn giving an account of the four castes. As regards questions of style and diction, we firmly believe that tastes differ in such matters, and no conclusion can be arrived at from opinions founded on individual idiosyncracies and tastes.

One last question remains. If the fourfold caste existed "in the oldest, at least Indo-Persian times" (De La Saussaye), how far back into antiquity should we go in our search for the date of its origin? Our modern authorities can give no clue. So the Indian account as given in the Purusha-Sukta and other ancient sacred authorities keeps the field, and all attempts to discredit it, whatever their source, have proved lamentable failures. "In the oldest times,"—that is the verdict equally of the modern science of comparative religion and of our ancient spiritual science of the Veda. There we are content to leave the question of the origin of caste. There it has stood unshaken as a rock by the assaults equally of the faddist and the fanatic, of the social revolutionist and the political agitator.

TAGORE'S SADHANA : A BRIEF STUDY.

BY

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I propose to deal in this article with the great and helpful and uplifting ideas contained in Sir Rabindra Nath Tagore's *Sadhana*. "Sadhana" means the way or the means. He has well called his book "*the realisation of life*." I have discussed the book at great length in my forthcoming work on Tagore. My object here is to draw the attention of my countrymen to a few main ideas of the work so that as large a number of readers as possible may go with eager delight to the original and slake the thirst of their souls by drinking the pure, cool and refreshing waters of the Ganga of Tagore's work.

In the first discourse Tagore draws our attention prominently to the distinguishing and vital traits of the genius of the Hindu race. He says :

"The civilisation of ancient Greece was nurtured within city walls. In fact all the modern civilisations have their cradles of brick and mortar. These walls leave their mark deep in the minds of men. They set up a principle of 'divide and rule' in our mental outlook, which begets in us a habit of securing all our conquests by fortifying them and separating them from one another. We divide nation and nation, knowledge and knowledge, man and nature..... In India it was in the forests that our civilisation had its birth, and it took a distinct character from this origin and environment..... To realise this great harmony between man's spirit and the spirit of the world was the endeavour of the forest-dwelling sages of ancient India..... The West seems to take a pride in thinking that it is subduing nature..... India put all her emphasis on the harmony that exists between the individual and the universal."

Tagore has rightly laid stress on this great truth at the very outset of his inquiry. The Indian idea of the unity of creation is not a mere doctrine ; it is the deepest thing of realisation in us and is as much in touch with our active life in the world as with our inner life. The idea that the elements are manifestations of the divine, the feeling that life is sacred, the sense of the omnipresence and immanence of God—these are like so many golden lamps burning in the shrine of India's heart. The sun, as it comes up in the morning with its glad gift of golden light, is described in the *Isavasyopanishad* as the golden covering of the spiritual glory within. As Tagore says:

"In India men are enjoined to be fully awake to the fact that they are in the closest relation to things around them, body and soul, and that they are to hail the morning sun, the flowing water, the fruitful earth, as the manifestation of the same living truth which holds them in its embrace. Thus the text of our every-day meditation is the *Gayatri*, a verse which is considered to be the epitome of all the *Vedas*. By its help we try to realise the essential unity of the world with the

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conscious soul of man ; we learn to perceive the unity held together by the one Eternal Spirit, whose power creates the earth, the sky, and the stars, and at the same time irradiates our minds with the light of a consciousness that moves and exists in unbroken continuity with the outer world."

After thus telling us about the individual and the universe in the first discourse, Tagore takes us in the second discourse to *soul-consciousness*. What is the meaning of the injunction, know thine own soul ! Tagore says :

"Our soul, when detached and imprisoned within the narrow limits of a self, loses its significance. For its very essence is unity. It can only find out its truth by unifying itself with others, and only then it has its joy..... It is the discovery of ourselves outside us which makes us glad. This relation of understanding is partial, but the relation of love is complete..... Therefore love is the highest bliss that man can attain to, for through it alone he truly knows that he is more than himself, and that he is at one with the All."

This is a great truth which we must try to realise in life. As Emerson beautifully says: "When it (the soul) breathes through his intellect, it is genius ; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love." (*The Over-soul*). Tagore points out how our worldly love should lead us to the higher love.

"It (the lower love) enlarges our scope of consciousness, no doubt, yet it sets a limit to its freest expansion. Nevertheless, it is the first step, and all the wonder lies in this first step itself."

The Sufi poet says : "Worldly love is the bridge over which those must pass who seek the joys of divine love." Tagore warns us against the wrong view that India preached a renunciation of the world in the sense of scorning life and turning our backs on it. He says :

"I have already warned my hearers, and must once more warn them against the idea that the teachers of India preached a renunciation of the world and of self which leads only to the blank emptiness of negation."

In nature God is Law, but in our soul He is Love. Tagore says :

"There (in our heart) he comes as a guest, not as a king, and therefore he has to wait till he is invited. It is the man's self from which God has withdrawn his commands, for there he comes to court our love. His armed force, the laws of nature, stand outside its gate, and only beauty, the messenger of his love, finds admission within its precincts."

This naturally leads us to the third discourse on *The Problem of Evil*. Tagore shows us that pain is not "a fixture in life" and "is not an end in itself, as joy is." He says of death :

"But the truth is, death is not the ultimate reality. It looks black, as the sky looks blue ; but it does not blacken existence, just as the sky does not leave its stain upon the wings of the bird."

What is suffering due to ?

"Like these accidents in a child's attempts to walk, we meet with sufferings in various forms in our life every day, showing the imperfections in our knowledge and our available power, and in the application of our will."

Why do we have an undying sense of strength in us despite our failures and our sufferings ? Let Tagore answer in his own words.

"Within us we have a hope which always walks in front of our present narrow experience ; it is the undying faith in the infinite in us ; it will never accept any of our disabilities as a permanent fact ; it sets no limit to its own scope ; it dares to assert that man has oneness with God ; and its wild dreams become true every day." "The evil has to pass on, it has to grow into good ; it cannot stand and give battle to the All."

What is goodness as opposed to evil ?

"Good is that which is desirable for our greater self."

The realisation of the infinite in us is at the same time the root and the blossom of the highest morality. Tagore says :

"To the man who lives for an idea, for his country, for the good of humanity, life has an extensive meaning, and to that extent pain becomes less important to him. To live the life of goodness is to live the life of all.....In pain is symbolised the infinite possibility of perfection, the eternal unfolding of joy.....For she (pain) is the vestal virgin consecrated to the service of the immortal perfection, and when she takes her true place before the altar of the infinite she casts off her dark veil and bares her face to the beholder as a revelation of supreme joy."

The fourth discourse is upon *The Problem of Self*. Man's highest *dharma* is self-sacrifice.

"This is man's *dharma*, man's religion, and man's self is the vessel which is to carry this sacrifice to the altar." "Thus we find in perfect love the freedom of our self. That only which is done for love is done freely, however much pain it may cause. Therefore working for love is freedom in action. This is the meaning of the teaching of disinterested work in the *Gita*.....Our true freedom is not the freedom from action but freedom in action which can only be attained in the work of love."

The last four discourses deal with various aspects of realisation. The fifth discourse is upon *Realisation in Love*. Tagore expresses by a beautiful simile the relation of the individual and the universal.

"Waves rise, each to its individual height in a seeming attitude of unrelenting competition, but only up to a certain point ; and thus we know of the great repose of the sea to which they are all related, and to which they must all return in a rhythm which is marvellously beautiful."

This passage reminds us of the famous lines of Tennyson :

"But that one ripple on the boundless deep
Feels that the deep is boundless, and itself
For ever changing form, but ever more
One with the boundless motion of the deep."

(*The Ancient Sage.*)

Tagore shows us that the discovery of the laws of nature if these are rightly understood, can never lessen our sense of the mystery of things. He says :

"As if gravitation is not more of a mystery than the fall of an apple, as if the evolution from one scale of being to the other is not something which is even more shy of explanation than a succession of creations."

The same need for ascending from Law to Love is felt in literature and art. Tagore says :

"The beauty of a poem is bound by strict laws, yet it transcends them. The laws are its wings, they do not keep it weighed down, they carry it to freedom. Its form is in law, but its spirit is in beauty. Law is the first step towards freedom, and beauty is the complete liberation which stands on the pedestal of law. Beauty harmonises in itself the limit and the beyond, the law and the liberty."

He brings home to our hearts a great message—how the beauty of nature has a different appeal to the human soul than when its value to itself is considered independently of the human soul. He says :

"What to the bee in nature is merely colour and scent, and the marks or spots which show the right track to the honey, is to the human heart beauty and joy untrammelled by necessity. They bring a love-letter to the heart written in many-coloured inks.....Outwardly nature is busy and restless, inwardly she is all silence and peace. She has toil on one side and leisure on the other. You see her bondage only when you see her from without, but within her heart is a limitless beauty."

The nature of love which is the innermost truth of things is thus well stated by him :

"For love is the ultimate meaning of everything around us. It is not a mere sentiment ; it is truth ; it is the joy that is at the root of all creation. It is the white light of pure consciousness that emanates from Brahman.....Love spontaneously gives itself in endless gifts.....Joy is the realisation of the truth of oneness, the oneness of our soul with the world and of the world-soul with the supreme lover."

The sixth discourse is on *Realisation in Action* and is very valuable and uplifting. Tagore says :

"But we must remember that just as joy expresses itself in law, so the soul finds its freedom in action."

The following passage is as full of true beauty of thought as it is full of golden beauty of style.

"When man cuts down the pestilential jungle and makes unto himself a garden, the beauty that he thus sets free, from within its enclosure of ugliness is the beauty of his own soul: without giving it this freedom outside, he cannot make it free within. When he implants law and order in the midst of the waywardness of society, the good which he sets free from the obstruction of the bad is the goodness of his own soul: without being thus made free outside it cannot find freedom within."

The discourse on *The Realisation of Beauty* takes us to an even higher altitude of thought. He says :

"A thing is only completely our own when it is a thing of joy to us..... Through our sense of truth we realise law in creation, and through our sense of beauty we realise harmony in the universe."

He says of music :

"Music is the purest form of art, and therefore the most direct expression of beauty, with a form and spirit which is one and simple, and least encumbered with anything extraneous."

The last discourse is on *The Realisation of the Infinite* : We now come after a close and thorough investigation of the truth of things to the great truth with which the book begins and which is the deepest truth in life. Tagore says :

"So our daily worship of God is not really the process of gradual acquisition of Him, but the daily process of surrendering ourselves, removing all obstacles to union and extending our consciousness of Him in devotion and service, in goodness and in love."

Hence the highest lesson of life is thus stated by Tagore :

"We see everywhere in the history of man that the spirit of renunciation is the deepest reality of the human soul.....Man's abiding happiness is not in getting anything but in giving himself up to what is greater than himself, to ideas which are larger than his individual life, the idea of his country, of humanity, of God."

II.

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND INDIVIDUAL DISCIPLINES.

It is generally forgotten that social institutions and individual disciplines are intended for the average run of humanity as a convenient guide which is near at hand for the discharge of social duties and progress of individual worth. The master-minds in all communities are the makers and unmakers of institutions and disciplines. They do not go by rule but are the prescribers of rules which uplift society and raise men to a higher level of intelligence and character.

But when we say that the master-minds are the "makers and unmakers of institutions and disciplines," it is not meant that they are to impose their arbitrary will upon society but that they possess a deeper insight and wider comprehension of social and individual problems and the suggestions they make are luminous and instinct with life and they serve the needs for which they were intended.

But this does not at all affect the root principles and fundamental basis of social and individual growth. They are based on the

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eternal principles that underlie all cosmic and human activity. Any idea, belief or conviction that infringes these eternal verities, can never be acceptable to the instincts of humanity and hence will not endure.

We have already stated the ideals of individual growth as found in the East and as slowly beginning to be recognised in the West. The East has its **Eastern and Western Tendencies.** Paramahansa, while the West has its Superman. The former wants to free himself from all material relations and emphasises only the spiritual unity, while the latter insists on the material relations being recognised and developed in all their aspects. The one wishes to attain freedom from *Prakriti* in its entirety, while the other desires only to be master of all its phases. The one looks at life in the light of the Eternal ; the other looks at it from the standpoint of enduring, ever-progressive, Becoming. The one considers that life in *Prakriti* is an accident and true freedom is self-realisation. The other is engaged in hastening on of the development of all the individual faculties to their fullest extent. The East has solved the problem for itself for all time, for it has caught the whispers of the Eternal. The West is solving its problem also but only for a period of a *kalpa* or a cyclic day of Brahma, through the course of which time only, the present manifested condition of Nature will endure.

The vision of the West based as it is on the changeful, ever-flowing modifications of *Prakriti*, can never be permanent, nor final. It will vary progressively as natural conditions would go on transforming themselves. Hence of the schemes of life that are made to relate with the shifting consciousness of *Prakriti*, the one that is suited for one age may not be suitable to another at all ; so the ideals will be constantly in a state of flux and at best may have only a comparative stability, that is, they can be permanent within definite limits of time and space. The History of Europe bears witness to this constant change of beliefs and ideals, and the revolutionary movements that have brought them about. Not so in the East. Every time a need for change of social environment and intellectual belief when being urged, the great ones of this land renewed their inspiration from the very source of Being and came back to reveal to us, how the changing and evolving social environment and individual belief can be utilised for the realisation of the highest possibility of man—the attainment of God-consciousness. The East judged all *Samsaric* life in terms of that Supreme Value, the unfoldment of God-consciousness. The West has been basing its schemes of life on the necessities of earth-life as revealed to-day and sees into the future or looks back into the past only so far as to make the present intelligible.

The fluctuations in the life of people in the West is therefore more marked and is imposing in the stir and tumult they make. The changes in the East, however profound, have not outward grandeur and imposing outlook. They are gradual, silent and unseen. The

East takes hold of the inner man and gives him a glimpse of a new truth, by transforming his vision of things. The West tries to change the social environment which will compel the people to change their vision. The latter process is successful only in an atmosphere of strife and stress; while the former requires comparative calm and fixity for its effectiveness. Hence the social structure in the East was less mobile, more stable than in the West. The Eastern method has this advantage that the progressive assimilation becomes a permanent possession, because it transforms the inner man which is the more permanent aspect of our personality. It is owing to this, revolutions in the political world have rarely affected the thoughts and beliefs of the people.

It was stated that the Paramahansa state is attained through Jnana or Bhakti. The inter-social relation of the Paramahansa is purely of a spiritual nature. All the material relations have been inhibited by the very necessity of the state which makes it incumbent on the aspirant to feel oneself apart from the material self, a pure intelligence, a conscious entity free from all material qualities. Such a person is incapable of coming into conflict with other personalities, for conflict is possible only when he wears a material vehicle or is in contact with a material vehicle.

A person following the ideal of a Paramahansa renounces voluntarily all the joys that arise out of material contacts—intellectual, sensuous or bodily. His individuality is completely absorbed in the absolute or in such perfect unison with Iswara that he has no independent will of his own. He knows and feels that the energy of Iswara upholds the whole system and that he may or may not become a conduit of the Divine as God purposes. With such perfect self-abnegation as his goal, there is likely to be the least disturbance to society from such an individual.

When this state of Paramahansa is placed as an ideal to be followed by others and an institution like Sannyasa is organised, then, people who will take up the discipline, being of varying tendencies and capacities, will always fall short of the ideal of perfection they aim at. In the event of a number of people taking it without proper restraint or balance of mind, either leaning towards the extreme of fanaticism or towards the dull-hearted lukewarmness, the evils and limitations which are inherent in all human institutions may manifest themselves. The fanatic who takes up to Sannyasa generally manifests his morbid state of mind by maceration of the body and other cruel and unnatural methods. He may even destroy his body by burning it up in the frenzy of the moment. The lukewarm man may ruin his prospects of self-development and degenerate into a "social parasite." But the aberrations of this institution are not due to the institution itself but to the weakness of the human

nature, that tends ever to blur the vision of the ideal and satisfy the caprices of the moment.

This state of the *Siddha-Purusha* or Super-man is attained by *Samyama-yoga* or *Karma-yoga*. The former **Superman or Siddha-Purusha and Dharma.** gives us intellectual efficiency and develops the power of mind and the latter trains the will and gives us practical or ethical efficiency. The *Samyama-yogi* takes note of a purely individual development and mastery over material and mental conditions, manipulating them by his own masterful will: but the *Karma-yogi* takes the social aspect of man into account and tries to manipulate all social relations for his highest humanitarian purpose. The modern philanthropist and social worker to a certain extent resembles the *Karma-yogi* and the scientist and psychical researcher represents the former type.

Both of them are engaged in understanding and studying nature in its variety, details. The one makes the study of society his speciality and the other the material environment his field of research. The motive that prompts them is purely human and has the well-being of society or the individual at heart. This is now dubbed by the name of *Humanism*.

No doubt this state of Super-man requires the existence of an organised society for its complete realisation. It seeks to manifest itself in innumerable channels of material and intellectual activities as is evidenced by organised scientific work and social amelioration. Society itself is the best field of work for such men and probably it itself is the all-sufficient instrument for the attainment of that goal.

Organisation itself is material and is useful only to persons engaged in intellectual pursuits or the immediate physical well-being. But the spiritual in man is self-sufficient, self-luminous, and self-sustained, and organisation becomes only a hindrance to its self-realisation. So society is not its instrument of manifestation but solitude and the calm born of it. The spiritual state is attained by the deepening of one's own personal life by the quieting of all individual and personal desires, whether *Egoistic* or *Altruistic*. Even the very recognition of society and individuals and the manifold variety, however fine our emotions may be, falls short of the spiritual unity or fellowship of the Jnani or Bhakta. Hence Karma and Yoga were ever subordinated in this land to Bhakti and Jnana: Karma flowers into the Bhakti state and Yoga into that of Jnana.

We have just now stated that society is the background of his effort, both to a Karmi and a Yogi. The moment he recognises the independence of the individual in the consciousness of spirit apart from all social relations, he at once passes into the consciousness of the Bhakta or Jnani states.

Just as individuals may fall short of the ideal states of the Jnani and Bhakta, so individuals following Karma and Yoga may also fall short of the ideal. The other-regarding passion of the Karmi and the outward, objective vision of the Raja Yogi have all the dangers appertaining to the fluctuating environment, social and material, on which their whole motive force is bestowed. Hypocrisy and fanaticism are as likely to break out among them as in the case of the other two types. The fanatic element in these two types may lead to anarchism and organised rebellion as it is likely to lead in the case of the other two types, to suicide or self-torture. The hypocrite among these two types, instead of being merely 'a social parasite,' will be a veritable 'blood-sucking vampire' as is evidenced by too many examples of those who in modern times talk of public spirit, patriotism, humanity, brotherhood and all the shibboleths to which Western education has made us familiar.

The imperfect types among Jnanis and Bhaktas harm themselves but do not harm society or other individuals while the imperfect types among Karmis and Yogis ever threaten to engulf society and endanger individual happiness. The hell which a Jnani or a Bhakta may create is individual, local and restricted: while the *social hell* which the fanatic among the latter types create spell disaster terrible and widespread. Besides the most *Sattvika* among the Karmis and Yogis have the chance of succumbing to the overpowering influence of the social and material environment. Who among the souls in *Samsara* will be strong and pure enough to escape contamination? Sri Krishna says in the *Gita* thus: "The objects of the senses turn away from an abstemious soul: but the tendency towards experience then perishes only after the Supreme is seen." So the unrealised soul of a Karmi or a Yogi is ever prone to be a captive of the caprices of the mind.*

It is therefore absolutely necessary to recognise limitations of the life lived in and for the social and material environments and it is also necessary to emphasise that those engaged in it can never aspire to possess that exalted state of *Sattvika* temper which is absolutely free from the least dross of *Rajas*, and if any one in society does possess it he has to isolate himself from society or stoop himself to the level of society by adopting *Rajasic* and *tamasic* methods, ruinous to the higher nature of man.

* Some of the statements of this paragraph should be considered as true only in ordinary cases. But there are exceptions like the *Adhikarika Purushas*, prophets and those super-human souls whom all religions rise up to worship as the very incarnations of God. They bring down to the society such a mass of spiritual magnetism with them, that the whole society becomes enlivened with it for the time being. They come for the good of the society and so they work in and through it, yet they maintain the perfect serenity of their exalted selves. And thus they become the beacon lights for all humanity.—Ed.

INDIAN CASTE—A FABRIC OF DUTY—NO PRIVILEGE.

BY

Mr. N. Subrahmanya Aiyar, M.A.
(of Travancore)

I have read with considerable interest and with no small gratification the English translation of Swami Vivekananda's notes in Bengali published in the December number of the *Vedanta Kesari*. In the anxiety not to miss the next issue for offering my tribute of appreciation, I am putting up the following few notes.

2. The great Swami begins by saying "our society is built on caste divisions" and says towards the close that "the division of society into castes is not a fault but that inequality of privilege has been the cause of enormous crimes." He advises therefore those that would listen to him, not to abolish caste but to establish equality of privileges. "Our most solemn resolve in life," he says, "is to help all castes from the *pariah* upwards to gain equal rights to religion, wealth, worldly prosperity and liberation (*Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha*)."

3. Readers of the *Vedanta Kesari* are aware of my position with reference to caste. To me, caste is the organisation of society on the lines of structure and function, calculated to secure happiness in this life and elsewhere for every unit in that society. When One becomes many or appears as many, the arrangement of that many can never mean inequality of happiness for any in that many.

4. When, for instance, a number of amateurs, young or old, resolve to act out a drama and agree among themselves as to the several parts they should play in that drama, the part that one actually plays is what he is asked and allowed to do by all the others. As both the part and the conditions under which it is acted stand on the basis of free-will and consent on the part of all, the whole arrangement must be taken as intended for the amusement and recreation of those all.

5. This is the view of society, when we regard the universe as shaped by Self, using the term in its highest sense. But even on the theory of cosmo-genesis by an external Creator, or even if we assume that human society got started into existence we know not how, but with no order or plan, and has only been groping its way to find the perfect state, there can be no sounder ideal

to which we should all strive than the ideal of equitable distribution of place and function. Of course, the need and possibility of mutual encroachment after such distribution must be jealously guarded against. Otherwise, happiness, in the sense of freedom from want or fear of want, cannot be secured for all the units, and certainly not for all time.

6. Such a distribution of place and function is visible to the most unskilled observer in the animal organism. In its highest form, *viz.*, man, there is a separate organ for each separate function; and what is more, the structure of one organ is different from that of another. Whether the result of original creation or of habitual exercise, this difference in structure while, on the one hand, it fits a particular organ for its own function, disables it from doing the function of any other. Thus, as one organ is able to do only one function, no organ can be dispensed with as long as the organism wishes to have the benefit of all functions, and it becomes the interest of each organ in the organism to keep all the other organs well and fit.

7. If the social organism be reared and maintained on these lines, there can possibly be no separateness of interest between class and class in a society or nation, any more than there can be between organ and organ in the same organism; and it will not be difficult to recognise that the differences in name, form, place and function are only intended for the welfare of the organism. This is real caste. This is caste as it ought to be. To such an institution, the idea of privilege, which means undue or exclusive advantage for one class or person, must be wholly foreign. It is only when the functions get deranged and all inter-dependence between organ and organ through mutual functioning ceases that the above-said differences in name, form, &c., suggest separateness of interest and lead to disharmony and suspicion.

8. In regard to the four main functions of the body-politic, production, distribution, protection and religion, the persons engaged in each of them should, in the healthy state of the social body, be all equally balanced in power and wealth. But occasions might arise in the history of certain societies rightly or wrongly when one class overbalances, or considers it necessary to overbalance the other three. When that takes place, the society would go by the name of the overbalancing organ. If the producing or industrial class dominates, the state or society would be known as the Industrial State or society. If the commercial organ predominates, it would be the Commercial State. If the religious class predominates, it would be the Church State, and so on. But

all these are departures from the norm. And when the predominating class forgets that its predominance, consciously or unconsciously secured, has as its right purpose the helping of the other three to recover the lost balance in due time it degenerates into a privilege and a curse. It is this that has now brought the Indian social system into disrepute. It is this circumstance again that led the early European visitors to import the word "caste" and read its hierarchical connotation into the system of occupational divisions in India, which had been established and continued in unbroken and happy heredity—one cannot yet definitely and pronouncedly say how long.

9. Every friend of India, be he Indian or non-Indian, should therefore respond to the pitch of his voice to the great soul of Indian renaissance in modern India, *viz.*, Swami Vivekananda, that caste *privilege* must go.

And it can go, *only* if each person recognises that he is but a unit in an interdependent, mutually connected organismal universe. He will *then alone* feel that, *in his own interest*, it is necessary to harness his knowledge, power and wealth to the service of the others. More of this in my next. But it may be stated *at once* that unless such a harnessing is undertaken *all the world over*, life career will be one of exploitation and privilege which must sooner or later get self-extinguished.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Elsewhere we publish the beautiful article on Dr. Rabindranath's *Sadhana* by Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri. Mr. Sastri has indeed succeeded in showing, by quoting apt passages from the book in study, that Dr. Rabindranath not only belongs to an exalted type of poets, but is a seer too. In the book the poet raises a charming vision of a universal spirit "who realises himself in his creation" and "whose greatest joy consists in his play"—the creation. He believes that the self (ego) is only a misreading of the soul and its bondage which it should liberate itself from, by delivering itself unto the Universal, what he poetically describes as the marriage of the soul with God. Yet, he rings a note of warning "against the idea that the teachers of India preached a renunciation of the world and of the self which leads only to the blank emptiness of negation". But this is, we consider, only a presentation of half-truths. No doubt, it is very true that none of our Indian teachers ever preached anything that might lead to the blank emptiness of negation, yet to say in their name that they never preached the renunciation of the world and self is to assert what is not a fact.

Rabindranath like a true Visishtadwaitin avows the absolute necessity of *Jnana Karma Samuchchayam* (combination of knowledge and action). But he goes a little further;—unlike the old *Acharyas* of the land, he never believes in the realisation of “Brahman in meditation only in his aspect of completeness” apart from the sight of “him in the commerce of the universe in his aspect of evolution,”—nay, such effort to realise Brahman divorced from his creation is, according to him, abortive and most derogatory to the soul; it only leads to the “intoxication of the spirit and its consequent degradation.” He characterises such seekers of God with the following remarks: “Their faith would acknowledge no bondage of law, their imagination soars unrestricted, their conduct disdains to offer any explanation to reason. Their intellect, in its vain attempts to see Brahma inseparable from his creation, works itself stone-dry, and their heart, seeking to confine him within its own outpourings, swoons in a drunken ecstasy of emotion. They have not even kept within reach any standard whereby they can measure the loss of strength and character which manhood sustains by thus ignoring the bonds of law and the claims of actions in the external universe.” Then he comes down openly upon the Sannyasin with all the vitriol that his poet’s fancy can brew and vomit through the pen,—he addresses: “O thou distraught wanderer, thou Sannyasin, drunk in the wine of self-intoxication, dost thou not already hear the progress of the human-soul along the high-way traversing the wide fields of humanity—the thunder of its progress, the car of its achievements, which is destined to overpass the bounds that prevent its expansion into the universe?” He challenges “Who is there that thinks the union of God and man is to be found in some secluded enjoyment of his own imaginings, away from the sky-towering temple of the greatness of humanity, which the whole of mankind, in sunshine and storm, is toiling to erect through the ages? Who is there that thinks secluded communion is the highest form of religion?” “He who thinks to reach God by running away from the world, when and where does he expect to meet him? How far can he fly—can he fly and fly, till he flies into nothingness itself?” Then he asserts like a sage with a big negative “No, the coward who would fly can no where find him.” God must be realised in and through creation.

But on the ears of a Hindu trained in the ways of life as formulated by the ancient sages of India, some of the above outpourings of sentiments of Rabindranath will jar like a discordant note in the midst of the sweet harmony of the poet’s imaginings.

Dr. Rabindranath is a poet and has a genius in bringing about a grand display of vivid imagery. All his thoughts assume living forms and dance around his intellect. But when the images grow thick

and fast, they absorb all his attention, and his whole consciousness gets infatuated with the charm of those images. His imagination gets installed on the sacred seat of intuition. This is the great danger of having too much of imagination. At times the figment of his own fancy gets mingled up with the reality of perception and assumes all the importance and grandeur of Reality itself. He like a wizard weaves spell with his words and make those lifeless mummies of his own creation appear as figures endowed with life, moving on the stage of Reality. But we must know that it is only a grand feat of a soaring fancy, or at best, a heaven of his own creation.

But the Reality lies deeper. There may be joy in the delicate tints of the blooming blossom, in the roseate hue of the dawn, in the music of the flowing river, in the blushing of the fruitful earth, in the entranced glory of the starry sky, or the dazzling beauty of the eternal snows, or in the terrific grandeur of the rolling waters of the ocean, or even in the love of man that knits heart to heart and builds up the grand superstructure of society; yet they are not the Truth, although they may be “the manifestation of the same living truth which holds them in its embrace.” We must remember that the manifestation is only before the senses and the mind and *not* to the soul. Before the soul, the pure consciousness of the Atman, the Spirit whose aspect is this universe, appears directly in its own native glory, before which all these pleasing grandeurs of the universe dwindle into insignificant nullity.

With a profounder insight has the Vedic sage sung:

एतावानस्य महिमा अतो ज्यायांश्च पुरुषः ।

पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ॥

“These are His glories, but the self of the Purusha is far superior to them. This creation is the manifestation of only (as if) one-fourth of His being, but the remaining three-fourths are in the shining region and immortal (*i.e.*, in its changeless absolute condition.)” This transcendental immensity of the Purusha suffers great limitation while manifesting itself through Time and Space, in the form of the present smiling universe.

Poet Rabindranath was taught by his own genius to gather these smiles of Nature and human soul, and bunch them up into a beautiful bouquet which he calls the “harmony of the spirit” and be entranced at its glory. He is however wide awake to the fact that these smiles are of the universal spirit, hence we have recognised him as a *seer*. But the poet in him sets up its own limitations around and prevents him from his getting a full vision of the Transcendental Reality. The inertia of his soul perhaps hinders his consciousness to

transcend his senses and mind. That is why he likes to enjoy the spirit only in its aspect of cosmic manifestation. As he himself has said in one of his Bengali songs : " Mine is not the path of penance or privation or renunciation. Mine is to taste the Boundless in the midst of the infinite bounds."

..

Well, poet Rabindranath may very well choose his own path and like to taste *Mukti* in the midst of the manifold *bandhanas* ; no one can have any moral objection to it, as no one can dictate what another should like or not. Liking and disliking are the expressions of the tendencies and potencies of the individual mind. But equally what moral right has he to decry the another path that leads to a still higher experience of the Truth? He has experienced, at best, only the *Saguna* aspect of the spirit, and to assert that that is the best, highest and final state of consciousness of the Truth is only self-sufficiency and dogmatism. Thereby it betrays only the limitedness of his own realisation and shortsightedness of his vision. It would do far better for him to acknowledge his own incapacity to realise, than deny the realisation of the *Nirguna* state of the spirit which has been described in the Upanishads as—

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिः प्रज्ञं नोभयतः प्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् ।
अदृष्टमन्यवहाय्यमप्राह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यमेकात्म्यप्रत्ययसारं प्रपञ्चोपशमं
शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥

"It is neither inward consciousness (as in the dream state), nor outward consciousness (as in the wakeful state), nor consciousness yet both ways, nor the *ingathered* consciousness (of the dreamless deep sleep), nor even whole consciousness (like that of God who perceives all at a time), nor yet unconsciousness ; it is unperceivable (by the senses), beyond all relations, incomprehensible, undenotable, unthinkable, past definition, nought but pure self-consciousness alone, where all phenomena are negated, the Peace (transcendental), the Bliss (absolute), the secondless—this is the fourth state (of consciousness) they say. It is the Self. It should be realised."

..

If his realisation of the *Saguna* aspect be true by virtue of being experienced, it is only self-conscious arrogance and dogmatism to deny the verity to the other experience as well. Nay, he is pleased to vituperate it as a "swoon in the drunken ecstasy of emotion," "self-intoxication" etc. But vituperation is no argument, nor test of truth. All those words can be very well applied to his realisation of God as well. The realisation of the *kaivalya* state of the soul of the Vedantin and Nirvana of the Buddhist stands out as a protest against all his fanciful statements of the soul realisation. Moreover if the abiding consciousness be the test of Truth, the realisation of the *Nirguna* Brahman is far truer than the experience of its *Saguna* aspect. Hence

the Vedantin calls that *Nirguna* absolute state as the शाश्वतपदं, "the eternal state," or तद् विष्णो परमं पदम् "the supreme state of the all-pervading spirit," and the expression of that supreme spirit in the form of the universe or in the form of creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe, i.e., in the expression of Law, Love and Beauty in the universe, however sweet it may be, is only relatively true. (Vide the passages of the Katha-Upanishad appearing in this issue.)

..

And what is this *Sannyasa* institution that becomes the butt of Rabindranath's criticism and of the sarcasms of some of the wise-aces of the day? It is an institution, a training ground for awakening the soul to the transcendental reality of the Atman described above. It trains the soul how to extricate itself from the meshes of body, the senses and mind and realise its own absolute identity undefiled by the clamour of the senses or passions of the mind. This absolute state of the self, which the Upanishads style नेति नेति आत्मा, "not this—not this—Atman," that is, the Atman in which all the phenomenal expressions are negated, can never be realised unless the world-process is denied absolutely. Hence the absolute necessity for *Vairagya*m, not the type of renunciation as Rabindranath posits, but the supreme renunciation of गुणविद्वेषा (abnegation of the three *Gunas*) as defined by Patanjali.

..

We therefore find throughout the whole history of man's struggle for the realisation, or better the fullest awakening, of the inner consciousness of the spirit, that master-souls who led the path, holding aloft the torch-light of spiritual glory, were men of supreme renunciation—not the make-belief intellectual renunciation of Rabindranath, but the supreme and complete abnegation of the finite self or egohood, nurtured in the loneliness of the soul far away from the calls and attractions of society. They all held that the direct path for the realisation of even the *Saguna* aspect of the Spirit as Love, Law and Beauty or Harmony, is the *sannyasa* institution, in which the soul gets more respite to meditate upon the Truth than in the midst of distracting clamour of social life.

..

And ah, Rabindranath is kind enough to call the Sannyasin a distraught wanderer and self-intoxicated soul. Well, निरंकुशाः कवयः, poets are unrestrained. Nothing can check their flowing fancy, or the glib movement of their pen. Yet, for truth's sake we have to say that a Sannyasin is not distraught at all, nor is he self-intoxicated. Perfect composure reigns in his heart and his soul rests in the supreme peace of Brahman untainted by the mad intoxication of the self which we find so markedly in the man who works and lives

in the luxury of society. He is the very type of selflessness and his existence is a living message of the spirit to the hide-bound souls of the world.

In the opinion of Rabindranath, then, the life of Buddha was a failure, the life of Jesus was a failure, and the lives of all the Christian mystics, Sufi saints, and the sages of India like Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhwa, Chaitanya are ruinous heaps of failures only. These master-souls, whose very names thrill us with spiritual fervour, not only lived the life of "renunciation of the world and of self," but promulgated the path with all emphasis for the true aspirants of spiritual realisation. Rabindranath, though he has accepted some of their doctrines, yet perhaps considers their lives as grand mistakes, otherwise he would not have given vent to those preposterous utterances about Sannyasa.

We shall revert again in our next issue to Rabindranath's theory of self-realisation.

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban.

We are glad to receive a copy of the Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban for the year 1914, for review. It opens with an appeal to the public at large, which we are sure, deserves to be heard and responded to by every sympathetic heart. Really this good work which has stood the trial and test of the past 8 years and showed its grand utility by alleviating the sufferings of hundreds of souls in the sacred city of Brindaban should not be allowed to dwindle in its scope of benevolence for mere want of funds. It is no exaggeration when we say that such institutions are the glory and pride of our country. Their maintenance and multiplication will not only divert the straggling charities of the land to a fruitful channel, but will afford training grounds for the individuals who come to help them, for the awakening of the higher principles of human nature. So they are necessary as much for the poor sufferers as for those who help such charities.

The salient feature of this philanthropic institution is that no distinction is ever made in respect of caste, creed or colour. As detailed in the report itself the Ashrama offers relief in the following forms :—

1. The diseased poor of Sri Brindaban, and the neighbouring villages and the large number of poor pilgrims resorting there are supplied with medical aid free of charge.

2. Poor and helpless patients are picked up by the workers of the Sevashrama from the roadsides and Dharmashalas, and attended

to with loving care in the Sevashrama; and in cases of death, the Sevashrama cremates or disposes of the dead bodies according to the religious belief of the dead patients, at its own cost. The number of in-door and out-door patients this year was 318 and 36,971 (including repeated numbers) respectively.

3. Medicines and diet are carried to diseased persons in their own quarters when they cannot come to the Sevashrama.

4. Medicines are given free of charge to out-door patients.

5. Pardanashin women are helped as far as possible in extreme cases of distress.

The report under review shows clearly that the Sevashrama does its work on a systematic and well-organised plan. Monthly subscription on the whole realised during the year 1914, amounts to Rs. 1,206. Donations received for Building Fund during the year 1914, amounts to Rs. 4,838-15-0. Other donations received during the year comes up to a total of Rs. 1,515-9-6. Balance Sheet for the year 1914, shows an outstanding balance of Rs. 7,184-10-3 being the surplus of income Rs. 9,439-11-3 over the year's expenditure Rs. 2,255-1-0. We heartily wish success to the institution and hope and pray for its growth and development in the hallowed land where had been one of the greatest expressions of the Divine in human form.

Contributions, however small, may be sent to Swami Brahmananda, President, The Ramakrishna Mission, Belur, Howra, or to the Secretary in charge of the Sevashrama, Brindaban, District Muttra, U.P.

The Fourteenth Annual Report of The Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares.

WE have received the Fourteenth Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Benares. It is a clear record of the continued progress which this noble institution is making in the philanthropic work undertaken on behalf of thousands of poor people stricken with disease and poverty in the great City of Shiva. The number of persons relieved in the year under review, namely, 12,732, represents an increase of 15 per cent. as compared with last year. Of this number 761 obtained in-door hospital relief. In the register of persons relieved the entries represent almost all the provinces in India and almost all her creeds and communities. It is evident that this philanthropic institution has really become a national concern with all our countrymen, and it is in this light that an appeal has been made in the present Report to the public for immediate co-operation in solving the difficult problem of accommodation which confronts the noble workers to-day. The provision of separate infectious wards and of refuges for old invalids who in utter helplessness drift about in Shiva's City

with the only hope left in their life of closing it there for ever, forms the most crying need of this institution. The only urgent remedy therefore is an extension of the present site and construction of new buildings. Timely help has come from the Government in the shape of the acquisition of 8.22 acres of adjoining land, on which construction work has already been commenced on a small scale, while the public are being at the same time most fervently appealed to for funds to meet construction expenses under the extension scheme. This scheme which is fully explained in the Report, providing for 4 Dysentery wards, 2 for male and 2 for female patients, 2 Cholera wards for them, respectively, 4 other segregation wards for Plague, Pox and Phthisis patients, 2 Asylums for old helpless invalids and quarters for workers and medical officers, estimates the cost of the whole extension at more than one and a half lakh of rupees. Besides donations from the generous public, the scheme counts upon endowments of the construction of special wards and on beds therein in memory or honour of friends or relatives of donors.

To our readers of all creeds and races we reiterate the appeal made in the Report under review. This Benares institution is really, as the Report points out, a noble monument of our national spirit of organisation and charity. It is, to quote from it, "not merely a place where poor and sick people resort to receive help, but it is a temple where a whole nation performs the worship of God with a new inspiration. Here philanthropy is exalted into worship, charity into communion, and a whole nation participates in the blessing thereof." We gladly invite public charity therefore to contribute by an unstinted flow towards the upkeep and expansion of the noble work of this Benares Home of Service. All correspondence with reference to the building of the memorial wards and the support of beds and so forth, as also all donations and contributions should be sent to the Assistant Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares City.

The Birthday Celebration of Swami Vivekananda.

The fifty-fourth Birthday Anniversary of SRI SWAMI VIVEKANANDA will be celebrated on the Sri Ramakrishna Home grounds, Brodie's Road, Mylapore, Madras, on Sunday, the 30th January, 1916.

PROGRAMME.

- | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|------------------------|
| 1. Bhajana | ... | ... | 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. |
| 2. Feeding the poor | ... | ... | 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. |
| 3. Harikatha Kalakshepam | ... | ... | 2-30 p.m. to 4-30 p.m. |
| 4. Lecture on "The place of religion in our National Development, as Interpreted by Swami Vivekananda" by Dr. T. S. S. Rajan. M.R.C.S., (England), L.R.C.P. (London), of Srirangam | ... | ... | 5-30 p.m. |

The subtlest of all is the Pure Intelligence, the Purusha, the basis of all Life and Substance. Then comes the inscrutable primal matter or energy, the Prakriti, which cloaks the Purusha and creates in Him the dream of the Universe. This first conception of Universal Life is the Hiranyagarbha; in it are aggregated infinite individual souls whose chief distinguishing features are the intellect (*Buddhi*) and the mind (*Manas*). The grosser aspect of the Universal Life divides itself again into two, viz., as the senses and the sense-objects.]

एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढोऽत्मा न प्रकाशते ।

दृश्यते स्रग्धया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ॥ १२ ॥

सर्वेषु all भूतेषु in beings गूढः hidden एषः this आत्मा Atman न प्रकाशते does not shine (reveal), तु but सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः by the subtle seers स्रग्धया sharp, pointed सूक्ष्मया subtle बुद्ध्या intellect (एष आत्मा this Atman) दृश्यते is seen (realised).

This Atman hidden in all beings, reveals (Itself) not (to all), but is seen (only) by the subtle seers through their pointed and subtle intellect.

[Subtle seers—The sharp, discriminative persons who can perceive the subtleties of objects as enumerated in the previous two mantrams.

Through their pointed intellect, i. e., with the concentrated intellect.]

यच्छेद्वाङ्मनसी प्राज्ञस्तद्यच्छेज्ज्ञान आत्मनि ।

ज्ञानमात्मनि महति नियच्छेत्तद्यच्छेच्छान्त आत्मनि ॥ १३ ॥

प्राज्ञः the wise वाक् speech मनसी in the mind यच्छेत् should merge तत् that (mind) ज्ञाने आत्मनि in intellect (lit. in the knowledge-self) यच्छेत् should merge, ज्ञानम् the intellect महति आत्मनि in the Great Self (i.e. Hiranyagarbha) नियच्छेत् submerge, तत् that (Great Self) शान्ते आत्मनि in the Peace Self यच्छेत् merge.

The wise should merge the speech in the mind and that (mind) in the intellect, the intellect in the Great Self and that (Great Self again) in the Self of Peace.

[*Merge the speech, etc.*—Here, the reference is to the practice of *Samyama*. First, all the activities of the senses should be stopped and the consciousness should be contracted from the senses and concentrated upon the mind, next the consciousness should be drawn in from the mind even and put on the intellect or the higher discriminative faculty of the mind, then it should be withdrawn from the intellect even and centred in the intuition which comprehends the cosmic existence of life, which can be done only by the proper intuitive feeling of our own pure Ego, the *Ahankara*; and then lastly, when the thin veil of Ego is also pierced through, Consciousness reveals its own singular, pure, self-contained absolute aspect. This process of self-realisation through self-discrimination and introspection is what is known as *Jnana Yoga*.

Self of peace—The real self of man, the Atman, is fitly designated here as the *Shanta Atma*, i.e., Self of peace, because all the activities of *Prakriti* are absolutely negated in it.]

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया दुर्गमपथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति ॥ १४ ॥

उत्तिष्ठत arise, जाग्रत awake! वरान् the excellent (teacher) प्राप्य having approached (तत् that) Atman निबोधत know, realise, निशिता sharp क्षुरस्य of a razor धारा edge, दुरत्यया difficult to cross, दुर्गम hard to tread तत् that पथः path (इति so) कवयः the wise वदन्ति say.

Arise, awake, (O, man)! realise (that Atman) having approached the excellent (teacher). Like the sharp edge of a razor is that path, so the wise say, difficult to cross and hard to tread.

[*Arise, Awake*—i.e., from the slumber of ignorance.

Note—The latter half of the *mantram* speaks of the great arduousness of the path of self-realisation, indicating thereby that it requires utmost caution and cleverness to reach the goal of the path. cf. II. 7, 8.]

अशब्दमस्पर्शमरूपमव्ययं तथा रसन्नित्यमगन्धवच्च यत् ।

अनाद्यनन्तममृतं परं ध्रुवं निचाय्य तन्मृत्युमुखात्प्रमुच्यते ॥ १५ ॥

यत् which अशब्दं without sound, अस्पर्शं without touch, अरूपं without form, अव्ययं imperishable, तथा so also अरसं without taste,

नित्यं eternal, अगन्धवत् without smell (भवति is), अनाद्यनन्तम् without beginning or end, अमृतं the Mahat परं beyond (superior to), ध्रुवं immutable तं that (Atman) निचाय्य having realised मृत्युमुखात् from the jaws of death प्रमुच्यते is released.

Having realised that (Atman) which is soundless, touchless, formless, imperishable, and also without taste and smell, eternal, without beginning or end, (even) beyond the Mahat, immutable,—one is released from the jaws of death.

[*That (Atman) which is soundless, etc.*—i.e., the Atman which is of the nature of pure Intelligence, and beyond all sense-perceptions having nothing in common with Matter.

Beyond the Mahat—See note III. 2.

Released from the jaws of death—i.e., is emancipated from the bondage of birth and death, which phenomena become possible only through the ignorance of our real Atman. In Atman there is no change like birth and death. It is the eternal, immutable, absolute state of consciousness. To know that Atman means to realise that state of consciousness.]

नाचिकेतमुपाख्यानं मृत्युप्रोक्तं सनातनम् ।

उक्त्वा श्रुत्वा च मेधावी ब्रह्मलोके महीयते ॥ १६ ॥

मेधावी the intelligent (इदम् this) मृत्युप्रोक्तं told by Death सनातनम् the ancient नाचिकेतम् concerning Nachiketas, उपाख्यानम् the story उक्त्वा having related च and श्रुत्वा having heard ब्रह्मलोके in the world of Brahman महीयते is glorified

The intelligent having heard and related this ancient story of Nachiketas told by Death, is glorified in the world of Brahman.

[*Having heard and related*—i.e., being instructed himself by a competent teacher and having imparted the same instruction to other aspiring souls.

Is glorified—i.e., becomes one with the infinite magnificence of Brahman.]

य इमं परमं गुह्यं श्रावयेत् ब्रह्मसंसदि । प्रयतः श्राद्धकाले वा
तदानन्त्याय कल्पते तदानन्त्याय कल्पत इति ॥ १७ ॥

यः who प्रयतः with great devotion परमं supremely गुह्यं myste-
rious इदम् this (story) ब्रह्मसंसदि in the assembly of Brahmanas, वा
or श्राद्धकाले at the time of *Sraddha* ceremony श्रावयेत् repeats, तत्
that तदानन्त्याय for infinite (reward) कल्पते becomes fit.

He who repeats this supremely mysterious (story) with
great devotion in the assembly of Brahmanas or at
the time of *Sraddha* ceremony, obtains thereby infinite
rewards.

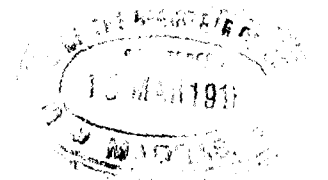
[In the assembly of Brahmanas—i.e., in the assembly of
intelligent devotees who only are able to understand the supreme
mystery and glories of the Atman revealed in the story of
Nachiketas.

At the time of *Sraddha* ceremony—*Sraddha* is the ceremony
done in honour of the departed to bring peace to their souls.
Hence, that has been considered as the fit occasion for delineating
the glories of the Atman as embodied in this story of Nachi-
ketas.

Note—The last clause of the *mantram* has been repeated twice,
indicating the end of the First Book.]

The End of the Third Chapter.

THE END OF THE FIRST BOOK.



The Vedanta Kesari

“ Let the lion of Vedanta roar.”

“ Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that ‘ I am the Atman.’ ”

—Swami Vivekananda.

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FEBRUARY, 1916.

[No. 10

THE HYMN OF SAMADHI.

(Rendered from a Bengali Song of Swami Vivekananda).

Lo ! The sun is not, nor the comely moon,
All light extinct ; in the great void of space
Floats shadow-like the image-universe.

In the void of mind involute, there floats
The fleeting universe, rises and floats,
Sinks again, ceaseless, in the current “ I.”

Slowly, slowly, the shadow-multitude
Entered the primal womb, and flowed ceaseless,
The only current, the “ I am,” “ I am.”

Lo ! 'Tis stopped, ev'n that current flows no more,
Void merged into void,—beyond speech and mind !
Knoweth verily he whose heart it knows.

THE ETHICAL ASPECT OF THE VEDANTA.

BY

Professor K. Sundararama Iyer, M.A.

PART XI.

KARMA AND THE SOCIAL AIM.

A great Christian Missionary,—the greatest that has ever set foot in the Madras Presidency,—the Reverend Dr. William Miller, had once the unparalleled generosity to proclaim his conscientious conviction that the rest of the world had to learn from India and Hinduism the saving doctrines of “the solidarity of man” and “the omnipenetrativeness of God.” The Hindus alone regard all peoples and all races inhabiting the world as forming an organism or a household. The function assigned to the Hindus in the divine ordering of the world is to provide the habitat wherein alone are available the ethical and spiritual facilities which, when fully utilised, are to lead to the realisation of the Self. This function can only be efficiently discharged if the Hindus vividly realise the idea of the solidarity of man as their social aim. What, then, is the true import of this idea for the Hindu mind, and how does it enable Hindu Society to fulfil its function in the divine order and dispensation?

Before proceeding to answer these questions, we wish to state how the Hindu conception of the social aim is contrasted with those entertained among other sections of the human family and other societies or nationalities in other parts of the civilised world. The idea of a universal empire was born into the world chiefly through the influence of Christianity. It originated as the secular correlative of the idea once dominant, but now decayed, of a universal Christian Church. Whether the first founder of Christianity entertained this notion is at best doubtful, and may even be denied on fairly sustainable grounds. In Matthew, X. 5, 6, Jesus commands his disciples as follows :—“Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter not, but go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.” Against this passage may be set Matthew, XXVIII. 19 :—“Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” But, according to the greatest of living theologians, Dr. Adolf Harnack, “Matthew, XXVIII. 19 is not a saying of the Lord.” The whole story of the Resurrection and what transpired

subsequently in the career of Jesus is now discredited by scholars. Dr. William Wrede, for instance, writes as follows :—“The conclusion of the Gospel (Matthew’s) as we read it in our Bibles—*i.e.*, the last twelve verses—is, without doubt, not genuine, as in fact these verses are wanting in the oldest manuscripts” (*Origin of the New Testament*, p. 54). Hence the aspirations of the Christian Church towards universality and its efforts to achieve it had no sanction in the religious consciousness of Jesus, as far as we can ascertain it from his authentic sayings and precepts. Its aggressiveness and its attempts to win the whole world are due to others who later laid the foundations,—or built up the artificial superstructure,—of its dogmas of sin and salvation. While Jesus taught, “My kingdom is not of this world” and “the Kingdom of Heaven is within you,” and that it was only by its realisation “within” the mind of man that it was to be realised on earth,—those who organised the Church in the Apostolic age, and subsequently to it, added the idea of a universal Christian Society to be built up through the influence and labours of that Church. The Apostolic Church acting upon, and being reacted upon in its turn by, Greek culture and Roman citizenship laid down the plan of a world-wide missionary enterprise which was to build up a universal communion of the faithful. In Romans, III. 29, St. Paul asks :—“Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also the God of the Gentiles?” It has been rightly said that, even if Paul had never heard of Jesus, he would have become the prophet and preacher of a world-religion. Paul’s Rabbinical culture was also responsible for his claim that the Christians were the people originally elected of God for his service,—the holy people whom God’s covenant with Israel, developing into the promise of a blessing for all nations and communities, was to combine into a universal community of the chosen under the leading of the successor of St. Peter, whom all early recognised as pre-eminent among the Apostles. How the French Monarchy was founded in Roman Gaul by Clovis,—how the East-Frankish line of the Carolingians supplanted the Western and became supreme by its victory over the advancing Saracenic power in Spain,—how, when the Pope appealed to him for help against the Lombards, he gladly responded and was rewarded for his services by being recognised and proclaimed as the secular head of the revived Western Roman Empire,—and how finally this became transformed in 962 into the Holy Roman Empire of the German King Otto I,—are well-known facts of European history. There are certain ideas which, when once born into the world, are never destined to leave it ;—and this is true of the ideas of a universal spiritual community and a universal secular empire,—

even though the subsequent history of those ideas is sufficient to convince us that neither is going to be practically realised in the affairs of mankind. The nations and peoples of the West are, every one of them, trying and vying with each other to achieve the status first of a world-power and then of a world-empire only as steps in their progress towards their building up of the universal empire of the future. This is the social destiny for which each nation and community nominally Christian is striving, and this explains the daily-expanding world-struggle which is being fought out at the present critical epoch of history to its still uncertain or unforeseen conclusion.

Let us look at the matter from another standpoint, and we shall reach the same conclusion. In the early days of Christianity, there prevailed a belief that Jesus would revisit the earth within a short time after his resurrection and ascension to establish a heavenly kingdom on earth and rule over it. The Gospel of Luke represents him as saying to his disciples, "I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Kingdom of God." It seems to us that this passage can be so interpreted as to harmonise with the idea of a spiritual Kingdom of God "within" the heart of man. But the belief seems to have widely prevailed that Jesus was to return in his old physical body and rule over the earth. Even when the futility of this hope had been demonstrated to the full by the irresistible logic of facts, the Christians did not cease to believe in the conception of a future physical return of Jesus to reign as the ruler of a perfect form of the State. The Christian feels called upon to work in order to prepare for the coming perfect society and state in which all are "to be perfect even as the father in heaven is perfect," and to practise Christ's precept as given in St. John's Gospel, "that ye love one another even as I loved you." Every Christian is bound to feel the duty of so improving the world around him that every Christian living at some future time may practise the perfect form of love—the law equally of duty and of liberty in its perfect form—in full measure and with the utmost energy possible. Every Christian knows, or ought to know, that a world of perfected men can never come into being on earth. Still, the Christian mind and faith has become wedded to the ideal for good or evil,—more for evil than for good, in our view,—for this accounts as much for its unfailing record of failure as a spiritual force as for its glorious record of success as a secular force making for political aggrandisement and economic exploitation. Throughout the world, Christian communities practise the cult of aggressive patriotism, nationalism, and imperialism in the most relentless manner so that

peace and good-will among men have vanished never to return; and we see, instead, the reign of racial swagger, racial conflict, territorial aggression, and a perpetual over-breeding of the population necessitating the exiling for all time of a portion of it in the form of colonisation.

The creed proclaimed by the prophet of Arabia is one which, while it was raised on an eclectic basis, has its own special merits and beams forth with an illumination and insight all its own,—inspiring men to culture, courage, self-sacrifice, honesty of purpose, charity, chastity, enlightenment, and true devotion. It has been said of Mohammed that "his creed was Judaism *plus* proselytism, and Christianity *minus* the teaching of St. Paul." Hence we see here too the aspiration after a visible universal Church consisting of all men and nations. This aspiration is greatly helped by the circumstance that there are no invidious social distinctions among Mohammedans, though it is regrettable that Mohammedanism is tending, in the present condition of the world's politics, to assume more and more the character of a losing cause. This feeling of regret becomes all the more emphasised in us when we recollect how close is the correspondence between the Vedanta doctrine and the philosophical aspect of the religion of Mohammed known to us as Sufism.

The Hindu ideal of the social destiny of the Hindus stands vividly contrasted with the ideals of which the creeds already referred to have made themselves the expression in the constitution of their society and the development of their relations with the rest of the world. The constitution of Hindu Society, its chosen home on earth, and its destiny are based on the doctrine of Karma. As Karma runs its course and bears fruit, each individual soul, irrespective of its previous history and habitat, takes its birth in the holy land (of Bharatavarsha) and among the holy people (Aryas) to whom appertains the practice of the Sanatana-Dharmas leading to the realisation of the highest truth and bliss. The Aryas have the particular attributes of Viveka (discrimination of the eternal from the ephemeral) and Vairagya (dispassion) which are alone to bear the fruit of the realisation of the One Existence. The Jews, too, used to consider themselves the Holy People and their country—Palestine—which they inhabited as the Holy Land. But their conceptions are wide as the poles apart from our own. For, theirs was a national faith; the ideal good for which they covenanted with the Lord and for which they—all the children of the covenant—are to pray for was the fulness of earthly prosperity in a land flowing with milk and honey, and the return to Zion of the

ransomed of the Lord. On the other hand, the ideal of the Hindus is that of "the solidarity of man." The Law of Karma bound all Jivas together into one family under the care of the universal divine father. The Gods (Devas), worshipped by sacrifices and fed by the sacrificial offerings, sent forth their blessings not for the Hindus only, but for the whole earth and the human race. The offering of the sacrifice belonged to the priests; the Veda contained the knowledge not only of the sacrificial ritual, but of the divine worship and meditation which was to lead to the one-pointedness of mind leading ultimately to the realisation of the universal and absolute existence which is "one only without a second." But all these blessings were to be shared not by the Hindu race and society alone, but by every individual Jiva, whatever his present habitat or his present embodiment, when his Karma, in fulfilling its predetermined course, takes him in due time to his birth among the four Varnas (divisions) of the Aryas and provides him with the advantages of the spiritual knowledge and training under perfected Gurus who possess the secret of spiritual illumination and can impart the methods of its attainment to the qualified disciple. Thus Hinduism is alone the universal religion which is to help all Jivas, irrespective of time and whatever their place or mode of living within the cosmos. The Hindu religion secures no social, political or spiritual benefit to the castes and circumstances within the magic circle of the Holy People which it does not—or will not—secure also to every Jiva in the universe when his Karma ripens so as to secure him his birth among them and its undoubted advantages. In spite of our system of Varna and its division of Hindu Society into parts which seem to be bound together by its own separate interests and to go each its own way apart from all others, our religious ideas, aims, and institutions are, in the first place, inseparably and eternally associated with the idea of the social solidarity, not only of all men, but of all Jivas throughout God's universe, anywhere and everywhere. In marked contrast to this is the ethical system of the Jews which not only gave the foremost place to those virtues only which tended to secure the permanence and prosperity of the Jewish family and the Jewish society and nationality, but never shared to any extent the accentuated individualism which forms the most prominent and unfailing feature of our seemingly caste-ridden society. Among the Jews the interest of each individual was synonymous with that of the tribe, and the whole tribe was in its turn pledged to defend its individual members. Moreover, ours is the Holy Land in a different sense from that in which Palestine was the Holy Land of the Jews. Moses is said to have "hewed

Israel from the rock." He was the leader who created the Hebrew nation and led them into a land where they gained a settled abode and became transformed into a stable power, and his words were regarded as Jehovah's message to them; the land of the Hebrews is the land of Jehovah, and therefore the Holy Land. But the *Punya-Bhumi* or Holy Land of Bharatavarsha is not only the land of the Aryas and Rishis, but the land which contains the *Avimuktakshetra*, the city of Kasi (Benares),—the city of redemption from the bondage of re-birth for the entire universe of Jivas,—the city where, at the time of death, Isvara teaches the *Taraka-mantra*, the spiritual formula the meditation of whose import is to lead to the goal of freedom from Samsara, and the bliss of realising the highest self,—the city which, in the macrocosm of the universe, corresponds to the lotus of the human heart (*Hridaya-pundarika*) in the microcosm of the human body where the Jiva, taught the highest truth and the mode of realising it by the Guru, shall lose his individuality in the unlimited and all-pervading Divine Light, in the bliss of noumenal or absolute existence.

From what has been said above, it will be easy to see how different is the Vedantin's practical outlook on life from that of the Christian, Hebrew, or even the Moslem who is a stranger to the doctrines of Sufism. While the processes of preparation and discipline, which the Vedantic disciple undergoes under his Guru's instruction and the fruit secured to him thereby of realising the light and joy of the One Existence leave him an *altered man*—altered in his relations to the world around him—that alteration does not bring him into conflict with the world like the Christian or Jew or Moslem who has to be eternally active and at war with the Congregation of Satan or the Kaffir world around him, even though he knows that such a thing as a world of perfected men, full of spiritual sweetness and the serene light of divine wisdom, can never be an accomplished fact and is only like the baseless fabric of a dreamer's perverted vision. His attitude to the world is one of unstinted love for all its varied forms of life, and he has none of the egoistic impulses which lead the rest of the world into sensualism, sin and strife. His relation to the world is largely—even predominantly and serenely passive; and he is no longer subject to the impulsion of those strong passions of greed and hatred which lead to the perpetual clash of interests that characterises the national life of modern Christian or other communities even in the piping times of peace and to the frequent clash of arms whenever the perfection of military organisation and naval armament enables them to defy neighbouring nations, or even the rest of the world.

We have now to meet the objection that these observations may apply to individuals of an advanced type, but never to a whole community. The blessed Bhagavan says in the Gita :—(III. 21).

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।

स यत्प्रमाद्यं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥

“Whatever the man who enjoys social pre-eminence does, that the common people receive who are dependent on him ; people also accept (as their guide) that which he regards as his source of guidance in matter secular or spiritual.”

Here the blessed Bhagavan enunciates—and points out the value of—both the great principles of *personality* (सदाचार) and of *authority* (प्रमाण). In the world, *faiths* divide men, because the authority on which they are founded is not of such a kind as to appeal to experience and to allay the uprising of the critical faculty. In India the supreme and unquestioned authority of the Veda has led to the union under one flag of the many minor circles and groups formed under the magic influence of the striking spiritual personalities who have at different times impressed themselves on the imaginations of men. The principle of personality is the most potent of all in social life, and that is why the blessed Bhagavan makes his appeal to it in so forcible a manner in his exhortation to Arjuna above quoted. Unlearned persons always understand how much they are dependent upon the learned and require their help and guidance in order to be able to satisfy the needs and emergencies of life. This is the reason why founded religions have had great influence in the world. But where personalities have become converted into mere dogmas, historical or doctrinal, and men accept them as insoluble riddles or mysteries which somehow influence their future destiny, a time comes when the appeal has to be made to personal experience or personal belief or both. Science and logic make short work of everything which cannot stand these tests and be thereby made to cohere into a consistent system which satisfies the intellects and consciences of men. Science and logic alone constitute what the world can regard as truth. Hindu Society, in taking its stand on the Veda (which includes the Vedanta), has always followed an authority of unquestionable value as the source of spiritual truth,—truth which is identical with realisation and can therefore be confirmed by the most intelligible of all tests and standards. A Western writer has the following beautiful passage :—“Our wishes ought not to determine what we shall accept as truth. Must we not always take shame to ourselves when we catch ourselves

wishing for a truth other than the actual one? No, let us give all honour to truth ; for with truth goodness is inseparably united. Perfect truth always brings consolation with it.” To the Vedantin alone is given the consolation of knowing that he combines truth, beauty and goodness in his proclamation of the great Vedic Truth of *Tat-tvam-asi* (That thou art) and of the Vedic principle of renunciation (*Tyaga*) which can alone lead to the perceptive realisation of it. These truths are the foundation of the principle and aim of “the solidarity of man,” determining the eternal structure of Hindu Society. Hence, also, the blessed Bhagavan lays reiterated emphasis—in Chapter III of the Gita—on the practice of *Loka-sangraha* (the solidarity of the universe through the acceptance and practice of *Svadharm*) in his exhortation to the enlightened conscience of the Vidvan,—of him who is instructed in the doctrine of the Veda. The doctrine of Karma is inseparably and fruitfully associated with the principle of the “solidarity of man” and even of the solidarity of the entire universe of living souls (*Jivas*) as the social aim of the Hindu race.

THE WAY OF THE WORD.

BY

Eric Hammond.

From age to age the world has been inspired and stirred by scriptures exquisite alike in conception and expression ; scriptures which, nevertheless, can be traced to no acknowledged authorship among men. The noble hearts that thought them, that travailed, sometimes sorely and sorrowfully in bringing them forth ; the wise heads that gave them shape ; the thrilling tongues that spoke them ; the persuasive lips through which they found passage ; the facile fingers that prompted the instruments by which they were immortalised ; above all, the selfless lives that put them into vital practice ;—all these remain unrecognised and unrecognisable. No one name is emblazoned on the binding of the book in which they are enshrined. God sent His message to mankind. The receiver and moulder of the message hailed it reverently, manipulated it aided by faith and prayer, but never for one little moment, dreamed of stamping his own signature at its foot. It was, for him, enough and more than enough, to have been the chosen vehicle through whose agency the divine stream of grace gathered and flowed onward in a strength which increased rather than diminished as centuries

dawned and centuries disappeared. Like birds of the air, these elect souls fulfilled with music, sang "because they must." For them the holy order was an imperative, supreme command. The sacred fire that burned within them brought into play all the finest and fairest notes which the human compass contained; notes whose vibration is, like life, eternal; and, like love, universal.

So, the very chord of a gospel, the supreme psalm of some glad tidings of great helpfulness and joy, resounded through the atmosphere of this world while it was yet young, and still sounds in our ears to-day. We hearken to the melodious message, and, as we listen, we hear also the replying response of our hearts beating with it in harmonious unison. Its appeal is direct and definite, unhindered by any deterring factor of merely man's invention. The Word, spiritually articulate, is vocalised by human agency, but that agency, sanctified and devoted, has refrained from proclaiming, in any way, its own immediate movement. The author, or authors, have abided content in their assurance that the Voice of God has made itself audible, while the work of their voices passed unmentioned, possibly even unheeded. No record of their names or habitations has filled a single line in the archives of mundane doings. No disciple, however alert, however keen, can determine by whose service the Upanishads launched their purposeful plan of The Way upon the ocean of the earth. Many a pregnant passage of the scriptures of the West cannot be acclaimed as emanating from this saint or from that. The great intrinsic worth to the world of such work, divinely bestowed, unattributable to the influence of any person in the flesh, owes its value and its continuing utility, to the essential fact of its anonymity. It is untainted by touch of time; it stays untroubled by all chances of causation. For it our gratitude is immeasurable. Through it, seekers and speakers have, from century to century, been encouraged to proceed. From it the Guru and the Chela have drawn much of the mighty power which has given them their impulse and led them towards their attainment.

All this is certain; but it is equally certain that some of the finest spiritual forces that have moved the children of men godward, have been incarnate souls whose earth-names are cherished, whose birth-places are recorded and reverently visited, whose words were spoken with all the sweetness and strength of sanctity. Such souls, such saints, such embodied impressions of the supernal spirit, may have imbibed much of their fitness and their fulness from those sources to which we have referred, or, in their turn, they may have been so immediately impelled by the

spirit itself, as to bring upon the world some of the very atmosphere of the Most Holy Place. For them, nevertheless, circumstances were altogether and entirely different. Their environment and their surroundings obliged those around them and about them to acknowledge their presence and to pay obeisance to them as seers of the unseen. These special manifestations were evident and obvious, in order that people of their generation should be without excuse or doubt concerning the manner of their entrance upon this plane, their attitude towards it, the length of their sojourn here, or their express explanation of The Word as revealed to them. History, then, relates the "life" of Gautama the Buddha. Nor can history fail to note the coming and the going of Sri Ramakrishna. We are informed in black and white of all the outstanding features of his dwelling among men, of his wonderful words, of his immense influence. We are, again, at no loss to find in the chapters of our time an accurate account of Swami Vivekananda's every important movement. From infancy onward his steps may be faithfully followed. His sermons and orations are readily obtainable, verified by personal hearers. More, his disciples have set on record his most intimate and illuminating conversations. Many among us, indeed, have seen him face to face; met him as friend to friend; held his strong, kind hand in ours; been strengthened, as soul to soul, by the mere fact of his chivalrous presence. Many more, without the high privilege of claiming all this, know him well because of his teaching, since that has spread far and wide. Emphasised in most adequate English, in perfect phrasing, the Vedantic philosophy was presented by Swami Vivekananda as it had never been presented before. He gave the ancient religion of India a new lease of life. Its breath, reviving, revived the land in which he made his advent and, journeying with him to the Western sphere of the Empire and to America, endowed them also. Were he in this life to-day he would rejoice because the psalm that he sung found listeners and singers; because the faith with which he was fulfilled found hearts eagerly ready for its acceptance. His mission met with a success whose width and depth cannot be precisely tabulated, for it has permeated the preachers of many pulpits and many platforms representing, apparently, varying creeds. It may be that, as yet, some teachers of his teaching do not and cannot claim him as the apostle of their choice. Men often refresh themselves from a stream whose source is out of their cognisance. This much is sure concerning him, that, to him, name and fame were as dust in the balance when weighed against the majesty and the necessity of the message he came to give. That message reverberates, as we have noted, from pulpit and from platform.

Through Vivekananda the exquisite trinity of love and faith and hope have blossomed and are bounteously bearing fruit. The Word cannot return void into its Author, "Flee unto Him for shelter with all thy being" said the Blessed Lord; "By His grace thou shalt obtain supreme peace, the ever-lasting dwelling-place."

THE ECHOES OF THE TEACHINGS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

BY

Dr. M. C. Nanjunda Rao.

Sivaji and Afzul Khan.

(Continued from page 125.)

As regards the events connected with the death of Afzul Khan, said Swamiji, it is rather difficult to say at this distance of time what exactly is the truth, as the various accounts given by the Mahratta and Mahomedan chroniclers of the period are so conflicting and contrary to each other. These chroniclers have indented upon their own imagination, each in his own way and according to his own bias. Mahomedan historians whom Grant Duff and other English historians blindly follow, have charged Sivaji with treachery* but the Mahratta chroniclers both Sabhasada and Chitnis have shown that Sivaji acted purely in self-defence and under the guidance of Mother Bhavani, in this particular instance. To understand the whole situation and judge the events that happened in their proper light a certain amount of intuition and faith are necessary, and a brief description of the various events that led to this marvellous deed of Sivaji is of utmost importance in throwing a flood of light on the character and conduct of the great patriot.

The real trouble with Bijapur arose after the capture of Kalyan after a severe fight by the Mahrattas under Abaji Sandev. The news of the victory was brought to Sivaji and Sivaji showed the usual clemency that always characterised his conduct after victory. The captives were of course deprived of their arms and their horses but their lives were spared and they were given enough of grain and

* Mrs. Besant in her admirable little book recently published viz., 'India—A Nation,' a book that ought to be read by every College Student and other young men—says "The story of Sivaji's courage and far seeing genius, of the Mahratta confederacy which was the outcome of his thought should be read in Mr. Justice Ranade's book. The prejudiced English reports should be disregarded, for the Mahrattas are the people most feared and therefore most hated by our Anglo-Indians."

money to support them on their way to Bijapur. The commander of Kalyan, Mullana Ahmed was treated with the greatest respect and sent back to Bijapur with honours. In this connection it would be interesting to note a nice incident which has brought to light, the great regard and solicitude which Sivaji entertained for the protection of honour and welfare of women, and which remained a bright spot in his character throughout his life. At the siege of Kalyan, Abaji Sandev had captured a very handsome girl, the daughter-in-law of Mullana Ahmed, the Governor of Kalyan, and thinking that he would be greatly honoured and rewarded by Sivaji, he presented the girl to Sivaji. Sivaji was struck by her beauty and he was only twenty-nine years of age at the time, and yet he said: "If my mother had had your beauty, how happy would it have been! I too should have looked handsome," so saying, he treated the girl as his own daughter, gave her clothes and other gifts and sent her safely to her own home at Bijapur. Not only this but on many other occasions he had warned his soldiers and leaders never to molest women, children, old people and ryots, particularly the women whose honour he always strove to guard with a parental affection. It must be said to the credit of Sivaji that even during those wild times, he knew no other women than his own lawful wedded wives.

The seizure of Kalyan roused the authorities at Bijapur and they brought pressure to bear upon Sivaji through his father, Shaji. The King of Bijapur, Ali Adil Shah wrote to Shaji then in Karnatic, saying "Your son Siva has caused disorders and plundered our dominion and forts. We have not taken notice of it in view of your good services but you should make him desist from such insolence." Shaji replied, "I have renounced this bad son and his mother. Your Majesty may well devise some remedy to teach him a lesson." But nothing he urged could convince Ali Adil Shah of his innocence and being enraged at his supposed contumacy, he decided to punish him. So Shaji was recalled from his Jagir in the Karnatic and brought to Bijapur having been treacherously seized by one Bajee Ghorpuray at an entertainment given to Shaji and thrown into a stone dungeon the door of which was built up except a small opening and he was told that if within a certain period, his son Sivaji did not submit, the aperture would for ever be closed.

Sivaji, when he heard of the imprisonment and danger which threatened his father, is said to have entertained thoughts of submitting; but if he even seriously intended to adopt such a plan, it was overruled as Grant Duff says, by the opinion of his wife Sayee Bai, who represented that he had a better chance of effecting Shaji's liberty maintaining his present powers, than by trusting to the mercy of a Government notoriously treacherous. The following conversation between Sivaji and his wife is described in a Persian manuscript found in the library of the India Office and translated by Mr. Jadunath

Sarcas, and is interesting as throwing some light on the humility and wisdom possessed by the wife of Sivaji and how our women were of great help and support in those turbulent times to their husbands. When Sivaji sought her advice, she answered, "Women are foolish. Have I the wisdom to advise you? It would be more proper to ask your officers and experienced servants for the solution of the difficulty. The proverb has it, 'Whatever your innermost mind suggests is conducive to happiness; old and godly men's counsels should be preferred to all other people's; consulting strangers and others is the cause of disgrace and consulting women is the cause of ruin'; therefore it may not be well to follow my advice. Woman's brain is lighter than everything else." Sivaji replied, "It is so indeed, but there are women and *women*. Faithful wives are the mainstay of homes, and hence they are competent to give advice. I have asked you as I know you to be wiser than all else. Whatever your wisdom suggests must be the essence of policy." To which Sayee Bai answered, "To my humble mind it appears best for you not to go to Bijapur for any reason at all. Rely on the true aid of Bhavani; all seemingly insoluble difficulties will be removed by Her special Grace." The advice of his wife decided Sivaji's future action. He turned the tables by offering his services to the Mogul Emperor Shah Jehan and the protection of the Emperor was found effective enough to secure Shahji's release from prison.

It is only after this that Sivaji commenced the real conflict with Bijapur power. This conflict brought Sivaji in contact with more powerful Mahratta Jagirdars in the Bijapur service and Sivaji's actions during these years appear to have been to unite these chiefs, as he had united those who lived near his neighbourhood, under his leadership. His offers were, however, declined and one Chandra Row Moray, the most powerful of them, even conspired with one Brahmin Baji Shamraj, who was known to be an unscrupulous hireling of the Bijapur Government, and gave shelter to a party sent from Bijapur with the intention of surprising Sivaji and assassinating him. The plot was discovered and the Bijapur agents were in their turn surprised by Sivaji. As Chandra Row Moray could not be reconciled to the view of Sivaji, he was assassinated by his agents, and this led to the conquest of Javli, which opened the way to further conquests ending in the submission of most of these principal Jagirdars to the influence of Sivaji.

These successes brought matters to a crisis and the Bijapur authorities resolved to make a supreme effort. A grand durbar was held and the King of Bijapur resolved to send an overwhelming force under his ablest Pathan General, Afzul Khan. This Afzul Khan is said to have brought about the untimely death of Sivaji's elder brother Sambaji in the Karnatic and was an implacable enemy of Shaji and Sivaji. He had ostentatiously undertaken in open Durbar

to capture the mountain rat—as he called Sivaji, dead or alive. The King of Bijapur presented Afzul Khan with costly clothes, jewels, elephants, horses and immense treasure and having commended his valorous spirit he gave him a retinue of 12,000 horses and 10,000 infantry. Afzul Khan proudly marched at the head of this army and reached Tuljapur. Here he broke to pieces the idol of Sri Bhavani, the tutelary deity of Sivaji's family, and ground the pieces to dust. Thence he proceeded to Pandharpur, broke the image of Vitoba, killed cows within the shrine and polluted it. Thence he went on to Wai. His march therefore had all the appearance of a religious war and mutually excited the worst passions on both sides. It was a struggle of life and death to the victor or the vanquished. Sivaji and his councillors perceived the gravity of the situation. Tanaji Malusray had been sent to find out the movements of the Bijapur army under Afzul Khan and bring the news. He had not returned. On all such grave, critical occasions as was his wont, Sivaji invoked the guidance of his Goddess Bhavani but no reply was vouchsafed to him. To quote from Colonel Meadows Taylor's description of this event in his historical novel *Tara*, "Sivaji once in his life grew weary and a shadow of gloom settled on his countenance." With this heavy heart he went to his mother Jija Bai for solace and consolation. She met him at the threshold of the door and with her usual manner, passed her hands over his face and neck, kissing the tips of her fingers, while bowing low, Sivaji touched both her feet, then his own eyes and forehead.

"Is Tanaji arrived my son," she asked, "that thou hast broken the reception so early?"

"No mother," he said, "No, there is no news and that vexes me," and both went in. The mother sat on a mattress and Sivaji lay down resting his head on the lap of the mother and said "Mother, hast thou been with the Goddess to-day? To me she is dim and mournful; I ask my heart of her designs but there comes no answer. Is her favour gone from us?"

"Who can tell Her purposes, my Life?" she replied. "We are only Her instruments, O, fail not in heart. If there be troubles, should we not meet them? If She bid us suffer, shall we not suffer? But O fail not, doubt not, remember your father doubted and failed, and what came of it but weary imprisonment, fine, pain, shame and failure? O, not so my son, better thou wast dead and I with thee than to doubt and fail."

"The trial will be heavy, mother," he replied, "Here we are safe and I fear not for thee; but for the rest, the cause is hopeless and that is what vexes me. Years of stratagem and arrangement are gone with man's death, and all we have planned is known."

"And, if it be known, my son, dost thou fear?" she exclaimed. "I am only a woman and the priests will tell thee not to trust a woman's

thoughts or designs. I tell thee I am glad, I rejoice that a trial has come to thee. One hour such as thou passed now with thine own heart to speak to thee is worth more to the cause than a thousand priests or a lakh of swordsmen; I tell thee I am glad: for such things only can teach thee to trust thyself, and not to look to others." "And thee, Mother," he said smiling. "No, no, not to me. No, not to me, except when the Goddess speaks by my mouth," she replied quickly "I am but a woman else, fearful of thee, my son, fearful of the bullet, the sword, the lance, the wild fray of the battle, fearful of—"

"Nay, Mother," he cried sitting up and interrupting her, "not of the sword or the battle; there I am safe, there I fear not. Were I but there now, this heaviness at my heart would pass away. 'Har, Har, Mahadev,' the cry, the shout rings in my ears and urges on. Then there is no time for thought, as now in this silence."

"And it shall ring again, my son," she replied, "Fear not, doubt not, only act, that is all. Oh Mother, Oh Holy Mother," she cried standing up and lifting her joined hands towards the deep blue sky, "Come thence, come from the sky into Thy daughter's heart, teach me what to say, how to direct him or direct him Thyself. Oh, Mother, we do all for thy name and land, and for the faith so long degraded, let us not fail or be shamed."

After this she went into the temple, watched alone and prayed; then returned and said reverently, "The Mother is in sorrow herself and needs comfort. No matter, I will entreat Her."

"Surely She hath heard already," replied her son, after another pause, "for my soul is better for thy words—stronger, mother. I see how it will be. I will only say we must work and work for ourselves. If my people will only trust me, yes mother, if they only trust me, we shall have victory and I will not disappoint them or you."

"Now, a thousand blessings on thee, Sivaji Bhonsle, for those words," cried his mother passing her hands over his head. "I have no fear now—none. Go to the Katha; tell them that their time is come and when you cry 'Har, Har, Mahadev,' each shout of theirs will echo the death-cry of a thousand infidels," so saying she went in.

He watched her intently as she left him and disappeared behind a curtain. An expression of triumph lit up his large dark eyes and expressive features. "She said I must act for myself," he cried aloud, "Yes mother, I will act for thee first and then for the people and there shall be no idle words again, only 'Har, Har, Mahadev' when the fire is on the hills."

The cause of the depression of spirits and Mother Bhavani herself being in sorrow as said by Sivaji's mother—as you will see below, was due to the destruction of the great Bhavani's Temple at Thuljapur and the slaughter of many cows there.

Sivaji had ordered a Katha, and as was already said, all knew, when this took place, that it was a prelude to some great act or an expedition. All had assembled on the mountain and just then a single horseman came breathlessly riding and entered the pandal arranged for the assembly, and when he came to light all recognised Tanaji Mulsray. Sivaji, who was so anxiously awaiting his return, asked what news he had brought.

"Of sorrow, yet of joy, my prince," replied Mulsray, disengaging himself. "I heard the news at Jutt and I made a vow which only that altar can clean me of, that I would not sit and rest till I had told it to you and the people. Rise all ye," he shouted, "and listen to my words."

"Listen," he continued, "O beloved prince and people, we have fallen upon evil days, for the Goddess, our Mother, has been insulted, and Her temple at Thuljapur desecrated. Yes," he continued, lifting up his hand to stay the cry which was about to break out, "Afzul Khan has cast down the image of Thulja Mata, plundered the temple of its wealth, slain the Brahmins and sprinkled the blood of sacred cows over the shrine; and now the altar there and the Mother are my witness that I have told this grief to ye only."

Then burst forth a strange cry, a blending of individual cries of grief or revenge, into one common roar from those thousands which reverberated through the whole mountain, which at a motion of the hand of the Prince once more became still.

"I thought the Holy Mother was in sorrow," he said, "for She has hidden Her face from me these many days, and my mother too sought Her but in vain. And now, we know the reason. O my people shall it be so? Shall the Mother's temple be desolate? Not while Sivaji Bhonsle lives and ye live! Rather we died in honour than lived to be pointed as cowards, while She is unrevenged! Listen," he continued, as he took up the sword called Bhavani lying at his feet, "This ye all know, is named after the Mother and see!" He drew it from the scabbard, "She hath a light and a lovely face, but it must be dimmed in Moslem blood, let her drink it freely, so I swear, and so ye will answer to my cry Har, Har, Mahadev."

Not one of all that assembly who wore a sword was there that did not draw and wave it as his chieftain had done, and cried "Har, Har, Mahadev."

After the assembly broke up Sivaji had a long talk with Mulsray and when he heard all the details about the composition of the large army that was marching under Afzul Khan and the details of the sack of Thuljapur, it was more than evident to Sivaji, that to attempt to oppose Afzul Khan in the field with the men about him would be madness; but he might be drawn on with specious promises of

sub-mission into wilds where his cavalry and his artillery would be useless and in those jungles the men then present would be ample against ten thousand Mahomedan Infantry.

Thus Sivaji resolved to meet his great antagonist on a spot carefully chosen by himself and he kept his own counsel and took all care and caution making all necessary arrangements to meet all contingencies. Afzul Khan also, on the other hand, proud in the possession of the large army that he was leading and certain that Sivaji would not stand up against him in the field, was intent upon one subject only, namely, to bring out Sivaji from the shelter of his forts and, if possible, to capture him in triumph to Bijapur and thus avoid all the perils of a long campaign in a hilly country.

Apparently each was anxious to surprise and capture the other's person, for both knew that in Eastern warfare, the fall of the general leading the army too often determined or greatly influenced the result of the fight."

(To be continued.)

THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN OUR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS INTERPRETED BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.*

BY

Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, M.R.C.S. & L.R.C.P.

Full fifty-three human years have passed away since the birth of a powerful personality, destined to make his name eternal in the annals of our country. Looking back into the vista of years that had elapsed since the mortal remains of him, whom the world knew as Swami Vivekananda, have been laid to rest, one can see and feel the new spirit that has arisen amidst us. Short as was his life, his dynamic utterances are developing greater force as years roll on. For prophetic words are seldom uttered in vain. They embody eternal truths restated for the benefit of changing epochs of humanity in language suitable for the occasion. That Swami Vivekananda was a man of the hour needs no proof. Thoroughly imbued with the culture of the West, he drank deep at the fountain of spiritual knowledge at the feet of one who was a living symbol of God-realisation. Contact with a divine mind brought out the latent powers inherent in him and solved once for all the doubts that were lingering in his mind regarding the so-called unknown. The agnostic, the Brahmo, and

* Lecture delivered at the 54th Birthday Celebration of Swami Vivekananda on the 80th January, 1916, at the Ramakrishna Home premises, Mylapore, Madras.

the reformer have got merged in the sea of Vedanta and ever afterwards became the cleverest exponent of the subtle philosophy. It was he that proclaimed to the nation in no unmistakable terms that religion alone, of all the forces that exist can guide us and give us the strength to fight towards our goal. As a patriot of the first rank no one can deny the sincerity of his convictions, nor can any question the methods he employed towards attaining his ends. His religion was a living force with him and guided his movements with unflinching steps.

The evolution of Indian culture from time immemorial has always been on the lines of the spiritual development. Even in its heyday of power, the Hindu race has always exhibited a synthesis which is quite unique in the history of nations. Political power came on the heels of spiritual development. It was the heart that was moved before power. The birth of Buddha shed a benign lustre of unparalleled love and fellowship that it made the empire of Asoka possible. Imperial nations have yet to learn the key of the Imperialism of the Asokan era. It was not the edicts nor the commandments of an emperor sustaining his prestige with hosts of men armed to the teeth with destructive weapons, but it was the genuine love that went forth from the hearts of a sovereign who felt his subjects' sorrows and joys as his own. Says Asoka in an edict: "It is true that the prevalence of essential virtues differs in different sects. But there is a common basis, and that is gentleness and moderation in language. Thus one should not exalt one's own sect and decry the others; one should not deprecate them without cause, but should render them on every occasion the honour which they deserve. Striving thus, one promotes the welfare of his own sect while serving others." The power born of love was his and the solidarity of the empire lasted only so long as the power of the spirit that animated it was a living force with the ruler and the ruled. Sympathy—not the sickly pity of the rich for the poor, by which the former gives doles of charity with a self-complacency, unworthy of both the giver and the recipient, but that sympathy which is born of a universal feeling of love wherein the giver feels obliged for the beneficiary for having given him an opportunity of exercising his charity on him—such sympathy which is beyond all considerations was the cause of the unprecedented glory. Selfishness was purified by a whole religious impulse into selflessness and where self-sacrifice was the rule with the best in society, that society always prospered. Coming to later times the Mahomedan Akbar demonstrated the force of the religion of love in a powerful way. The glory of Akbar did not consist in the number of wars he waged, nor yet in the number of countries he brought under subjection, but in the loving toleration of a deep-rooted religious instinct which solved for him the much-debated question of the Hindu-Mahomedan problem. He solved the social and the political problems of his time in a way that no one

has attempted to do before or after his time. Freed from the fanaticism of Islam and guided by the ripe experience and sober wisdom of good counsellors, his heart was open to good and benign influences. The power of the spirit mastered that of the brute, combining in him the best of the Mahomedan and the Hindu. No wonder he became an ideal king and the age of Akbar has left an indelible page in the history of our country.

The rise of the Sikh power was a demonstration of the power of religion. The tenets of their faith made them what they were. The moment they fought the spiritual force underlying religion, the voice of the Guru Nanak and Guru Govind faded in the dim past and political adventurers devoid of all spirituality led the forces towards mere material aggression and the result was annihilation. The short-lived Maharatta confederacy which at one time threatened to attain to supreme power in our land died a natural death when the spiritual power that animated the earlier heroes failed to have any effect on the later ones. Selfishness and mean strife put an end to its glory with the disappearance of an ideal other than exploitation and plunder.

Such have been some of the vicissitudes of our society as we learn from modern histories written on the subject. Whatever has been the basic principle of success in any other climate or race, with us, it has always been the success of spirit over matter. As long as matter was in tune with the spirit and was guided by it, wordly success was lasting and beneficial. Where spiritual ideals were forgotten, degeneration had invariably set in as surely as night follows day. This is the lesson of our history. Power without culture is barren in its results, and culture has always been the result of religion. Throughout all civilisations that have survived the onslaught of time, the motive force for culture has been religion. Artistic talent found its way in the production of tombs, temples and mosques, and in hymns to Gods and Goddesses. Sciences like astronomy and geometry were cultivated for religious purposes. Culture has been the medium for truth—for salvation.

The survival of Hindu civilisation and culture in spite of the loss of political independence denotes an underlying vigour of this religion. Foreign invasions have not affected our culture very much. On many occasions they have intensified it, and their cultures have incorporated in ours. The Greeks, the Parthians, the Scythians and the Huns established their authority in the early centuries in various parts of India. Sooner or later they were either expelled, or such of those that remained became Hinduised. The Greek Meander, who ruled at Kabul about the 2nd century B.C., became a Buddhist with his name changed into Milinda. His name has been immortalised in a Buddhist work entitled "The questions of Milinda." Kadphises II, a Scythian was a noted Shaivite, and Kanishka was a Buddhist. The Pallavas of Kanchipuram have been the great patrons of Hindu

Religion. The Scythian satraps of Kathiawar were either Brahmans or Buddhists. The Saracen invaders in later times carried from India the knowledge of Indian medicine, arithmetic, algebra and chemistry. Even the bigoted Moslem that settled in India gradually became tempered by Hindu philosophy and culture. Man Sing, Todar Mall, Bir Bal, were the media of Hindu culture through whom the gentle and benevolent force of our religion flowed into Mahomedan administration. Dara, the son of Akbar, had fifty Upanishads translated into Persian. Hindu religion has been one of amity, not of enmity, a universal religion as Swami Vivekananda has called it. The main condition for efficiency in any society is not constant strife but a cessation of it. Strength we must have—not alone the strength of the physique but also physical strength—not alone the predatory or military spirit but the spirit of righteousness and benevolence—the spirit of Dharma.

A nation receives its principle of unity from the utmost depths of its collective life. This principle is nothing if not derived from the fundamental interests of that life,—interests round which the whole history of that nation must have revolved. This true unifying principle for the Indian people must be sought therefore within the sphere of such interests of their life as have created their history. If the bonds of unity does not touch the inmost depths of heart in every unit in the nation, then it is bound to prove a fickle treacherous bond when put to any difficult but usual test. Knowing that the trend of our history has been religious and that the ups and downs of our national life have varied according to the ups and downs of our spiritual vigour, we shall now see the necessity for the revitalisation of the spiritual energy. The national development in India is just face to face with a new force from the West. That India is undergoing a tremendous transition there is not the least doubt. Social reform movements, political congresses and conferences, Sanatana Dharma societies all these are but manifestations of a commotion in society which is affecting it all round. The secular education that we receive has a good deal to do with our development. It is useless to talk of getting rid of the material civilisation of the West. The West has influenced us a good deal in the past and is still influencing us. This is a settled fact. But the question that should concern every thinker should be as to how to utilise this new force. Should it be allowed to supersede the old time-honoured veteran culture of our race and lead to all the results good and bad which are prevailing in Europe to-day? Should the tyranny of wealth take the place of the tyranny of birth? Should expensive luxury take the place of severe simplicity? Should man be a slave of the machine and work all his life for his frock-coat and top-hat and for the flowery exhibits of the housewife's ever-changing head dress and season garments? Or should he be a poverty-stricken physical wreck talking dry logic and speculating on an abstract

philosophy, while his kith and kins are crying for bread? We have enthusiasts of both these cults in our midst, but the truth lies with neither. A calm and dispassionate consideration is necessary to arrive at a right conclusion. The West represents an analytical culture—physical in its effects, critical in its method, material in its results, answering in its intensity to the needs of the physical man. It has tremendous personalities, eminent scientists, whose researches have relieved the misery of thousands, great statesmen whose far-reaching schemes have brought great many lands under their sway, and great philosophers too of the type of Spencer, Huxley, Mill and Bright. Even a Max Muller, a Schopenhauer and a Deussen have grown in the Western atmosphere. The output of human energy has indeed been marvellous. Those of us who desire Western culture in place of the East may have all these results provided they are prepared to render the same sacrifices as the West have done. But it is as well to ponder a little over the achievements of the West and see whether all the labour and enthusiasm devoted by the West have produced the best results. Is it necessary that we should also suffer from all the social and industrial troubles which were confronting Europe before the outbreak of the present deadly war? The degrading chapter of science—its prostitution to unworthy ends is a glaring contrast to its manifold advantages. The war has illustrated that scientific precision can be used as much for purposes of destruction as for purposes of construction. The fierce struggle for power that is raging in Europe to-day has no doubt requisitioned the self-sacrificing energy of all nations concerned. It excites our admiration to see how phalanx after phalanx of armed men march on the heels of one another into a deadly combat—meeting death coolly in the face—all this not for any purposes of their own but for a common ideal—worldly and ephemeral as it may seem. These facts prove only one truth—a power may be used for good or for bad. It all depends on the motive of the user. Fire warms our cold and benumbed limbs and brings back to life a collapsing invalid. It cooks our food, but at the same time in the hands of an unscrupulous man, it destroys houses and burns down beautiful cities to ashes.

It is not so much the power that is of concern but the ideal towards the realising of which the power is exhibited. If the power is for the exploitation of the weak by the strong, if the power is for destroying the manhood of humanity at large, if it is for mere comfort, luxury and all that pertains to the physical needs alone, then that power is bound to be short-lived. History has proved this over and over again. Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Rome have all had their day of glory. Some of their culture—which is the best of their achievements—alone remains and the nation itself has disappeared. A higher ideal than money-making has yet to inspire the Powers of Europe. India must grow the seeds of Indian nationality, and

must develop taking for its growth all the fertilising influences of a foreign culture; but the tree must grow in its nature. It must represent a healthy and living culture essentially Indian, only richer than the rest, for its assimilation of the best in the foreign cultures with which she has to deal. Such must be the type of Indian manhood. A man-making religion, as Swami Vivekananda puts it, is the one that must form the basis of our development. In India religion was never shackled. No one was ever challenged in the selection of the *Ishla-Devala* or his sect, or his preceptor; and religion grew as it grew nowhere else. Society was made the fixed point to allow this infinite variation in religion, and hence it became rigid and immovable. The society's freedom of growth was thus arrested with all the evils arising therefrom. In the West religion became the fixed point and society was allowed a freedom of growth with the result that a splendid social organisation developed while religious ideas did not grow beyond the grossest materialistic conceptions.

The Indian nation has its mission—its mission of conveying to the rest of mankind the power of the spirit that must enliven the power of matter. As Swami says, "The infinite power of the spirit, brought to bear upon matter evolves material development, made to act upon thought evolves intellectuality, and made to act upon Itself makes of man a God." Such a grand conception of life is ours,—a life, in conformity with such an ideal, has been the particular property of our race, and the weary warring world shall after the end of her vain struggles receive the message of glory and happiness from our hands. They are not ripe to be fit recipients of this wisdom. They are yet to grow and learn more of matter to realise the strength of spirit that underlies it. If it is forced on them earlier they will not accept it; and even if they do, it will share the fate of Christianity. The introduction of high ethical ideals among peoples not sufficiently advanced intellectually to receive them does far more harm than good. During the "Middle ages" there was no country in Europe which took such a prominent part in that horrible system of persecution, the Inquisition, as Spain; and there was no country which was so earnestly and sincerely 'Christian' as Spain, but it was at a time when she was not intellectually prepared for the grand ideals of the noble religion preached by Jesus Christ.

(To be continued.)

THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

AT MADRAS.

The 54th Birthday of Sri Swami Vivekananda was celebrated with usual devotion and enthusiasm by his numerous disciples, friends and admirers, ever growing in number, on Sunday, the 30th ultimo, in a spacious pandal specially erected for the occasion at the Ramakrishna Home premises, Brodies Road, Mylapore.

The functions of the day commenced in the morning with Bhajana in which people of all sects, castes and creeds, took part with intense devotion and which lasted till 12 o'clock in the noon. Then about 2,000 poor people were sumptuously fed through the aid and kind co-operation of the generous local public and of the maffassal. In the afternoon, Mr. M. K. Tatacharyar, B.A., of the Public Works Secretariat, entertained his big audience with a *Harikatha Kalakshepam* on *Kuchalopakhyanam* of absorbing interest. At 5-30 P.M., a public meeting was held in the pandal with the Hon'ble Rai Bahadur B. N. Sarma, B.A., B.L., in the chair, when Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., of Srirangam, delivered a stirring and edifying lecture on the "Place of Religion in our National Development as interpreted by Swami Vivekananda," the full text of which we publish elsewhere. The Hon'ble Mr. Sarma in winding up the proceedings of the day expressed his emphatic belief that without religion as its basis the complete regeneration of India could never be properly accomplished. Indian mind gave always ready responses to calls that were religious. He was not one of those, he said, who believed that the present state of the Hindu Society was due to Hindu Religion, but rather it was due to the wrong conception of the Religion of Vedanta prevalent in the popular mind, which was mainly responsible for so much unpractical dreaminess or self-centred coldness found in the Society. Hence the preaching of the true Vedanta of which Swami Vivekananda was the modern prophet, should be disseminated widely. Even the consciousness that we were spiritually great would sustain the nation to a very great extent. "Faith in the Atman will make us believe that we are equal in every respect, at least potentially, to any people however great, on the face of the earth, and we have the power too to manifest that greatness, and we must manifest it." Lastly, he said that money or wealth was necessary for the growth of national life and it should not be shunned. It symbolised power. The defect lay not in the acquisition of wealth, but in its misuse. So he exhorted not to despise wealth but to acquire it to be utilised only for the good of the nation.

The functions of the day was concluded with *Aratrikam* and distribution of *Prasadam*.

AT BANGALORE.

On Thursday, the 27th of January, after the *Tilthi Puja* in the presence of a large gathering, *Prasadam* was distributed to all who were fortunate enough to be present on the auspicious occasion. On the following Sunday, the public celebration was a grand success.

From the early hours of the morning, many loving hands were busy in doing the various little offices, necessary to make the function a success. At about eleven, *Sankirtan* parties began to arrive and the air resounded with the name of the Lord Almighty, who has us all in his merciful keeping. One such party came from Ellegowdanpalayam, a suburb of Bangalore, with a photograph of Swamiji placed on a *Ratham* beautifully and tastefully decorated. These parties were welcomed cordially at the entrance to the Ashrama by Swami Nirmalanandaji, the President of the local branch of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission. This photograph was then placed in a prominent position inside the spacious pandal, and the decorated photographs brought by two other parties supported it on the right and on the left. At about twelve in the noon the feeding of the poor began with great enthusiasm in the premises of the "Chatram" adjoining the Anjaneya Temple, Basavangudi, and lasted on till about half-past three. Over a thousand 'Poor Narayanas' were fed by young men animated by the spirit of true social service. Surely Swamiji must have been present in spirit throughout the whole day. In the afternoon, Sriman Belur Kesava Murti Doss entertained the audience with his *Harikatha*. Gradually, people numbering nearly two thousand began to pour in from all sides, till the spacious pandal was almost full, a prominent feature of the gathering being the presence of about two hundred ladies. At about half-past five, when the pandal was full of eager listeners, Sriman Chenna Kesava Iyengar began his lecture in Kannada. He spoke for about an hour on the import of Swamiji's work for Aryavarttha. Then Brahmasri Pandit D. Narayan Sastri, a prominent representative of the orthodox community, spoke on the reshaping of the entire contents of the Sanatana Dharma by Swamiji to suit the needs of Modern India. Mr. N. N. Murthi followed him with a very interesting paper on "Swami Vivekananda and Modern India." A brief report of the celebration of the anniversaries during the year 1915 was, afterwards, read by Mr. Kunhi Raman.

Finally Mr. M. A. Narayana Iyengar, a staunch friend of the Mission, rose up and read a letter from His Highness the Yuvaraja who therein regretted his inability to be present on the occasion. As usual, His Highness had sent in his subscription of a hundred rupees. After *Arati* and the distribution of *Prasadam* the huge crowd dispersed.

AT THE BELUR MATH.

The *Thithi Puja* or the actual birth day of Sri Swami Vivekananda was observed on Thursday the 27th January. Swamiji's room and the Samadhi Mandir were tastefully decorated. *Homa* and special *puja* for the day were gone through with due solemnity and devotion and the distribution of *Prasadam* was smoothly performed. Songs and festivity continued the live-long day. In spite of its being a week day, quite an unexpectedly large number of devotees attended the festival.

The public celebration, as usual, was on the following Sunday. Preparations had been made on the previous night to offer a hearty reception to the visitors and devotees who came on the occasion. From early morning people began to flock to the Math. Hundreds of boats plied over the sacred waters of the Mother Ganges and brought in from the other bank thousands of men, while again by other routes equal number of men poured in; and before it was noon the whole spacious ground of the Math was swarmed with ten thousands of men. People belonging to different castes and creeds,

took part in the festival. The Swami's room and Samadhi Mandir were beautifully decorated and a big oil painting of his was placed in the midst of arches of ferns and flowers and decked with beautiful garlands in the courtyard; it was very artistic and looked as if quite instinct with life. A party of singers seated themselves before him sang devotional songs in praise of the Divine Mother. The whole Math was alive to the spirit of the day. The splendid sight of feeding the Daridra Narayanas more than four thousands in number sitting in rows on the lawn and being served with sumptuous dinner cannot fail to excite the admiration of anyone who would ponder over the spirit of the occasion and get benefited by the devotional attitude of the workers. It would call back to mind the words of heavenly sweetness that fell from Sri Swamiji's inspired lips, "Give everything and look for no return. Give love, give help, give service, give any little thing you can, but keep out barter. Let us give out of our own bounty just as God gives to us." The import of all this will make a deep impression upon the youths of the country—the future hope of the land—who formed the majority of the vast gathering. It was, indeed, a Vivekananda day.

The gathering began to disperse in the evening and the great crowd gradually melted away as the devotees and admirers left the Math with deafening cheers of 'Sri Guru Maharajji ki jay,' 'Swamiji Maharajji ki jay,' sending a thrill of devotion to the boundless sky.

AT BENARES.

The 54th birthday anniversary of Sri Swami Vivekananda was celebrated on Sunday, the 30th ultimo, with great eclat in the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Benares. The portrait of the Swami was nicely decorated with flowers and ferns and also the hall was tastefully adorned on the occasion. The attendance of the guests and the poor was much above the average. The guests were entertained with *prasada* and music both vocal and instrumental, and with a very appreciative speech on the life and works of the great Swami delivered by Srijiut Kali Prasanna Chatterji, the late Editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. The speaker expatiated on the great Swami's catholic spirit with which he brought home the teachings of his Guru Maharaj to the hearts of the people, both Oriental and Occidental, his versatile genius having mainly contributed to the success of his life's mission. The speaker illustrated his points with several incidents from his life and kept the audience spell-bound with eloquence and power of illustration.

The special feature of the day was the feeding of the poor whom the Swami used to call his "Daridra Narayanas." They numbered about a thousand and were treated to a sumptuous dinner given on the occasion by the *Bhaktas* and admirers of the Great Swami.

The function of the day terminated with *Bhajanam*, *Aratrikam* and the distribution of *Prasadam*.

AT QUILON.

The 54th birthday anniversary of Srimat Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at the "Prabuddha Kerala" Office, Quilon, on Sunday, the 30th January, with more than its usual grandeur and significance this year, by the local "Vedanta Society." The front yard and the hall were tastefully decorated with garlands, flags, pictures and evergreen, and the nice photos of Sri Guru Maharaj and

Swamiji, which were placed at the eastern end of the hall too, were very beautifully decorated with plenty of flowers and garlands. The *Bhajana* procession arrived at 7 A.M. and *Sankeertanam* continued for an hour. This was followed by a meeting, presided over by M.R.Ry. K. Padmanabhan Thampi, B.A., B.L., Senior District Superintendent of Police. There were present not only a large crowd but also almost all the officials, vakils, landlords and merchants. The programme began with an English lecture on "The Religion of the Day" by K. Raman Menon. Then followed another lecture in Malayalam on "The Life and Teachings of Swami Vivekananda" by P. Velu Pillai. The President's address on Swami Vivekananda and his mission brought the morning functions to a close. In the noon, about 2,000 poor men, women and children were sumptuously fed. The evening functions began with *Harikatha* by Pandit Gopala Sastri and terminated at 9-30 P.M. with distribution of *Prasadam*.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, KISHENPUR.

The birthday anniversary of Sri Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at the above ashrama and its school boys were sumptuously fed.

The Ramakrishna Ashrama has been founded in the village Kishenpur, Rajpur P. O., Dehra-Dun District, U. P., five miles off, towards the north, on the road to Mussoori. Under the auspices of the above Ashrama, a vernacular school has been started, where a few young boys are taught under the care of a teacher.

AT SIVAGANGA

RAMAKRISHNA VIVEKANANDA VEDANTA SANGHAM.

The *Janma Tithi* of Sri Swami Vivekananda was celebrated on the 27th January. In the morning there were the chanting of the Taittiriya Upanishad and the Vivekananda *Panchakam*, *Aratrikam* and the distribution of *Prasad*. In the evening about 500 poor people of the depressed classes were fed. 17 poor persons were clothed. A short lecture on the "Life of Swamiji" and *Bhajanam* in the night concluded the proceedings of the day.

On the next Sunday the public celebration was conducted on a very grand scale. The morning was spent in *Bhajanam* and *Aradhanam*, the latter consisted of readings from various Scriptures and *Tevaram*. In the forenoon there was a Tamil lecture on the "Glory of Ramanama" by Brahmasri Sasi Ramaiyar Avergal. From 2 P.M. to 4 P.M. there was *Bhajanam* again. At 4-30 P.M., a public meeting was held under the Presidentship of M.R.Ry. R. Gopala Row Avergal, M.A., B.L., Sub-Judge of Sivaganga. Lectures on the life career of the Swami were delivered in English and Tamil by Messrs. R. Lakshmana Aiyangar and P. S. Ramaswami Aiyar, pleaders. The President wound up the proceedings with an instructive lecture on some aspects of Swami Vivekananda's teachings and work.

AT OTHER CENTRES.

We have received many reports of the Birthday Celebration of Sri Swamiji, from the different centres of the Ramakrishna Mission in India and abroad, and also from the numerous Vivekananda Societies sprinkled all over the country, some of which we shall publish in our next issue.

GENERAL NEWS.

The President of the Ramakrishna Mission Brotherhood (Belur Math), and of the Vedanta movement all over the world, has asked Swami Prakashananda to succeed the deceased Swami Trigunatita as the spiritual head of the Hindu Temple (San Francisco Vedanta Society). The latter has been advised to immediately take charge of the services and other functions of the Temple, to superintend the management of the "Voice of Freedom," and also to try to unite all the local centres of the Vedanta movement. Thus instructed, the Swami has already commenced giving lectures at the Hindu Temple on Sunday evenings, and is trying his best to merge the Pacific Vedanta Centre and S. F. Vedanta Society. This consolidation and establishment of a bigger and stronger Vedanta Society, by uniting and bringing together all the scattered forces, will bring about a new era in the history of the Vedanta movement on the Pacific Coast. Swami Prakashananda takes this opportunity to thank on behalf of the Brotherhood all those who have been instrumental in upholding the cause of Vedanta, and requests all interested in the spread of the broad and universal teachings of Vedanta to join hands by sinking their differences and help him build up this broad and strong organisation.—*Voice of Freedom*.

The Eighty-first Birthday of BHAGAVAN SRI RAMAKRISHNA will be celebrated at the Ramakrishna Home, Brodies Road, Mylapore, Madras, on the 12th March 1916.

PROGRAMME.

1. Bhajana ... 8-30 to 11 a.m.
2. Feeding of the Poor ... 9-30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
3. Harikatha—"NAKULOPAKHYANAM."
By M.R.Ry. M. K. Talacharya
Avergal, B.A. ... 2-30 to 5 p.m.
4. Lecture on "THE MESSAGE OF SRI
RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA"—
By M.R.Ry. V. C. Seshachariar
Avergal, B.A., B.L. ... 5-30 p.m.

॥ द्वितीयोऽध्यायः ॥

PART SECOND.

॥ चतुर्थी वल्ली ॥

CHAPTER IV.

पराञ्चि खानि व्यतृणत्स्वयम्भूस्तस्मात्पराङ्पश्यति नान्तरात्मन् ।
कश्चिद्धीरः प्रत्यगात्मानमैक्षदावृत्तं चक्षुरमृतत्वमिच्छन् ॥ १ ॥

स्वयम्भूः the self-existent (God) खानि the senses (*lit.* openings) पराञ्चि going outwards व्यतृणत् (so) created with defects, punished, तस्मात् therefore पराङ् the external पश्यति sees न अन्तरात्मन् not the internal self. कश्चित् some धीरः wise man अमृतत्वं immortality इच्छन् desiring आवृत्तचक्षुः with his eyes turned (inside) प्रत्यगात्मानं the inner self ऐक्षत् saw (sees.)

The self-existent has rendered the senses (so) defective that they go outward, and hence man sees the external and not the internal self. (Only perchance) some wise man desirous of immortality turns his eyes in and beholds the inner Atman.

[Turns his eyes in—Here the eyes are metaphorically spoken of for all the senses.]

पराचः कामाननुयन्ति बालास्ते मृत्योर्यन्ति विततस्य पाशम् ।
अथ धीरा अमृतत्वं विदित्वा ध्रुवमध्रुवेऽपि न प्रार्थयन्ते ॥ २ ॥

बालाः children पराचः external कामान् pleasures, अनुयन्ति pursue ते they विततस्य wide-spread मृत्योः of death पाशं snare यन्ति go (fall into). अथ so इह in this world धीराः the wise अध्रुवेषु in the midst of non-eternals ध्रुवं the eternal अमृतत्वं immortality विदित्वा having known न प्रार्थयन्ते do not desire.

Children pursue the external pleasures, (and so) they fall into the snare of the wide-spread death. But the wise do not desire (anything) in this world, having known what is eternally immortal, in the midst of all non-eternals.

[Children—i.e., child-like inexperienced, ignorant souls.

Wide-spread death—Here by 'death' are signified all the changes in life, viz., birth, death, disease, old age, etc.]

येन रूपं रसं गन्धं शब्दान् स्पर्शाश्च मैथुनान् ।
एतेनैव विजानाति किमत्र परिशिष्यते । एतद्वैतत् ॥ ३ ॥

येन एतेन by what रूपं form (light), रसं taste, गन्धं smell, शब्दान् sounds, मैथुनान् sexual स्पर्शा contacts च and विजानाति knows, अत्र in this किं what else परिशिष्यते remains, एतत् this वै verily तत् that (Atman.)

That by which man cognises light, taste, smell, sounds and the sexual contacts ;—what else remains?—and this is verily that (Atman thou hast wanted to know.)

[That by which man cognises etc.—i.e., the pure intelligence which is at the back of all the sense-perceptions and even of the mind.]

स्वप्नान्तं जागरितान्तं चोभौ येनानुपश्यति ।
महान्तं विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥ ४ ॥

स्वप्नान्तं the objects of dream, जागरितान्तं the objects of the waking state च and उभौ both येन by which अनुपश्यति sees (तं that) महान्तं great विभुं the all-pervading (unlimited) आत्मानं the Atman मत्वा having realised धीरः the wise man न शोचति grieves not.

The wise man grieves not, having, realised (that) great, all-pervading Atman through which one perceives all objects in dream as well as in the waking state.

[Through which one perceives etc.—Atman is that pure intelligence which makes us conscious of our sleep, or dream, or the awakened state.]

य इमं मध्वर्दं वेद आत्मानं जीवमन्तिकात् ।
ईशानं भूतभव्यस्य न ततो विजुगुप्सते । एतद्वैतत् ॥ ५ ॥

यः who इमं this मध्वर्दं the enjoyer of honey जीवं the sustainer of life आत्मानं the Atman भूतभव्यस्य of the past and the future ईशानम् the Lord अन्तिकात् very near वेद know. (सः he) ततः therefore न विजुगुप्सते does not fear (lit. does not intend to hide himself.)

He who knows this Atman, ever near, the enjoyer of honey, the sustainer of life and the Lord of the past and the future, hence fears no more. This is verily that.

[Ever near—i.e., within this body, as my very self.

Honey—the consequences of Karma.]

यः पूर्वं तपसो जातमद्भ्यः पूर्वमजायत ।
गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्तं यो भूतेभिर्यपश्यत । एतद्वैतत् ॥ ६ ॥

यः who पूर्वं in the beginning तपसः of knowledge (penance) जातम् born, अद्भ्यः to waters पूर्वम् prior अजायत was born, गुहां in the heart प्रविश्य having entered भूतेभिः with the elements तिष्ठन्तं dwelling (तं him) यः who व्यपश्यत realises (lit. sees well,) (सः ब्रह्म एव परयति he sees verily Brahman.)

He who was born of knowledge in the beginning and born (even) prior to the waters—(one) who sees him as dwelling with the elements, having entered the heart (sees verily Brahman). This is verily that.

[He who was born of knowledge—The reference is of Hiranyagarbha, the Brahma of the Puranas, who is the first manifestation of Brahman, through its tapas, i.e., knowledge. In the Mundakopanishad it is said, तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म, "through tapas Brahman augmented (i.e., manifested in the form of many) and next it explains itself by saying:—यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद्यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः । तस्मादेतद्ब्रह्म नामरूपमन्त्रं जायते ॥ " Of Him Who is omniscient and omni-perceiver, and whose tapas consists of knowledge,—of Him (the Highest Brahman) are born this Brahman (Hiranyagarbha), name, form and matter.

Born prior to waters—By 'water' all the five elements are meant here by implication.

Dwelling with the elements—i.e., dwelling inside the body which is made of the five elements.

NOTE—Brahman in the macrocosmic (*Samashti*) aspect is Hiranyagarbha and in the individualised, finite (*Vyashti*) or microcosmic aspect is the *Jiva*. He who knows Brahman through both of these two aspects of His, knows Him indeed.]

या प्राणेन संभवत्यदिदिद्वतामयी ।

गुहां प्रविश्य तिष्ठन्ती या भूतोभिर्यजायत । एतद्वत् ॥ ७ ॥

या who देवतामयी the soul of Gods, अदिति Aditi (*lit.* one who eats) प्राणेन in the form of Prana संभवति manifests ; या who भूतेभिः with the elements व्यजायत was created गुहां the heart प्रविश्य having entered तिष्ठन्ती existing (तां यः पश्यति स ब्रह्म एव पश्यति he who sees him, sees Brahman indeed.)

The Aditi, the soul of gods, who manifested in the form of Prana and was created with the elements, who dwells having entered the heart,—(he who knows him, knows Brahman indeed). This is verily that.

[Aditi.—Hiranyagarbha is called here Aditi because he is the sole enjoyer of the whole universe.

Prana.—Hiranyagarbha, the cosmic life.]

अरण्योर्निहतो जातवेदा गर्भ इव सुभृतो गर्भिणीभिः ।
दिवे दिव ईड्यो जागृवद्भिर्हविष्मद्भिर्मनुष्येभिरग्निः । एतद्वत् ॥ ८ ॥

गर्भिणीभिः by the pregnant woman सुभृतः well preserved, well nourished, गर्भः foetus इव like, अरण्योः in the two fire-sticks निहितः lodged जातवेदाः Omniscient अग्निः the god of fire, जागृवद्भिः by the awakened मनुष्येभिः by men हविष्मद्भिः by those who offer oblations to the sacrificial fire दिवे दिवे day after day, ईड्यः worshipful (भवति becomes).

Like the foetus well preserved by the pregnant mother, the Omniscient Agni, lodged in the two fire sticks, is worshipped day after day by the awakened men and the sacrificial offerers. This is verily that.

[Lodged in the two fire sticks.—In the Vedic sacrifices, the fire is to be ignited with two specific wooden sticks by rubbing them against each other.

The Vedanta Kesari

“ Let the lion of Vedanta roar.”

“ Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that ‘ I am the Atman.’ ”

—Swami Vivekananda.

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SAYINGS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA.*

Jnana is the realisation of the Atman by the elimination of all phenomena—“*Neti*,” “*Neti*.” By eliminating the phenomena (from the consciousness) through mental analysis (*vichara*) one attains Samadhi and then realises the Atman.

And *Vijnana* means knowing with greater distinction and fullness. Some have only heard of milk, some have but seen it, while others again have tasted it. He who has only heard of it, is the ignorant man ; he who has seen it is the Jnanin ; but he who has tasted it can only be called the Vijnanin, as he alone knows it in its entirety. Having seen God, to have intimate relation with Him, as if He is our very own, our supreme kinsfolk—is what is *Vijnana*.

First, you have to follow “*Neti*,” “*Neti*”: He is not the five elements (and the body); He is not the senses, nor the *manas* (volitional mind), nor the Buddhi (intellect), nor the ego,—He is beyond all the *Tattwas* (material principles). To get up to the roof, you have to leave below all the steps of the staircase, one by one. Assuredly the steps are not the roof. But when you reach the roof, you find the same materials—such as, bricks, lime, mortar, sand, etc.—of which the roof is made, compose the stairs also. What is known as Brahman, the same has become the Jivas and

* Translated from the *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita*, Part II.

the universe—has assumed the form of the twenty-four principles (*Tattwas*). What is known as Atman, has become also the five elements (*Bhutas*). You may ask why the earth is so concrete, if it has come of the Atman. But through His will, everything is possible. Are not flesh and bone made from blood and semen! How the foam in the ocean can become so hard!

THE ETHICAL ASPECT OF THE VEDANTA.

BY

Professor K. Sundararama Iyer, M.A.

PART XII.

KARMA AND THE QUALITIES OF MATTER.

In modern times we give ear only to what are called scientific explanations of phenomena of all kinds. A material effect can have only a material cause or causes, and true knowledge or explanation consists in the statement of such cause or causes. The advance of science in the West has resulted in the acquisition of power and the augmentation of happiness among the nations which have devoted themselves to the advance of "*positive knowledge*" and the organisation of the material resources gained thereby. "Human welfare," says Sir Oliver Lodge, "is the ultimate end and aim of everything we have to do." To this all can, and must, agree. But, how is human welfare to be promoted? Sir Oliver Lodge says:—"Long ago I had a sort of inner suspicion that devotion to art and letters was a waste of time, that even natural beauty was a distraction, that nothing was worthy of serious attention that did not add to positive knowledge." To this the modern mind would only add the *application* of "positive knowledge" and of associated energy to the augmentation of the national dividend and the accumulation of the means of successfully exploiting the rest of the world whenever opportunity offers." But Sir Oliver Lodge adds:—"Fortunately I outgrew this green phase." At the same time he says of the wholesale advocate of the "positive" attitude taken up by the men of the world:—"Theirs is an instinctive and energising and strenuous belief, which has practical results and is not by any means should be despised—as some who profess a broader view are liable to despise it—and yet it is not a permanently satisfying attitude, nor one that will stand the test of time or the stress of trouble." Here are *two* points put forward by the most eminent of living scientists,—first, that the strenuous faith and the unethical, aggressive energy of the modern positivist and man of the world has led to positive results; and second, that it neither permanently satisfies human beings nor is able to maintain itself in times of trouble, despondency, and faltering of heart. Both

these considerations are undoubtedly worth attention as founded on universal experience. The Vedanta doctrine throws abundant light on them,—such light as is worth thoughtful consideration, even from those endowed with the practical temper and positive spirit now dominating the world.

In the first place, we must ask why—even apart from the waste of accumulated results and resources due to the enormous evil of modern wars—"practical results" are *not* attained in *all* cases in spite of devoted endeavours and the most skilful manipulation of resources. An eminent living mathematician has said:—"Nature being a rational cosmos, phenomena are related on the whole in the manner that reason would anticipate." What is the import of the qualification contained in the phrase, "*on the whole*"? Does it mean that "reason" is able to "anticipate" most—but not all—of the inter-related phenomena of the material world? "The well-laid plans of men and mice oft gang agley." Why is there this residuum not accounted for? The answer cannot be that the power and range of human calculation is limited. There is no *reason* why, if it can comprise so much of the whole world within its sphere of calculation, it should not take in all. The only possible reply is that man's intelligence is on its way to the attainment of the stage of perfection when it will no longer feel the liabilities to error or the limitations of its range, but will be enabled to capture the very citadel of truth and knowledge by the perfect, though laborious, exercise of all its faculties,—a claim, however, which—as Sir Oliver Lodge points out—fails to stand "the test of time or the stress of trouble." And herein lies the crux of the whole matter. So long as success attends their efforts in the world, both individuals and communities are found to be persistent and courageous in their efforts both to discover the reign of law and to anticipate the future in the orderly evolution of cosmic phenomena. But the moment calculation fails and misfortunes occur, as they must, then it is that men and communities are apt to climb down and form a humbler estimate of themselves than ever before.

It is with a view to save a situation like this,—to protect the permanent interests of the individual and the race, and to proclaim the truth about nature, man, and God,—that the Vedantin steps in fearlessly with his doctrines of *Vairagya* and humility before a world maddened by egotism and allured to its ruin by the fascinations of the flesh. No such situation as that which is said to confront Germany to-day would have arisen, if she had been able to assimilate the conception of *Vairagya* which lies at the foundation of the doctrine of Karma. The position of Europe, however, to day is not unlike what it was about half a century back. One of the most eminent Christian preachers of that time—Canon H. P. Liddon—spoke as follows of Europe during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71:—"What is the real lesson of the scene of devastation and slaughter

which is absorbing our thoughts and sympathies? Is it not a comment which all can read, written as it is in characters of blood, upon those sunny theories of human perfectibility and progress, by which sometimes commerce, sometimes intellectual culture, sometimes even the polish and refinement of the surface of modern life, were supposed long since to have effected, or almost to have effected, that which the Eternal Christ, as we were told, had failed to work,—a real regeneration, a true and lasting elevation and change in the heart and thought of man?" Canon Liddon goes on to use language which applies with a hundred-fold greater force to the Europe of to-day :—"So we were told, so it already was, or was presently to be ; when lo ! the foremost nations of Europe—foremost as leaders of its thought, foremost as producers of all that embellishes its outward life—feel a glow of the old passionate savagery of barbarous man stirring within them in all its ancient force, and bend the whole power of their cultivated thought and their strenuous will to achieve the largest possible measure of their mutual destruction. And, thus, already commerce has withered away, and intelligence, except so far as it is military or political, is silent, and some of the best treasures of art and literature are either perishing or are menaced with impending destruction, and besides the thousands who are slaughtered on the field of battle, entire populations are threatened with the extremities of want. Ay, and an evil which is even worse than these is beginning to show itself ; men are growing to be indifferent to human suffering, because, forsooth, suffering is on so great a scale that the imagination cannot master it in detail, and national feeling is degraded down to the point at which human life weighs for very little against schemes of military conquest." In what manner does the Vedanta proclaim the need and truth of the principle of *Vairagya*? It teaches that man's intelligence and powers are limited, and that he knows very little of the action—or the results of the action—of the principles of causation to which the phenomena and forces of nature are subject and of their results as influencing the situation of mankind from time to time. If man can understand aright the succession of cause and effect, why are there so many failures of adjustment in the action of individuals and societies? Why do so many institutions fail to meet the expectations formed of them? Why do statesmen and leaders constantly get discredited and have to confess that not only are events too strong for them in the ordinary course of the daily life of nations, but they combine to produce cataclysms and revolutions which no human calculation and foresight are competent to predict or prevent?

The Vedantic doctrine of Karma accounts for both successes and failures. It enables men and societies not only to prepare for the unknown or unknowable future, but enables them to accept calmly the destined course of events on the ground that it is the fruit of the Karma of those who are now brought together to reap what

they have sown in the past. The blessed Bhagavan says in the Gita (III. 23, 24):—

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥
उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।
संकरस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥

"Should I at any time not engage untiringly in activity, men will follow my course, O Partha, in all matters. If I did not engage in the actions (on which the well-being of the worlds depends) these worlds would be destroyed, I should be the author of the intermingling of castes, and (thereby) I should be ruining these creatures (of mine)." The blessed Bhagavan has nothing to gain by engaging in activity, but still is ever active in order to keep all living souls engaged in their activities for their own good and in order that they may not get ruined. He has, therefore, to reward all according to their merits and demerits and thereby to help forward their welfare and progress. Their own work along healthy and beneficial lines of activity is the means by which they bring about everything which promotes the world's well-being and happiness. The blessed Bhagavan helps them both by example and precept, and also bestows on them every blessing which they need in the world. From the above *slokas* we see how anxious He is that all should be happy ; and so whatever is healthy, auspicious, beneficent and good—whatever prevents the world's ruin and conduces to purity and happiness—emanates from His grace and activity. Nothing that is not all this,—nothing that detracts in any wise from the attainment of the highest ideals of excellence,—can be attributed to Him. In explaining to Arjuna how the world is woven in Him like a collection of gems in a string, He makes various statements about Himself the import of which we shall examine in order to explain how Karma's fruits manifest themselves in various forms of service to the denizens of the universe.

"रसोऽहमप्सु" "I am the taste (pure and valuable) in water" (VII. 8). Water is healthy, but also often polluted. It is *ordinarily* healthy, but exceptionally it gets polluted in such a way that diseases become epidemic and even root out entire populations. Both are fruits of Karma. When evil prevails in the world, the Lord's grace has ceased ; the deities who preside over the elements do not fulfil their function of guarding them so as to maintain them healthy and pure. *In its essence*, water is pure and healthy. Only when extraneous matter mingles with it, it becomes impure and spreads disease and pestilence. Men and Governments take ceaseless and laborious precautions, but are unable to prevent the pollution of water. Why do their efforts fail *sometimes*, and not at *other* times? It is not right to attribute plague and cholera to the gathering of large crowds,—for

they only appear at *some* of these gatherings, but not at all. There is a tendency in all men to throw the blame on others while forming a favourable estimate of themselves. This explains why the authorities always blame the people, and the latter ever grumble at the inadequacy of the endeavours of Government, even going so far as to suggest that its calculated policy of selfishness and neglect ever frustrates their own efforts to secure progress and prosperity. The truth, according to the Vedanta, is that, only when the blessed Bhagavan's injunctions for man's ethical guidance are ignored and men act according to their own notions of right and wrong, the elements around us become affected with the germs of disease in a manner imperceptible to us, and in a manner, too, which we cannot guard against by any rationally-guided precautionary measures. There is an intelligent agency behind the perceived phenomena and forces of nature, and that agency works under the blessed Bhagavan's control and fulfils his irresistible and unerring resolve and mandate. It is known collectively as the Devas among Hindus and in the Hindu Pramanas (or authoritative sources of true knowledge). The offerings made to them during the performance of Karmas are the means of propitiating them, and they bestow the blessings of the material world on humanity. They are functionaries whose powers and resources are vested in them by the grace of the Supreme Lord and whose will they carry out in accordance with his unalterable will and eternal laws. The Taittiriya Upanishad (II. 8-1) says :—"भीषास्माद्वातः पवते । भीषोदेति सूर्यः । भीषास्मादग्निश्चेन्द्रश्च । मृत्युर्भावति पंचमः ।" "Through fear of Him (Brahman) the Wind-God (Vayu) blows; through fear (of Him) the Sun-God (Surya) rises; through fear of Him Agni (the fire-God), Indra (the chief or ruler of all Gods) and Mrityu (the God of death) run."

The blessed Bhagavan says—(Gita VII—8, 9, 10)—similarly of all other elements that He is the sound in Akasa (ether)—sound that is "सारभूत" "essentially valuable," as Sri Sankaracharya explains—that He is the fragrant odour in the earth and the effulgence in the Fire; and He sums up with the general statement (VII. 10) "बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम् ।" "Know me, Partha, to be the eternal seed of all beings." The Gita proclaims in trumpet tones how the Supreme Lord works, what forms He assumes, how He blesses all living beings in the universe, and how, through His functionaries, controls all, and impartially and out of the abundance of His grace rewards all according to their deserts as revealed by their Karma.

Some modern minds regard this doctrine of the existence of an intelligent personality behind the elements or phenomena of nature and even of a supreme Deity pervading the manifested universe as a survival of—or even the same as—the "ghost theory" of religion, as a form of what is known as Animism. A French scientific writer speaks of Animism as follows :—"This is nothing more than p"

a me similar to the human me in the breasts of certain beings of the outside world. For the primitive man finds difficulty in allowing that there should be movement and action without will and without knowledge. He imagines that everything is animated by nature; the field of this imaginary life, at first indefinite, then gradually contracts before him in proportion as he observes and reasons to better advantage." And again :—"The worship of the earth, of the stars, of the sun, of the heavens, is the second phase of animism, in which man begins to look higher and higher; he begins to show his contempt for the smaller local gods, though he has not altogether abandoned them." Egotism and conceit can no further go. Science itself has had its revenge. The science of to-day is different from the science of the past. Not only soul exists, but in man at least it survives after death. Sir Oliver Lodge says :—"The soul is that controlling and guiding principle which is responsible for our personal expression and for the construction of the body, under the restrictions of physical condition and ancestry. In its higher development, it includes also feeling, intelligence and will, and is the storehouse of mental experience. The body is its instrument or organ, enabling it to receive and to convey physical impressions, and to affect and be affected by matter and energy." Also, "the thought, the human logos, survives, having undergone this curious experience,—having passed through the interlude or episode of incarnation in matter, having lived a material life on this planet." "The soul is related to the organism in somewhat the same way as the logos is related to the universe; it is that without which it does not exist,—that which vivifies and constructs, or composes and informs, the whole."

Among the world's great religions, Buddhism alone "repudiates both animistic soul and absolutist self" (Rhys Davids). The same author also says,— "There is no attack worth mentioning made by Buddhism on the notion, the impersonal principle of cosmic life and order. . . . But when that cosmic principle is considered not only as world-soul, but as the very soul of Me, the realisation of which was held as the supreme and saving truth,—then the Buddhist joins issue and fights without compromise." There are only *skandhas* (aggregates or groups of physical and mental states or qualities) five in number—corporeality, sensation, perception, differentiation, and consciousness. There is no permanent personality or individuality. Everything in the universe is impermanent and must finally be dissolved, leaving not a rack behind. There is no distinction between *dharma* and *dharmi* (character and the individual characterised). We have only changing forms, and no entity which endures while undergoing the transformations in succession.

The Vedic doctrine of Karma makes war on this Buddhist doctrine of Nihilism. Karma is the means by which the living self

determines his own fate and the fate of the universe. Karma is the instrument for securing the manifestation of the divine blessing throughout the phenomenal world for maintaining the normal or healthy condition of the elements and forces of nature, and thereby enabling all living personalities and entitles to ensure their progressive advance towards the realisation of their destined perfection. The blessed Bhagavan is the universal helper, both as the revealer of the Veda and its law of Dharma and the custodian and distributor of the world's rewards. He performs this last function by maintaining the order of the universe,—manifesting whatever is healthy, beautiful, and true in it so as to reward the faithful, and withdrawing his grace and bounty from it so that the deformities and horrors which nature can assume may impress his creatures and thereby have their influence in leading them into the path of righteousness which is marked out for them by the divine mercy and which is to lead them on to health and joy.

Karma has to take the form ordained by God in order that it might have the *indirect* effect of helping forward the world's well-being. Its *direct* effect is, as we have pointed out in a previous contribution, to help forward the evolution of the individual soul towards the purification of the mind from all egoism and self-aggrandisement so as ultimately to achieve freedom from the bondage of Samsara and the supreme blessing of self-realisation. But no living soul can attain this final goal of existence unless favoured by the conditions of the environment. Karma, as shown above, is *also* the means to the gaining of these favouring external conditions. These favouring conditions are of various kinds,—physical, political, economic, etc. The blessed Bhagavan, while mentioning (in the various slokas of Chapter VII of the Gita already quoted by us) the material conditions needed for their welfare, does not fail to enlighten us regarding the social conditions also needed for the same. In the self-same context, Sri Krishna says (VII-11):—

बलं बलवतां चाहं कामरागविवर्जितम् ।

धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥

“I am the strength of the strong, which is free from the thirst (to acquire fresh possessions) and the fond attachment (to those already on hand); and I am the desire, not inconsistent with the Dharma (inculcated by the sacred teachings,) which exists among all living persons.”

Evidently Sri Krishna here refers to the secular and social well-being which all desire to secure in order to maintain the continuity of the family life and tradition. The Advaitic commentator, Sankarananda Sarasvati, explains भूतेषु “among all living persons,” to mean “वर्णाश्रमिषु” “those who belong to the four Varnas (castes) and Asramas.” Sri Sankaracharya also, evidently has this in view, for he

- explains the word “अविरुद्धः” “not inconsistent with Dharma” to mean “शास्त्रार्थेनाविरुद्धः” “not inconsistent with the Dharma inculcated by the Sastras.” The general term भूतेषु is not inconsistent with this interpretation, for *all* living souls in the universe must, when the time is ripe, take their birth among the Aryas and have the benefit not only of spiritual training in accordance with the teaching of the Sastras, but also of the secular well-being gained from political and economic conditions, not inconsistent with it. This, too, is the fruit of Karma.

Some are apt to feel that we have attached too much importance to the Sastras and too little to the individual's independent power of reflective thought in determining the influence of man's practical activity on his material and social environment. We invite all such to ponder deeply over the true import of the prevailing utilitarianism of modern Europe as explained by Benedetto Croce, a living philosophical writer of Italy. Signor Croce says :—“Every action, every man has his price; it is all a matter of discovering what the price is. He who seems to place the glory of his country above all other aspirations, although he cannot, for example, be corrupted by money, by vanity, or by pleasure, will yet have always in him some weak point that a more expert corrupter will discover or be able to discover; and when the discovery has been made and the suitable transaction has been proposed, the glory of his country will be abandoned, because it has been well compensated for by something else.” If this is where the concrete critical, rational, positive, pragmatic doctrine of modern Europe is to lead us, it were far better that India and the Hindu people at least should remain outside the controlling influence of European civilisation and culture than that the world should lose what it has owed, and will continue to owe—despite its unwillingness to own it,—to the working of the effects of Karma in determining the welfare of the material world. Selfishness and corruption in the heart of man, however well disguised, can never succeed in winning the blessings which the all-knowing and almighty ruler of the universe—who is love and law at the same time—can only bestow as the reward for the merit of unflinching faith in him and loyal obedience to his commands. Whatever blessings man enjoys in any part of the world have only been earned by unswerving compliance to his will in accordance with the unfailing action of the law of Karma. The blessed Bhagavan says :—(Gita, IV. 17).

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥

“For, even about *Karma* (activity ordained by Sastra) much (that is hidden from the view) has to be known; there is also much to know about *Vikarma* (prohibited action); and there is also much to

know about *Akarma* (inaction) ; the truth about *Karma* is hard to know."

While in this sloka ordained Karma, prohibited Karma, and Akarma or inaction are all referred to, at the end it is stated only that the truth about *Karma* is hard to know. This does not mean that the truth about *Vikarma* and *Akarma* can be more easily known. Sri Krishna evidently means that the truth regarding all three is hard to know. How, where, and by what agency the living soul reaps what it sows are all inaccessible to the limited range of our feeble vision. It is more likely than not that we are all in error when we endeavour to trace the relation of cause and effect among the phenomena of the universe. Everywhere we see the rampant egotism which makes men feel assured that they can determine the course of events,—the egotism which disregards the gracious precepts of Heaven and relies blindly for the guidance of life upon the so-called lessons of the past and the equally futile dictates of the laws of thought. Everywhere, also men's visions are so blinded that, while they know full well that there have been many failures of calculation, they can never be certain,—even about what has seemed to answer expectations,—that it corresponds truly to the real, but mysterious, sequence of cause and effect. Here is the unknown mystery of Karma, which the blessed Bhagavan speaks of. If only this mystery were pondered over and its significance grasped, the world will be less afflicted than now with evils of all kinds, physical and social. For, then, men would endeavour to curb their passions and to consult the eternal oracles for the conduct of daily life in a manner to which at present they are utter strangers, and with the result that wisdom and happiness will reign on earth instead of the folly and misery which we see in abundance everywhere and which only serve to expose the futility of trusting the governance of men and societies to the tender mercies of those self-styled statesmen, patriots and rulers whose ineptitude, egotism and selfishness have wrought unutterable havoc to all the best interests of mankind. At the same time, we can have no doubt that Heaven rewards virtue and punishes the wicked, and that all the good and evil in the universe are only to be explained in accordance with the law of Karma,—however ignorant we are, as we are doomed to be, regarding its import and workings.

NEED FOR SANSKRIT STUDY *

BY

Lieut. Colonel His Highness Shri Sewai Maharajadhiraj
Sir Jey Singhji Bahadur Narendra Shiromani Deo,
R. C. S. I., K. C. I. E.,

OF

ALWAR.

ॐ

त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराणस्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
वेत्तासि वेद्यं च परं च धाम त्वया तत् विश्वमनन्तरूपम् ॥
तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायं प्रसादये त्वामहमीश मीड्यम्
पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव ! सोढुम् ॥

In this holy city of Kashi, which has been renowned through many centuries for its high wisdom and culture, is assembled to-day this distinguished gathering, consisting as it does to a large extent of the flowers of our ancient learning, and whose fragrance and aroma of name and fame is spread far and wide over our land. The inherent virtues of such gentlemen have been sung in the great Song-celestial, Bhagavat Gita XVIII 42 :—

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्ति राज्ञवमेव च ।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्म कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥

To them as the heads of our four Varnas, it is my primary duty as a Kshatriya to pay my *abhivadan* and reverence and to ask them to bestow their blessings on the proceedings of the day. Then there are present here leaders of communities and representatives of that part of Arya Varta whose past traditions have been rich in deeds of valour and glory. They represent one-third of India which is being administered by Ruling Princes who in their own spheres are the guardians and protectors of our ancient Dharma, and who are the emblems of :—

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दायकं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् ।

दानं भीष्मरभावश्च चात्र कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥

Bhagavatgita XVIII 43.

To such Brother-Princes as well as to the rest of the distinguished assemblage present to-day, I wish to extend my most cordial and sincere welcome.

* Presidential Address delivered on the 7th February, 1916, in commemoration of the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of the Hindu University at Benares.

Revered Preceptors, Your Highnesses and Gentlemen, the primary object for which we have gathered in this holy city, namely, to partake in the great function of the laying of the foundation stone of our Hindu University has been happily fulfilled, because at the hands of the honored representative of the Sovereign of India the sacred stone has been declared to be well and truly laid. Thus starts another chapter in our history which will bear much interest for the present generation and even greater importance for those coming in the future.

The public gathering which we all witnessed four days ago has perhaps in many ways been one of the most significant that has ever assembled in modern times in India, representing as it did so many different elements of our communities. It is not necessary for me here to deal with the inception of this scheme, because it is probably well known to most of you, but I should like to take advantage of the present opportunity of expressing once more our gratitude to those patriots who have been responsible for working up the proposals, the results of which have borne happy fruits in so far as the commencement has been made, and we are thankful to His Excellency the Viceroy as well as to Sir Harcourt Butler, the late Member for Education in the Government of India, for their sympathies and encouragement due to which the institution has now been put on its legs. If the entire scheme is not exactly as all of us could have wished, I have no doubt there will be possibilities whereby it will grow still more in general popularity and gradually work out its high salvation. As the University grows—and we must make our best efforts to enable it to grow—into a properly organised institution, we may hope that it will not only be a nursery for creating men that will be worthy of our sacred land, but that it will also be an example for other similar institutions in the country to follow.

In connection with the commemoration of this institution four days have been set aside for lectures on different topics and at the kind invitation of the University Committee the one over which it is my good fortune to preside to-day is regarding a subject which, though much to my sorrow, did not form a part of the studies in my early days, yet is one which is very dear to my heart and which I think will play an important role in the regeneration of our land.

A language is principally the means of communicating and perpetuating the ideas of humanity and with the circumstances of the time, it passes through vicissitudes or gives place to others, examples of which we have before us in our histories. From Sanskrit, the language of our land changed into Prakrita and other

dialects and thence to a great extent the official language of the country became Persian and Urdu, which have now given place to English.

The needs of the moment demand that in order to keep pace with the times and to earn a suitable living in the different avenues of life it is necessary to qualify ourselves in the language of the Rulers of the country. The first natural human tendency is to provide oneself with the means that will enable one to earn a livelihood but alongside this we must not forget that it is still more necessary for us not to lose touch with the principal language of our nationality in which are perpetuated the greatest teachings and glories of our Sanatana Dharma. We can no longer afford to neglect the study of the language which was the Deva-Vanee of our ancient Rishis and forefathers, and which, it gives me joy to say, is so well studied even at the present day by many of our religious heads and teachers particularly in this sacred and renowned land of Kashi. The growing tendency, however, nowadays is to style this Deva-Vanee as the dead language. I personally do not like to give it that name but if we must admit that it is the language of ancient days and that it is dead now, upon whom rests the duty of making it once more alive? Friends, it is upon our shoulders that this responsibility rests and on no one else. It is for us to realise the importance of its revival and if any of us have not had the opportunities of learning it ourselves, at any rate to make certain that our future generations shall not be neglected with the study thereof. The influence of modern civilisation in this hard struggle for existence has been so great and there have been so many factors surrounding us on all sides that they cannot help playing an important part in guiding our destinies. India is gradually, I might almost say rapidly, awakening towards the modern idea of nationhood, which to my mind appears to have its basis on political and geographical distinctions. If we are to unite in our efforts towards the ultimate goal of union and good-will, it must not be by submerging our individuality into a heterogenous mass but, on the other hand, it must be by cultivating and perfecting the individual units in order that they may form a harmonious combination. That end can only be attained by marching along the various paths that have been assigned for us by destiny in accordance with the best and highest precepts of our various religions which teach discipline and cultivate character so necessary for meeting the distracting influences of existence. While progressing along with the march of time if we on our part, are to hold our own and be Aryas as Aryas were in the past and if our foundation is to continue to rest on the

bedrock which has survived through so many thousands of years without losing our nationality and originality—and if India is to wake ultimately one day to place itself on a footing of mutual esteem and respect with other nations of the world, it is through Dharma, and Dharma alone, and the proper realisation thereof that we can expect to advance in the right direction. While the various nationalities in the world possess other virtues in varying degrees it can be observed that it is generally one quality in which they excel others. One nation is making rapid progress on commercial lines, a second marches along the path of science, a third excels in political development; while a fourth has made militarism the principal object of its existence, and so on. But, the heart of India through all these rolling centuries, for good or for ill, has chosen the path of Dharma which is our proud heritage and by the study of which even other countries outside India have been able to realise the heights and glories of our ancient civilisation.

If we are some day to soar once again to these lofty regions and to stand in equal comparison with other nations of the world, then while we should be prepared to receive from them the best of what they can give whether it be in the direction of politics, militarism, science or commercial advancement, we must be in a position also to give of what we possess. And what is this that we are in a position to give—nay, what the outside world even to-day is waiting for and of which we feel proud before the world? It is that which is embodied in the all-embracing word 'Dharma' in its highest and broadest sense which includes some of those magnificent philosophies so keenly read even by European philosophers and in connection with which—to quote only one of them—Schopenhaur has said that he found in the study thereof the solace of his life and that they will be the solace of his death. It is in these treasures which are our own in which are embodied the life-sustaining principles where there is no such thing as fear—not only of death, man or other things but not even the fear of God himself. It is this grand Philosophy with respect to the Atman that has been so well expounded in that song of Sri Krishna (*Bhagavatgita* II 23):—

नैनं क्षिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।

न चैनं ब्रह्मदग्धपावो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥

Not fear, but love and love alone is the principal source through which we must deal with the outside world and by the eventual cultivation of which quality we can create an atmosphere which will throw out its radiance and lustre all around us. It is the study of these ancient treasures that will teach toleration for other people's

Ideas and beliefs which will leave no room for the breeding of blind fanaticism or narrow sectarianism and which moreover embraces all true paths of different religions with the same goodwill, and recognises in them as only so many sources of reaching the same goal. It is this Dharma which teaches us how to overcome our selfishness and to breed in its place the grand idea of real self-hood, which sees no distinction between one another—the self-hood which is even higher than brotherhood—for while the latter teaches respect and esteem mutually, the former enjoins upon us to cultivate that love which sees no other but our self in everything surrounding us on all sides; that very self-hood which Madalasa preached to her son when he was yet in his cradle :—

शुद्धोसि बुद्धोसि निरञ्जनोसि संसारमाया परिवर्जितोसि ।

संसारस्वप्नं त्यज मोहनिद्रां मदालसा वाक्यं मुवाच पुत्रं ॥

I can but only briefly touch the merest fringe of this subject to-day, while abler tongues than mine can take you through these store-houses of our treasures and give you a feast in which you can revel not only for hours and days but through years, and perhaps for lifetimes, and to those who are in the happy position of being able to study the original subject themselves it can produce that deep intoxication of knowledge and love where there is nothing else besides the supreme Existence, Intelligence and Bliss. My countrymen! any organised system of education can cultivate the mind, but the mind is a dangerous thing if cultivated without discipline, and it is this particular discipline embodied in Dharma that is so necessary for us in order to make ourselves useful citizens of our country. And how is that Dharma to be obtained and learnt? It can no doubt to some extent be studied through translations, but translations are never the real thing and in order to obtain knowledge at first hand and in its original form, it is necessary to know our religion through the language in which it is embodied. That language is the glorious Deva-Vanee Sanskrit. If we do not make it our business to study this sacred tongue, how will it be possible for us to assume that position where we shall possess the necessary qualification for being able to give our wealth to others? Although translations may help us, if through our fortunes we obtain the right ones—and there is a great danger sometimes to obtain wrong ones, it is not possible to obtain first-hand knowledge through them in the same manner as we can naturally do from the original scriptures; at any rate it is for us to see that our successors hold the key which alone can unlock the door of true knowledge. The vehicle that will convey us in the best manner along the journey to our ultimate destination and which will help us on our path, will be the language

which some call the dead language and which it must be our duty to make a household word of the future.

It is not necessary for me to enlarge on the utility of studying Sanskrit, for it has been well understood and realised in olden times. It is only the modern circumstances which tend to move us in directions which are not altogether within our control that has resulted to some extent in a neglect of its study. Let us then make our best efforts to revive it once more and to sing its praises from one end of Arya Varta to the other as were sung in olden times by Dandin, Patanjali and Vishwanath in the *Kavya Darsha*, *Mahabhashya*, and *Sahitya Darpana*:—

संस्कृतं स्वर्णिमां भाषा शब्दशास्त्रेषु मिश्रिता ।
भाषासु मुख्या मधुरा दिव्या गीर्वाण भारती ॥
अनादिनिधना दिव्या वागुत्सृष्टा स्वयंभुवा ।
आदौ वेदमयी नित्या यतः सर्वाः प्रवृत्तयः ॥
पुरुषाणामनीचानां संस्कृतं स्यात्कृतात्मनाम् ।

Apart from its ancient glory the stress I lay upon the study of our sacred tongue is particularly with respect to the future. I understand that it is in this respect that our University is to be so different from those that now exist, namely, that while the others only give secular education, this institution will not only teach Sanskrit but through it also the moral and religious side of life.

Gentlemen, I do not wish to detain you much longer because many of you present here are in a far better position than myself to realise the importance of the study of this sacred language in our country and will no doubt exert your influences and use your best endeavours to help our University to attain that end. I hope that as we have given it our good wishes as well as moral and material support that it will continue to receive the kind attention of our countrymen in order that its future advancement may be secured, and as the squirrel that laid its quota of dust to make a bridge in order to let the armies of Sri Rama proceed to Lanka, I hope you will not think me presumptuous to announce to day that as a further addition to my subscription to our University—little as the sum may have been—my State will give a chair for Sanskrit Literature and Philosophy at a cost of Rs. 12,000 annually for the next five years.

Gentlemen, I know you must be impatient to listen to the lectures of the three different scholars who have been requested to deliver their address on Sanskrit, and as I have no doubt they will enlighten us with their eloquence more ably than I can, regarding the importance and esteem attached to this subject, I will detain you

no longer and will call upon them by turn to give their speeches. Before doing so, however, I will say one more word. This is the first public function at which it has been my good fortune to preside in British India and it will in itself explain facts if you detect any omissions on my part in what I have attempted to say, but I am nevertheless proud of the fact that on this occasion I have had the good fortune of presiding over a subject which has been the ancient glory of our ancestors in the past and which is of such momentous importance for the future of our land and its sons.

If one day, and let us hope that may be within the lives of many of us present here to-day, this University begins to bear its fruit and our cherished hopes begin to fulfil themselves, and through the sympathetic and generous tutelage and guardianship of its present Rulers, India awakens and rises once more to its ancient glories it will be a pleasant day to look back to and to be able to feel that we were able to do our little best in giving to this institution both our moral and material support. When the united efforts of all those concerned are able to create in the future sons of India, who are steadfast in their Dharma which is at the foundation of all right-living, loyalty, justice and advancement; then we shall have no cause to be ashamed of what little effort we have been able to make in this direction, and when the time comes for us to lay down our armour and to unbuckle our sword, we may then be able to say conscientiously to our successors that we tried to do our duty.

THE PLACE OF RELIGION IN OUR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS INTERPRETED BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

BY

Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, M. R. C. S., L. R. C. P.

(Continued from page 315.)

Even for ourselves our ideal of religion must be paramount. India must live—live a greater and nobler life for her contact with the West. Her synthetic life must be intensified by the analytic methods of the West; and science instead of being antagonistic to, as it is in the West, must be, and is bound to be, not only in sympathy with but actually supporting the theories of religion and ethics. As long as true religion is the basis of national life, India cannot die—will not die even in spite of the social reformers who decry religion as the bane of India's progress. In a prophetic strain Swami Vivekananda declares: "Shall India die? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct; all moral perfection will be extinct; all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct; all ideality will be

extinct ; and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest ; fraud, force, competition, its ceremonies ; and the human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be. The power of suffering is infinitely greater than the power of doing, the power of love is infinitely of greater potency than the power of hatred. Those that think that the present revival of Hinduism is only a manifestation of patriotic impulse are deluded."

The goal of our national development must still be *Mukti*—liberation or freedom. We want to attain liberty not for the love of conquest, not for the purpose of political self-aggrandisement, not for capturing the so-called industrial market of the world, but for the emancipation of the intellect from the thralldom of ignorance. We want to shake off the Tamas in us, to attain the Rajas and thence to Sattva. We want strength not to attack our neighbours, not to force our religious tenets on an unwilling populace, but to safeguard our Dharma which is essential for our existence. We want reform not to flout our religion, not to marry our widows, but to make us purer men, healthier men, men capable of protecting the society and the spirit that has been the mainstay of it. It is a true conception of our religion alone that will sustain us in our struggle. What is politics to us if it has no higher goal than attaining mere self-government? Self-government must first start with the individual. We must so train our nature as to put the country's welfare, our neighbour's welfare before our own. We must give up mean jealousy, this indiscriminate jostling for preferment and patronage. Renunciation and service—these are the keys for solving our national problems. What power on earth but religion will give that strength of ideal, making us serve our brethren and sacrifice our little self for the benefit of the greater self? Political nationalism will be shorn of all its meaning without the force of religion behind it. The congress and conferences will have more life in them and more sustained activity than the three days' eloquence of modern times. Our public men will no more be office-seeking adventurers but men of self-denial, working for the one ideal before them, independent of all considerations. That such men are few and almost absent is a proof positive of the barrenness of our political mind. Ideas we have in plenty but feeling there is none. Why? The heart is weak. Religion as the living factor in all these movements has been ignored. The work is spasmodic and the result only proportionate. The masses have got feeling but are poor in ideas, and the men of ideas are poor in feeling. The men of ideas must exchange their stock for that which they have not. With the spirit of religion our public men will turn out enduring work and with education of a national type, our masses will develop ideas. All progress must be on these lines as in no other a healthy development is possible.

Our society is not an inert mass. We possess wonderful power of reaction. Many a reform which the social reformers neither thought of, nor even dreamt of, has crept in our society. Even orthodox people drink the alien manufactured soda water, drink the water from public hydrants, and eat sugar purified with bone-ash. Where is the social reform association that advocated all these? And yet these are all accomplished facts. Reform is not levelling down process as many of us imagine, but it is essentially a constructive process by which the lowest man is gradually raised to the level of the highest. This is what our religion attempts to do. Even men who had changed their faith—the Christian converts of India have not got over the idea of caste. The pariah-christian is still a pariah, the Brahmin-christian a Brahmin in his social ideas. Real reform will only come when there is a need for it, and the reformers must set about reforming themselves before they reform others. Besides, reform must have a purpose and an ideal before it. The people for whom the reform is intended must feel the need for it. All these are not taken into consideration by the social reformers of to-day. They talk for themselves, for our women-folk, for our widows, for our pariahs, and for all. These self-constituted champions should pause to consider as to how far they are justified in being the spokesmen of the cause they represent. We have no quarrel with them but for the fact that most of them lay the blame of our degeneration on our religion. What I wish to point out is this. A nationalistic spirit of organisation must be infused in our society. The distinction between the higher and the lower in the social scale is natural to every society and it cannot be abolished. In a healthy society the justice of such distinction makes itself patent to all and organisation grows in spite of such distinctions. An able writer in the *Prabuddha Bharata* says : "In a crisis of social disorganisation the remedy is to reinstate that scale of social values which embodied itself in past social distinctions—to reinstate that scheme of social life in which the distinctions originated and then to invite the low, to emulate the high, along the real line of social worthiness, and it is impossible for any self-conscious society to withhold recognition from real social worth." The scale of social distinction must be rearranged by the degree of national importance to which a particular unit rises. The spiritual ideal for which the whole nation should stand must become the test. That community which practises best the national ideal, preserves it, and preaches it, shall become the highest in the social scale even as the Brahmans were in Ancient India. This is the only way for our social regeneration—a way to which we are used more than once in our national history. The ideal is of utmost importance—the ideal of national unity worked on a religious basis. According to Swami Vivekananda political ideas form the basis of national unity in Europe, while in Asia religious ideas

form the basis of national unity. The unity in religion is absolutely necessary for the future of India. The recognition of one religion for India must be not in the sense of one religion as held among the Christians, or the Mahomedans or Buddhists, but on those common principles, common to all our sects, however varying their conclusions may be. This broad-based religion of ours admits of a lot of variation and infinite amount of liberty to think and live our own lives. The mere accident of political unity can never form the basis of national unity. Common political interest gives rise to a scramble for privileges from the hands of our rulers and thus one community gets itself pitted against the other in this race of securing the greatest amount of privilege. The pledge of national unity must be the most solemn and sacred pledge of our life, and mere political considerations will never evoke this solemn and sacred response from our hearts. Ethical and spiritual considerations alone will triumph over consideration of rupees, annas and pies, and they alone will form the basis of our progress.

This national revival on a spiritual basis will be an object lesson for the rest of the world. Fond dreams of a world-federation of nations are often given utterance to without the ghost of a chance of ever realising. India with her vast multitude of diverse populations is attempting this unification of a composite national life. Japan—the oft-quoted Japan—borrowed many of her ideas from the West, but she has assimilated them in her own way, to her own betterment. There are no signs of indigestion of knowledge—no signs of the craze of getting Europeanised as we see amongst us to-day. A Japanese has become a better Japanese for his Western culture and that is what the contact with the West ought to do. With the assimilation of the culture of so many epochs and ages, the future of India must indeed be great. The progress must proceed in the right direction with spiritual men at the head—with men who are conscious of the trend of our history and the final destiny of our race. Only such men can guide us. Vivekananda writing about the mission of our race says, "Sceptres have been broken and thrown away, the ball of power has passed from hand to hand, but in India courts and kings always touched only a few; the vast mass of people, from the highest to the lowest, has been left to pursue its inevitable course, the current of national life flowing at times slow and half-conscious, at others strong and awakened. I stand in awe before the unbroken procession of scores of shining centuries, with here and there a dim link in the chain, only to flare up with added brilliance in the next and there she is walking with her own majestic steps—my Motherland,—to fulfil her glorious destiny, which no power in earth or heaven can check—the regeneration of man the brute into man the God."

The exhibition of the divinity in man is the goal of national

progress in India, and every step, whether social, political, or religious must be so guided as it may conduce towards attaining this ideal. Everything must be judged in terms of this standard and if found wanting must be unhesitatingly condemned. Social life will then be healthy and robust and political life free from aimless anarchism and misguided enthusiasm. Work will more be sustaining and failures decidedly cheerful. Far from being a doctrine of despair it will infuse young minds with a vigour and spirit uncommon to the political creeds and the destructive social philosophy of modern times. This grand ideal has to be preached and a life lived in accordance with the ideal. Men who have given up everything for the sake of the ideal should become the teachers and they will by example and precept lead the society onward. The Ramakrishna mission, gloriously inaugurated by that veteran patriot-saint, should become more popular and numbers of our young men should join it and make it a national organisation for the uplift of our land. Vedanta societies have grown up all over the land, but these require a co-ordination of work guided by the central body of mission. The united efforts of these institutions should always tend to fertilise our national spiritual ideal. Principles of affiliation must be widened so as to facilitate organisation on a larger scale. Our ideal is such that it is impossible that it would come into conflict with the ruling power. On the other hand it will cement together the rulers and the ruled with a subtle and a stronger tie of loving fellowship peculiar to all spiritual developments. Higher education does not mean mere study of material sciences and turning out things of everyday use by machinery, but it means the finding out of the ways and means of solving the problems of life and that is what is engaging the profound thought of the modern world. Secular education by itself can do very little unless invigorated by the life-giving ideals of higher religious culture. It is for this we welcome the imparting of suitable ethical culture in our university curriculum. It is our sannyasis that should take up this work even as they have done in the past. Let our young men grow in the full consciousness of their past with a bright hope of a promising future. No doubt many evil things have crept in our society and many modifications in the light of current events are necessary, but in no way should the ideal for which we have worked and planned be clouded and kept in the background. Preservation of our Dharma must be the watch word. We shall not have anything in exchange for it—not even absolute political freedom, it means the destruction of our ideal. India must live not only for herself but for the benefit of the world as well. Warring nations, commercial peoples, jealous monarchs, heartless tyrants, pleasure-seeking millionaires are all in need of an ideal which will give them peace, harmony and fellow-feeling. The conception of mind and soul is yet to develop a tangible hold on nations that are great and strong in their material resources. The harmony of matter with spirit is not yet

clearly understood. The life divine has yet to guide the life of those nations. India's mission is to interpret this divine life to the rest of the world. By virtue of the greatness of her culture, by her inherent vitality which has wonderfully withstood the onslaught of time and power, by the wonderful harmony between the cosmic and non-cosmic forces which underlie the phenomena of the universe, and above all by the inestimable wealth of her spirituality on the development of which the life of the nation has been so strenuously directed even to the gross neglect of the development of its material conditions. Such a nation—she is by her position, constitution, tendency and growth eminently fitted to be the spiritual teacher of nations that vainly struggle for freedom in ruthless wars and battles. India shall live—India, this motherland of ours—India that has given birth to a Vivekananda and will in time yield a number of Vivekanandas—this India cannot shrink into insignificance. Let me conclude by repeating this grand sentiment of the Master.

“And what a land! Whosoever stands on this sacred land, whether alien or a child of the soil feels himself surrounded,—unless his soul is degraded to the level of brute animals,—by the living thoughts of the earth's best and purest sons, who have been working to raise the animal to the divine through centuries, whose beginning history fails to trace. The very air is full of the pulsations of spirituality. This land is sacred to philosophy, to ethics and spirituality, to all that tends to give a respite to man in his incessant struggle for the preservation of the animal, to all training that makes man throw off the garment of brutality, and stand revealed as the spirit immortal, the birthless, the deathless, the ever blessed, this is the land where the cup of pleasure was full, and fuller has been the cup of misery, until here first of all, men found out that it was all vanity; here first of all in the prime of youth, in the lap of luxury, in the height of glory and plenitude of power, he broke through the fetters of delusion.

Here, in this ocean of humanity, amidst the sharp interaction of strong currents of pleasure and pain, of strength and weakness, of wealth and poverty, of joy and sorrow, of smile and tear, of life and death, in the melting rhythm of eternal peace and calmness, arose the throne of renunciation! Here in this land the great problems of life and death, of the thirst for life, and the vain mad struggles to preserve it only resulting in the accumulation of woes, were first grappled with and solved—solved as they had been never before, as they have never been yet and as they will never be hereafter; for here and here alone was discovered that even life itself is an evil, the shadow only of something which alone is real. This is the land where religion was practical and real, and here alone men and women plunged boldly in to realise the goal, just as in other lands, they madly plunge in to realise the pleasures of life, by robbing their weaker brethren. Here and here alone the human heart expanded till it comprised not only

the human, but birds, beasts and plants; from the highest Gods to the meanest grains of sand, the highest and the lowest, all find a place in the heart of man, grown great, infinite. And here alone, the human soul studied the universe as one unbroken unity whose every pulse was his own pulse.”

THE SPIRITUAL APPEAL OF THE GITANJALI.

BY

K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

I have discussed in these pages those works of Sir Rabindranath Tagore that have a great and direct spiritual appeal excepting the greatest of them all—the *Gitanjali*. My purpose here is to set out briefly the spiritual appeal of the *Gitanjali* so that the public may go to it with a new joy and a deeper sense of its wonderful insight into the heart of things. I am considering all the aspects of the great poem in my forthcoming work on Tagore. I am now confining myself to the spiritual appeal of the poem, and shall show what according to it is the significance of life and death, what is the crown of life, what are the Godward faculties, and what is true salvation.

Life, according to Sir Rabindranath Tagore, is neither a paradise to be coveted nor a hell to be shunned. Being essentially a poet, the innumerable beauties of the world and the sweet symphonies of the moral realm appeal to him with an irresistible fascination. But he is not unaware of the higher, supernal joys of perfect self surrender, renunciation, and self-realisation. I venture to affirm though with diffidence that the supposed divergences of doctrine between Vishishtadwaita and Adwaita on essential matters are more fictitious than real. We have been for so many generations affirming such divergences that we look almost with horror on attempts to re-synthesise the Indian systems of thought into an organic whole. In a similar spirit we have so magnified petty differences of *achara* that we have aimed a deadly blow at the solidarity of the Brahmin caste which Bhagavan Sri Krishna never meant to become the jealous and warring sub-castes of to-day—innumerable in point of numbers, ridiculous in their pettiness of action and narrowness of vision, and subversive of *true* religion in their supposed over religiousness. Interdining and inter-marriage among the sub-castes have almost gone out of existence. There are some wise men who affirm that Siva is only a *Jiva*; there are others who bestow the same honour on Vishnu. There are otherwise men who fight with each other as to whether Lakshmi is a *Jiva* or one with Narayana. The great trouble with modern theologians and thinkers is that they do not go to the Vedas but merely cram up their own systems and the criticisms of other systems contained in their own books, and then begin to abuse each

other, weaving interminable webs of argument and finding no end in wandering mazes lost.

The Sruthi declares :

पादोऽस्य विश्वाभूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ॥

Bhagavan says in Bhagavad Gita :

विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नं एकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ।

Hence the ceaseless and ever-changing play of names and forms is the glorious variety of colours into which an infinitesimal portion of the white splendour of the Divine is resolved by the prism of Maya. This term Maya has been so often mishandled and misused that one is afraid to use it. It is sometimes called the *Sakti* of God; it is sometimes described as a mere illusion; it is at other times described as the soul's nescience. These diverse descriptions of it are due to difference of points of view and nothing more. When we have a glimpse of the radiance of the Divine and feel how though it is very near us we find it difficult to realise it and make it ever-visible, ever-present, and ever-shining instead of having it only in interrupted and intermittent flashes, we see Maya from the human point of view and call it Nescience. When we think of the totality of creation and of the white changeless supernal radiance of God an infinitesimal part of which is refracted into the prismatic colours and glories of manifested life, and when we realise that the creation will in the process of involution be reabsorbed into the Divine and is hence of inferior permanence (न्यूनसत्ताक) in comparison with Parabrahma, we call it illusion. When we realise how but for creation the *Karma* of each soul will not be worked out and the golden ladder leading up to the heaven of God-Love and God-realisation cannot be climbed, we call Maya as the *Karuna Sakti* (Grace) because the gift of life is due to the infinite compassion of God who desires that each soul should be disburdened of its load of *punya* and *papa* and should soaring above the cycle of births and deaths, dwell in the heaven of His Love.

Hence the man who in his over-zealous and self-righteous spirit of renunciation scorns manifested life has as little of true religiousness as the man whose imagination is fired by the fleeting beauties of life and who scorns and denies the glory that shines through life and transcends it. The liberated soul till it is become one with the Divine for ever should neither scorn the world nor refuse obedience to His laws. What is the difference then between the life of renunciation and the life of service? It is a difference of the soul's outlook.

Vidyaranya says :

ज्ञानिनोऽज्ञानिनश्चैव सम प्रारब्धकर्मणी ।
न ब्रेशो ज्ञानिनो धैर्यान्मूढः क्रियत्यधैर्यतः ॥

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(The *Prarabdha Karma* is the same for the *Jnani* and the *Ajnani*. The *Jnani* has no sorrow as he is strong in knowledge; the *Ajnani* has sorrow because of his lack of strength of wisdom).

Sri Krishna says :

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।

कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथासक्तः चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहं ॥

(Chapter II of the Gita)

(Out of a desire for the good of the world, the wise man should do in a spirit of detachment those duties which the ignorant do in a spirit of attachment). Hence it is that *Varnashrama dharma* was given to us as the commandment of the Lord. This is not *ज्ञानकर्म-समुच्चयवाद* at all. It is only by *ज्ञान* that salvation can be attained. All true Hindus recognise and venerate that true self-poise of the soul where all differences are lost in unity, all darkness is lost in light, and all discords are lost in harmony, and that glorious state of self-realisation which is called *Brahmishthiti* in the Gita.

It is clear from Tagore's works that he does not attack the true spirit of *Sannyasa*. I have already stated that being essentially a poet he is fascinated by the beauty of the physical and moral realms, while realising

"The Light whose smile kindles the universe,
The Beauty in which all things live and move."

At times he even ridicules the fleeing from the world by men in a spirit of aversion and scorn for it. But the target of his attack is not the true, but the false, spirit of *Sannyasa*.*

* We fear some of the ideas embodied in these paragraphs tend to misapprehension. In the first place we must know definitely that Rabindranath is perfectly innocent of all such ideas as the *Varnashrama Dharma* is the commandment of God, etc. That he never believes in the *Varnashrama Dharma* is evident from myriads of his writings and speeches. He never makes a secret of it. He openly holds up to ridicule the institutions in his Bengali novels *Gora*, *Achalayatan* and some of his other writings. It is almost indispensable to study all the principal works of a writer before one can form an accurate opinion about him. Moreover when Rabindranath himself makes his position perfectly clear, we need not obscure it by importing our own ideas into his writings. The writer assures us that Rabindranath has no quarrel with *true Sannyasa*, he condemns only the false one. But the false *Sannyasa* stands self-condemned and requires no poet's lyre to curse it. No, the quarrel is not in the psychological renunciation or non-attachment, but it is in that hoary institution of *Sannyasa Asrama*. That Rabindranath never believes in the *Sannyasa Asrama* is clear from his writings. He says in *Gitanjali*:

Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads.
Whom does thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut?
Open thine eyes and see, thy God is not before thee!
He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the pathmaker is breaking the stones:
He is with them in sun and in shower, and his garment is covered with dust.
Put off thy holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil:
Deliverance! where there is this deliverance to be found?
Our Maker himself has joyfully taken upon him the bonds of creation: He is bound with us all for ever.
Come out of thy meditations and leave aside thy flowers and thy incense!
What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained?
Meet him and stand by him in toil and in sweat of thy brow.

Life according to Tagore is from one point of view a great festival.

"I have had my invitation to this world's festival? and thus my life has been blessed. My eyes have seen and my ears have heard.

It was my part at this feast to play upon my instrument, and I have done all I could.

And what a contrast to this, is the utterance of our immortal Sankara, the prince of Sannyasins, — "तच्च सर्वकर्मसंन्यासपूर्वकादात्मज्ञाननिष्ठारूपाद्धर्माद्भवति" "That (the supreme beatitude) becomes possible by the renunciation of all Karma (Nitya, Naimittika and Kamya) and from the observance of the Dharma in the form of steady pursuance of self-contemplation. (Introduction to *Gita Bhasya*). 'It is by Jnanam only that salvation can be attained,' so affirms the writer; but what is the Jnanam?—Sri Krishna says in *Anugita*, "ज्ञानं संन्यासलक्षणम्" "Knowledge

is of the nature of renunciation." Snti also says the same thing in other words: सत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा ह्येष आत्मा सम्यग्ज्ञानेन ब्रह्मचर्येण नित्यम् "This Atman is attainable by constant truthfulness, self-control, proper knowledge and continence." The whole of the Upanishadic literature is replete with such ideas. Without *Vairagya*, Jnanam is never possible. Patanjali defines the *Vairagya* first as "दृष्टानुश्रविकविषयवितृष्णस्य वशीकारसंज्ञा वैराग्यम्" "the dispassion for all sense-objects, either seen or heard of, is called *Vasikara Vairagya*." In this state the mind does not feel any passion (राग) for the sense-objects, it remains indifferent to it. But the next state, the supreme *Vairagya* is "तत्परं पुरुषयान्तर्गुणवैतृष्यम्" "The supreme *Vairagya*, of the nature of dispassion for the *Gunas*"

comes from the comprehension (of the true nature) of Purusha. "On this Vyasa comments "दृष्टानुश्रविकविषयदोषदर्शो विरक्तः पुरुषदर्शनाभ्यासात्तच्छुद्धिप्रविवेकाप्यायितशुद्धिगुणैर्भ्योऽव्यक्तधर्मकेभ्यो विरक्तः इति । ज्ञानस्यैव परा काष्ठा वैराग्यम् । एतस्यैव नान्तरोयकं केवल्यमिति ।" "The man of renunciation who has found evil

(bondage) in the sense-objects, both seen and heard of, turns away dispassionate from the *Gunas* (matter), both manifest and unmanifest, with intellect purified and graced by the knowledge (of the Purusha) begotten of constant practice of self-realisation..... The supreme consummation of knowledge is (this) *Vairagya*. And *Kaivalya* state is not separate from this (*Vairagya*). This is something like abstracting our spiritual self completely from the phenomena: and the Upanishads speak the very same thing by the "Neti" "Neti"-formula. (Vide *Brihadaranyaka* IV. iv. 22, 23.) Here is a positive *shunning*, if not *scorning*, of the phenomenal for the noumenon. And ah, what would a man in this state say to hear the poetic Hegelianism of Rabindranath, however attractive it might have been rendered by verbal effusions, we leave it to the intelligent conjecture of our readers. Is it not a height of presumption, to put it mildly, to call such a man 'irreligious'? The spiritual genius of the Hindus would ever refuse to accept any utterance on Spirit as the last verdict, if the utterer has not proved himself as one who has realised the Spirit in its *Kevala* state, i.e., in the *Nirvikalpa* Samadhi; because, until then, one is only on the threshold of Spirit's realm. We are sorry that we do not find in Rabindranath any synthesis of Indian systems of thoughts, on the other hand we see that he presents only one side of the shield, and hence it necessitated us to show the other side also, otherwise we are not blind to the spiritual value of Rabindranath's conceptions. If it be true that "Our Maker himself has joyfully taken upon him the bonds of creation: He is bound with us all forever," it is thousand times truer that "Our supposed Maker has never taken upon himself any bond of creation and is not bound with anybody." Hear what the Blessed Lord declares: "All beings exist in Me, but I do not dwell in them." "Nor do beings exist in Me (in reality), behold My Divine Yoga!" (*Bhagavad Gita* IX, 4, 5) (vide also *Brihadaranyaka* Upanishad, III, ix. 26). Herein is the real synthesis of all Dharma and Jnanam, the *Parinama Vada* and the *Vivarta Vada*. And this synthesis we have found so gloriously depicted in the actual life of Sri Ramakrishna in our age. We would fain see that synthesis elsewhere and bow before it—Ed.

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Now, I ask, has the time come at last when I may go in and see thy face and offer thee my silent salutation." (Pages 13—14).

He realises that the "silent salutation" of God-Love is the end of life and higher than playing our part in life in a spirit of attachment. In another poem he points out the need for making strenuous efforts to reach the goal.

"I must launch out my boat The languid hours pass by on the shore—Alas for me!

The spring has done its flowering. And now with the burden of faded futile flowers I wait and linger.

The waves have become clamorous, and upon the bank in the shady lane the yellow leaves flutter and fall.

What emptiness do you gaze upon! Do you not feel a thrill passing through the air with the notes of the far-away song floating from the other shore?"

(Page 17)

What is the goal?

"I am only waiting for love to give myself up at last into his hands. That is why it is so late and why I have been guilty of such omissions.

They come with their laws and their codes to bind me fast; but I evade them ever, for I am only waiting for love to give myself at last into his hands."

(Page 14.)

The fruition of life according to law is the life of love; and it is attained at last, and love is only the flower that blooms on the heavenly tree of Law.

Such is the significance of life according to Tagore. What is his conception of Death? It is the same as that of Tennyson when he says:

"Thine are these orbs of light and shade;

Thou madest life in man and brute;

Thou madest Death; and lo, thy foot

Is on the skull which thou hast made."

(In Memoriam)

Longfellow says:

"There is no Death! what seems so is transition." God who gave us life has given us "Death and his brother sleep" in the words of Shelley. The daily bath of the spirit in the dark Jumna of deep sleep is the true refresher and saviour of our minds and our senses.

As Sri Sankaracharya says in his Sutra-Bhashya:

जीवो जागरितव्यवहारे देहन्द्रियपञ्जराध्यक्षोभूत्वा तद्वासना निर्मितांश्च स्वप्नाद्वाडीचरोऽनुभूय श्रान्तः शरणं प्रेप्सुर्बभूव रूपदापि शरीराभिमानात्समुत्थाय सुषुप्तावस्थायां परं ज्योतिराकाशशब्दिनं परं ब्रह्मोपसंपद्य विशेषविज्ञानवत्त्वं च परित्यज्य स्वेन रूपेण भिनिष्पद्यते ।

In death we throw aside the used-up garment of our body and go forth to attain fuller illumination in other births in this world or in other spheres. Tagore says:

"It is thou who drawest the veil of night upon the tired eyes of the day to renew its sight in a fresher gladness of awakening."

(Page 20).

"The child cries out when from the right breast the mother takes it away, in the very next moment to find in the left one its consolation."

(Page 17)

Why then, does God give to us this succession of births and deaths? Our Karma is the cause of it all. God, as the dispenser of the fruits of Karma, punishes our sins, rewards our good acts, disciplines us, comes down to us out of his Grace, sends his chosen ones to uplift us, fits us slowly for union with him, and finally uplifts us into the Paradise of His love. Tagore says :

"Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure. This frail vessel thou emptiest again and again, and fillest it ever with fresh life." (Page 1).

"It is the most distant course that comes nearest to thyself, and that training is the most intricate which leads to the after simplicity of a tune."

"The traveller has to knock at every alien door to come to his own, and one has to wander through all the outer worlds to reach the innermost shrine at the end." (Page 10).

"Day by day thou art making me worthy of the full acceptance by refusing me ever and anon, saving me from perils of weak, uncertain desire." (Page 12).

If the realisation of God is the crown of life, what are the Godward faculties? Humility is an essential prerequisite.

"I touch by the edge of the far-spreading wing of my song thy feet which I could never aspire to reach." (Page 2).

"My song has put off her adornments. She has no pride of dress and decoration. Ornaments would mar our union; they would come between thee and me, their jingling would drown thy whispers." (Page 6).

Tagore insists again and again upon a spirit of prayerfulness. As Tennyson says :

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day,
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God." (*The Passing of Arthur*).

The Gitanjali contains many well-known and perfect gems of prayer. I shall quote only one of them here.

"Let only that little be left of me whereby I may name thee my all.
Let only that little be left of my will whereby I may feel thee on every side
and come to thee in everything, and offer to thee my love every moment.
Let only that little be left of me whereby I may never hide thee.
Let only that little of my fetters be left whereby I am bound with thy will,
and thy purpose is carried out in my life—and that is the fetter of thy love." (Pages 26—27).

Tagore teaches also the need of service:

"Here is thy footstool and there rest thy feet where live the poorest, and lowliest, and lost.

When I try to bow to thee, my obeisance cannot reach down to the depth where thy feet rest among the poorest, lowliest, and lost

My heart can never find its way to where thou keepest company with the companionless among the poorest, the lowliest, and the lost." (Page 8).

These and other positive and negative qualities are those that lead Godward, and we must ceaselessly cultivate them and perfect ourselves,

"Let not the hours pass by in the dark. Kindle the lamp of love with thy life." (Page 22).

Side by side with their cultivation, we must have a deep and passionate yearning to realise God, as it is only from it that they draw their life. Tagore expresses this feeling thus :

"If thou showest me not thy face, if thou leavest me wholly aside, I know not how I am to pass these long, rainy hours." (Page 25).

What is the nature of this Love of God? It is the God of life. It yearns to save man and lead him to its heaven. It waits for the time when man will turn his mind Godward.

"If I call not thee in my prayers, if I keep not thee in my heart, thy love for me still waits for my love." (Page 26).

It not merely waits with endless patience but hastens to meet us and lead our erring feet aright.

"I know not from what distant time thou art ever coming nearer to meet me. Thy sun and stars can never keep thee hidden from me for aye,

In many a morning and eve thy footsteps have been heard and thy messenger has come within my heart and called me in secret.

I know not why to-day my life is all astir, and a feeling of tremulous joy is passing through my heart.

It is as if the time were come to wind up my work, and I feel in the air a faint smell of thy sweet presence." (Pages 37-38).

What are Tagore's ideas as to creation and salvation? I have already stated them briefly above. Again and again he describes in beautiful verses the wonders of creation which in the words of Sri Shankaracharya is *मनसाप्यचिन्त्यरचना* (made in a way beyond the fairest dreams of our imagination.)

"The light of thy music illumines the world. The life breath of thy music runs from sky to sky. The holy stream of thy music breaks through all stony obstacles and rushes on." (Page 3).

At the same time he recognises the unity of all life in God, and God's true nature and His *Maya Shakti*.

"The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures

It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.

It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean-cradle of birth and death, in ebb and in flow." (Pages 64—65).

"That I should make much of myself and turn it on all sides, thus casting coloured shadows on thy radiance—such is thy *Maya*."

This screen thou hast raised is painted with innumerable figures with the brush of the night and the day. Behind it thy seat is woven in wondrous mysteries of curves, casting away all barren lines of straightness.

The great pageant of thee and me has overspread the sky. With the tune of thee and me all the air is vibrant, and all ages pass with the hiding and seeking of of thee and me." (Pages 66—67).

Tagore's equal insight into the life of service and the life of renunciation and his lofty and thoroughly Indian conception of salvation are clear from the following wonderful poem with which I

close this brief and imperfect study of one of the greatest spiritual poems of the world.

"Early in the day it was whispered that we should sail in a boat, only thou and I, and never a soul in the world would know of this our pilgrimage to no country and to no end.

In that shoreless ocean, at thy silently listening smile my songs would swell in melodies, free as waves, free from all bondage of words.

Is the time not come yet? Are there works still to do? Lo, the evening has come down upon the shore and in the fading light the seabirds come flying to their nests.

Who knows when the chains will be off, and the boat, like the last glimmer of sunset, vanish into the night?" (Page 34).

THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

OF

Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna at Madras.

The Eighty-first Birthday Anniversary of the Bhagavan was celebrated with usual joy and devotion at the Ramakrishna Mission compound, Brodies Road, Mylapore, on Sunday the 12th instant. A life-size portrait of Bhagavan was placed on a throne-like high seat and was well decorated with flowers and ferns, under a big *Pandal* specially erected for the purpose. In the morning devotees and admirers assembled from all parts of the town in a large number and *Bhajana* began from 8-30 A.M. and went on with unusual devotional fervour till noon. In the Bhasyam Iyengar's market, nearly 7 000 poor people were fed, and it is glorious to note that many young students, Professors, Vakils and other gentries of the town took great delight in serving them personally. In the afternoon a *Harikatha* was performed on *Nakulapakhyanam* by Mr. M. K. Tatacharya B.A., in his usual lucid way. At 5 P.M. a public meeting was held under the presidency of the Hon'ble Mr. B. V. Narasimha Iyer of Salem, when Mr. V. C. Seshachariar, B.A., B.L., delivered a stirring lecture on the "Message of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa," a summary of which we shall try to give in our future issue.

The Chairman in winding up the proceeding remarked that if one thing was demonstrated most forcibly of all, by the life of Sri Ramakrishna, it was his utmost sincerity of purpose and intense spiritual practicality. Now a days people talk much but do little. He deplored that people had given up even the performance of *Sundhya Upasana* which was so simple, yet so profound and helpful for the upbuilding of the spiritual life. The life and message of Sri Ramakrishna should always be kept before us as the beacon light to lead us on to spiritual realisation.

The functions of the day terminated with *Aratrikam* and distribution of *prasad*.

The whole celebration looked to an on-looker as a splendid demonstration of that grand synthesis of Karma, Jnana, Bhakti and Yoga, for which stands the life-message of Sri Ramakrishna.

The upper stick is called *Adhara Arani* and the lower one *Uttara Arani*.

The awakened men—The Jnanins or the Sannyasins.

Sacrificial offerers—The Karmins or the householders.

Note—Here is the indication that the same Brahman is worshipped as Iswara by the Jnanin through meditation, and as Agni by the householders through sacrifices.]

यत्तच्चोदेति सूर्योऽस्तं यत्र च गच्छति ।

तं देवाः सर्वे अर्पितास्तदु नात्येति कश्चन । एतद्वैतम् ॥ १ ॥

सूर्यः the sun *यत्तः* whence *उदेति* rises *यत्र* to which *अस्तं गच्छति* merges *च* and ; *सर्वे* all *देवाः* gods *तं* to that *अर्पिताः* are fixed *तत्* that *न कश्चन* none *उ* verily *अत्येति* transcends.

Whence the sun rises and into whom it merges again ;—that into whom are fixed all the gods,—that whom none can ever transcend ;—this is verily that.

[That into whom are fixed all the gods.—i.e., like the spokes of a wheel to its axle.]

यदेवेह तदमुत्र यदमुत्र तदन्विह ।

मृत्योः स मृत्युमाप्नोति य इह नानव पश्यति ॥ १० ॥

यत् what *एव* indeed *इह* here *तत्* that *अमुत्र* there. *यत्* what *अमुत्र* there *तत्* that *अनु* accordingly *इह* here, *सः* he *मृत्योः* after death *मृत्युं* death *आप्नोति* meets *यः* who *इह* here *नाना* *इव* as different *पश्यति* sees.

Whatever is here, that is there ; what is there, the same is here. He who sees here as different, meets death after death.

[Here.—i.e., in this manifested world, or in this body.

There.—The absolute state of Brahman.

Meets death after death.—i.e., has to undergo various births and deaths through his ignorance of the reality of Life.

Note.—There are two states of the Being,—the absolute and the manifested, and so essentially there is no difference between the two. The wave and the ocean are not materially different.

But from the standpoint of a Vivarta Vadin like Sankarācharya, this is true in a peculiar sense. With him, there can be no real two states of Being. The Being is eternal, ever immutable, absolute existence ; it mutates only in appearance which is nothing but a self-evolved *seeming* limitation of the Being. Hence the substance of the appearance and the Being in itself are identical ; ignorance only makes them look different.]

मनसैवेदमाप्तव्यन्नेह नानास्ति किंचन ।

मृत्योः स मृत्युं गच्छति य इह नानेव पश्यति ॥ ११ ॥

मनसा by mind एव alone इदं this आप्तव्यम् to be obtained (realised). इह here किञ्चन whatever नाना difference, variousness, न अस्ति does not exist. यः who इह here नाना इव as different पश्यति sees, सः he मृत्योः from death मृत्युं to death गच्छति goes.

By mind alone this is to be realised, and (then) there is no difference here. From death to death he goes, who sees as if there is difference here.

[Mind—Pure mind.

This—The absolute Brahman.

Then there is, etc.—Having realised Brahman by pure mind one comes to perceive that this universe is only the manifestation, an expression, of the same Brahman, and so not essentially different from It.]

अंगुष्ठमात्रः पुरुषो मध्य आत्मनि तिष्ठति ।

ईशानो भूतभव्यस्य न ततो विजुगुप्सते । एतद्वैतत् ॥ १२ ॥

अंगुष्ठमात्रः of the size of a thumb पुरुषः the Purusha (person) मध्ये आत्मनि within the body तिष्ठति dwells ; (सः, he) भूतभव्यस्य of the past and the future ईशानः lord ततः thenceforward न विजुगुप्सते fears no more.

The Purusha, of the size of a thumb, dwells within the body. He is the Lord of the past and the future, and thenceforward one fears no more. This is verily that.

[The Purusha.—The Atman is called Purusha because he lives in the City (Puri) of a body, or because he fills the whole universe (Purna).

Of the size of a thumb.—The Atman is spoken of here and in the next mantram as of the size of a thumb, because it is meditated upon as a light of the size of a thumb in the cavity of the heart, commonly called the “lotus of the heart” by the Yogins. The assigning of a size to the Atman which is really beyond all limitation of time and space, is purposive of meditation, and should not be understood as literally true. Cf. Sankaracharya's *Sariraka Bhashya* and also Ramanuja's *Sri Bhashya* I. iii. 24 and 25.

Thenceforward one fears no more—Cf. IV. 5.]

अंगुष्ठमात्रः पुरुष ज्योतिरिवाधूमकः ।

ईशानो भूतभव्यस्य स एवाद्य स उ श्वः । एतद्वैतत् ॥ १३ ॥

अंगुष्ठमात्रः of the size of a thumb पुरुषः the Purusha अधूमकः smokeless ज्योतिः light इव like. भूतभव्यस्य of the past and the future ईशानः lord ; सः he एव verily अद्य to-day सः he उ also श्वः to-morrow (वर्तिष्यते will continue to exist).

The Purusha, of the size of a thumb, is like a light without smoke, lord of the past and the future ; He is verily (the same) to-day and to-morrow. This is that.

[He is verily, etc.—He exists immutably through all times, past, present and future.]

यथोदकं दुर्गं वृष्टं पर्वतेषु विधावति ।

एवं धर्मान्पृथक् पश्यंस्तानवानुविधावति ॥ १४ ॥

यथा as दुर्गे on the (high) peak वृष्टं rained, उदकं water पर्वतेषु to the hill-sides विधावति runs in various ways, एवं so, धर्मान् the attributes पृथक् different पश्यं having seen, तान् them एव verily, अनुविधावति runs after.

As the rain-water, fallen on a (high) peak, runs down to the hill-sides variously, even so he who sees the attributes as different, verily runs after them.

[Note—The force of the simile is not very clear. Probably it means, that as the rain-water suffers distraction and defilement by its seeking the manifold hill-sides abandoning the unity of the

peak, although the peak and the valleys are of the same mountain, so the man who sees differences in life by the qualifying adjuncts and expressions of Brahman, suffers bondage, being caught in their net.

Who sees the attributes as different, i.e.,—who sees actual difference between life and life, following and emphasising upon the different attributes (Upadhis) that set up the difference in expression, while having not known the real underlying principle of unity, the Atman.

Verily runs after them—i.e., is verily dragged into the snares of birth and death, being allured by those attributes known as matter.]

यथोदकं शुद्धं शुद्धमासिक्तं तादृगेव भवति ।

एवं मुनेर्विजानत आत्मा भवति गौतम ॥ १५ ॥

गौतम O Gautama (Nachiketas) यथा as शुद्धम् pure उदकं water शुद्धे (उदके) into pure water सिक्तं poured तादृक् एव the same भवति becomes, विजानतः who knows (the unity) मुनेः of the sage आत्मा self एवं thus भवति becomes.

As pure water poured into pure water, becomes the same, so becomes the self of the sage, O Gautama, who knows (the unity of the Atman).

[So becomes the self, etc.—i.e., the self of the sage which has been purged of its dross, the ego, by the right Knowledge, becomes one with the Universal Self, Brahman.]

The end of the Fourth Chapter.

The Vedanta Kesari

“Let the lion of Vedanta roar.”

“Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want.
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the
Upanishads, and believe that ‘I am the Atman.’”

—Swami Vivekananda.

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA, THE GREAT MASTER.

BY

Swami Saradananda.

X.

The Early Days of Gadadhar—(Continued).

The sensitive nature of Gadadhar was deeply affected by the incident of his father's death. For, he had already begun to appreciate the greatness of his father's character by comparing it with others in his own way even at this early age. It is natural, therefore, that the great void that he felt in his heart by the event, made him think as deeply as he could at the time, on the problem of life and death. His fondness for frequenting solitary places increased and he passed many an hour in the lonely fields and the cremation-ground on the side of the little rivulet close to his place, known to this day as the 'Bhutir Khal' or the canal of the departed spirits, and in the adjacent mango-grove planted by Raja Manick. He felt himself drawn besides more than ever to the study of the religious literature, for therein, he found the teaching of the transitory nature of human life, a truth which had come

home to him with such force quite recently. And we can well imagine how he used to spend many hours of the day in studying them by himself or in company with his mother to soothe her aching heart—for, child as he still was, he could yet find that life had lost all its former sweetness for his dear mother on account of the sad event.

Strange as it may appear to us, the boy came to have at this time a great fascination for the life of those who had renounced the world. He began to frequent the *Dharmasala* or the shelter erected for the use of the pilgrims, and the poor wayfarers, by the Zamindar of the village, to cultivate the acquaintance of the itinerant monks who used to rest here for a few days on their way to and from the pilgrimage to Puri or Jagannath. It so happened that a band of such monks stopped here for some weeks at the time, on account of illness of some of their members and Gadadhar found his opportunity. He tried to gain their hearts by doing little things for them, and bringing them presents of some articles of food at times from his own family. The Sadhus, greatly pleased with the kindness and devotion of the boy, told him many a story of their travels in return and taught him the ways of meditation and also about how to lead the higher life sanctioned by the Scriptures. The child became gradually so fond of them that he began to spend all his leisure hours in their company, watching them as they performed their daily worship and cooked their simple meal to offer to the deity or sat in meditation before the sacred fire at nightfall, or chanted hymns in praise of the Lord. The story runs in the family that his fondness for them increased so much that he dressed himself one day like them and came to his mother to show her, how well he looked in that garb. The mother was pleased at first with this strange fancy of her boy, but grew anxious afterwards on his account. For was not the belief current in the village, that the wandering monks often increased their ranks by enticing away youths and sometimes boys also of his age? Little Gadadhar tried to persuade her to give up such ideas by telling her that the Sadhus were god-fearing holy men and could never do such mean things. But the mother's heart of Chandra knew no rest from that day until the time came when the Sadhus left the village for good after blessing her boy.

The monotonous sound of the collective life of the village was broken many a time during the year by religious festivals, celebrating the anniversaries of various village-gods. In March, for instance, there was the celebration of the anniversary of Shiva, known as the *Charaka-Puja*; in May or June, the chanting of

the name of *Hari* or *Vishnu* continually for three successive days and nights,—called the *Chabbisha Prahara*; in July, there was the car-festival—also of *Vishnu*; and so on. Thus there were days for worshipping the Goddess *Manasa*, the God *Dharma*, and also *Lakshmi*, the goddess of wealth, which is done by placing her in a heap of new-grown paddy fresh from the fields at about the hour of dusk,—for did not the paddy-fields form the principal source of income of the people of the place? Thus the village used to appear brisk and cheerful on many a little occasion besides that of the national religious festival of India celebrated with special *eclat* everywhere in Bengal, namely, the worship of the Divine Mother *Durga*. Each one of those celebrations had its own speciality, with certain characteristics again which were common to them all. Athletics and staff-playing for instance, formed an invariable part of the *Shiva*-festival of *Charaka-Puja*, as the special observance of a tender regard for all living creatures forms that of every *Vishnu*-festival, although the performance of religious dramas in the open and without the help of a stage and its paraphernalia—called the *yatras*, were held alike in both of those kinds of festivals. The sensitive, devotional nature of Gadadhar felt an especial thrill during all those festive occasions but the part in them all which delighted him most was to hear the musical performances or *yatras*. His study of the religious literature gave him an especial aptitude to understand them and the poet and musician in him found himself transported for the time into the dreamland of unspeakable beauty, harmony and ecstasy. A solemn recognition of the bright and the dark passions that controlled human life and its fitful events thus occurred to Gadadhar early in life through the help of these musical performances, but his intense imagination combined with his constant brooding over such things brought forth an unforeseen development in his mind of which we shall speak presently.

Little over a mile to the north of Kamarpukur, there stands the little sanctuary of the Goddess *Vishalakshi*, (literally, one with large eyes) in the village of Anur. The name of the Goddess has been held in deep veneration in the villages around from very old times. And the simple village folks flocked to her for help, to get themselves free from incurable diseases, as well as for the fulfilment of their heart's desire in many little things. The number of women votaries, of course, had always been greater than that of men, and as these villages of rural Bengal had never been subjected to the strict rules of *Purdah*, women of every rank could be seen to travel alone or in company with others of their sex, to the place from a distance of ten or more miles even.

Gadadhar, who was eight years old by this time, had one day joined such a party of worshippers, going to visit the sanctuary. The party was made up mostly of ladies whom he knew; and Prasanna, the widowed daughter of the Zemindar of Kamarpukur, who was very fond of him, was also in it. So the boy felt quite at home and entertained them with songs of the Divine Mother and with reciting stories from the Puranas at their request. Thus each one of the little party felt a great fervour of religious enthusiasm as they wended their way cheerfully through the lonely fields.

But an unexpected turn of events filled their hearts with fear and anxiety as they neared the place of their destination. For Gadadhar suddenly lost all outward consciousness and fell into a deep trance. The ladies who had never experienced such a thing before, took his case for a sunstroke, and some ran to the neighbouring pond for water and others began to fan him after placing him under the cool shade of a tree. But they were all surprised to find that the boy's face was radiant with a heavenly smile, and the calm dignity and self-possession of it inspired awe in their simple hearts! Then the suggestion came from one amongst them, might it not be that the Divine Mother, whom they were going to worship, had deigned to manifest herself in Her inscrutable ways, through the pure body and mind of Gadadhar to bless them all? Else why was the boy instead of looking miserable seemed thus to be full of ecstasy and why was he appearing like one possessed with a supernatural Being?

Thoughts like these, though they might be held up to ridicule by the iconoclastic agnosticism of the present day, appeared like self-evident truths to their mild and faithful hearts. They sat round the boy and began to chant the name of the mother with deep devotion. And before they had proceeded long in this way, Gadadhar became his ordinary self again! The delighted ladies then asked the boy what made him so,—and he told them in return that he hardly knew, but it seemed as if his mind suddenly getting concentrated on the thought of the beauty of the Divine Mother while he was chanting Her name lost all its outer bearings and its movements finally confined to an indescribable vision of beauty and delight. And strange as it may appear to us, Gadadhar did not feel any physical weakness after the experience and was able to go to the sanctuary, and returned home with the ladies as if nothing had happened!

And now came the time when Gadadhar must undergo the ceremony necessary to put on the sacred thread, so that he might be initiated into the study of the Vedas as far as possible, and above

all that he might worship and realise the supreme Being in himself and the universe, by entering into the spirit of the central mystery contained in them. The occasion had been looked upon as a memorable one from time immemorial; for did not the boy bind himself on that day to give up forever the life in the flesh and live for purity, light and truth alone in accordance with the principles laid down in the Vedas? And did he not promise to be truthful in thought, word and deed, abstemious in his habits, obedient and faithful to his teacher and to live the life of plain living and high thinking from that day? Thus it came to be looked upon as the occasion in which the boy had to undergo a new birth in a higher plane of existence, and in course of time the term *Dvija* or the twice-born was applied to the clan who received the initiation. And then came the custom that an elderly woman of equal rank to the mother of the boy should have the privilege of looking after his simple wants from the day of his entrance into the higher life by pouring the first dole of rice as alms into his newly-acquired 'begging-bowl.'*

Now the daughter of the blacksmith, Dhani, who had long been a great friend of the family and who indeed had been the nurse of Gadadhar since the day he was born, when she heard that her little protegee was going to have the sacred thread of the twice-born, yearned in her heart to have the privilege of giving him the first dole of alms on the occasion. She knew it well that she would not be supported in this by the custom of the family; yet fondly as she loved the boy she could not give up the idea and her heart became heavy with grief. The quick perception of Gadadhar, who was no less fond of this poor woman, soon found out the cause of her sorrow and he determined to make her happy by fulfilling her desire. The story runs in the family how in spite of stern protests from his elders he remained so firm in his purpose that they had ultimately to change their mind and allow poor Dhani to give him the first dole of alms on the occasion, and that this occurred while the boy was only nine years old.

Gadadhar was now allowed the privilege of worshipping and serving the family deity Raghuvira and he did so with perfect willingness. For he had long been familiar with the accounts of the wonderful way in which his father found the image in a dream, of how the family had been blessed since in every way, and about how his parents had often had the good fortune to be favoured with super-sensuous visions and perceptions through serving the God. No wonder then that he proceeded to his new task with all

* Lit. Begging-sack.

ardour and devotion that his nature was able to summon to the occasion with the sure expectation that he also will be favoured ere long with such visions and experiences. This does not mean, however, that he began to lead a visionary life from this time forward. He went to the school, led his playmates in everything that he did, pursued his studies of the sacred literature, practised the arts of painting and clay-modelling at leisure and did everything as he used to do before. But in the hours that he spent in worshipping the image, his strong imagination combined with his natural power of concentrating his mind made him rise to such heights of meditation that he lost consciousness of all his surroundings and his unfettered and untrammelled mind lived and moved for the time with the living ideal which the image always stood for. And ere many months had passed his mind became accustomed to soar to those living regions of peace and silence which the worldly-minded dread to enter in their dreams even and began to see light where they would only see "darkness piled upon darkness" with the help of their poor imagination. The events which followed go to prove what has been stated above.

THE HINDU UNIVERSITY AND VARNASRAMADHARMA.

BY

Mr. N. Subramanya Aiyar, M.A.,
(of Travancore).

I have been of late noticing the attitude of certain critics towards the movement headed by the Maharaja of Dharbanga for the encouragement of some of the ancient ideals of society and religion in India. That the Maharaja of Dharbanga, such as he is, should occasionally be scorned, ought to make one sad. But to read an expression of hope that "the religious instruction of the Hindu University, now to be started at Benares under the auspices and guidance of Government, may not turn out preachers of *Sanathanadharma* of the Dharbanga type I" i.e., of the man who has laboured so hard for it and endowed so generously, must create the greatest surprise. For, this is *exactly* one of the aims of the entire affair. If, however, the *Varnasramadharma* mission or the Hindu University does more, it may be a little too much. But if it does less, it will be *certainly* doing "precious little" in the wanted direction. In the former case, it may be superfluous. But in the latter, it would be infructuous in its veriest essential.

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Sanathanadharma means the eternal law of life. In its application to social relationship, it was known in India as *Varnasramadharma*. It consists in essence of established interdependence through division of labour into the four main heads, viz:—production, distribution, protection and religion, or *Sudradharma*, *Vaisya-dharma*, *Kshatriyadharma*, and *Brahmanadharma* respectively, with their various sub-divisions. These are the *Varnas*. The *Asramas* are the stages that each *Varna* and *sub-Varna* has to pass through for the attainment of the *Purusharthas*, or this wordly and other-worldly happiness. When, therefore, with labour so divided and stages in life so arranged, the demand for each labour is kept up, and through it, its wages and honour, the son would take his father's occupation as a matter of course. Hereditariness, or *Paramparadharma* as it is called, would then be an inevitable consequence and no enactment. It may be added in passing that if one of these *Varnas* (castes) or *sub-Varnas* (sub-castes) did not marry into another, of which so much is said nowadays it was simply to preserve skill in, and furnish scope for, the progressive development of the respective labours. And, if interdining was looked on with disfavour, it was on account of the fear that unrestricted interdining may in time lead to unrestricted intermarriage. Proscriptions and prescriptions of this kind, relating to personal and domestic life, have, as far as I am able to see, no greater excuse, though, at the same time, no lesser warrant. If, in these circumstances, there are gentlemen, no less progressive and sane than those that may think differently, who are prepared to show that the *Varnasramadharma* scheme of social disposition stands supported on reason and common sense, and, what is more, that no other system can ensure "peace on earth and good-will among men," without which happiness in a future existence is not ordinarily conceivable, there is no need for wonder. *Varnasramadharma* is obviously no sectarian cult. It even deserves to be a universal creed.

In any case, when the position of *Varnasramadharma* is thus not so atrociously stupid or silly, responsible publicists have a duty to themselves and also to the claims of truth of which no one holds the monopoly. With the intellects of men getting increasingly developed, and in an age of severe reason, every proposition put forward, every statement made, however novel it may seem to one individual or a group of individuals, be that group however large, must receive careful and reverent consideration. Organs of

The Press and
Public.

public opinion such as newspapers constitute the public conscience; and before its court, every espousal or accusation is entitled to be duly filed, the parties concerned heard with an open mind and a decision passed seriously and solemnly and in no unseemly haste. If an ordinary court, through which a Rs. 5 loan is asked to be recovered or a small act of assault sought to be punished, has to maintain an atmosphere of judicial calmness, public journals which constitute the open court of a country have to do likewise in a specialised degree.

Some persons do not hesitate to condemn as old-world and out-of-date the social ideal of established division of labour with sufficiency of comforts and convenience for all, particularly when it is put forward under the sanction of ancient religion and in the name of *Varnasramadharma*. But these very journals cannot help characterising, as a very scandalous one, the situation under which young men trained in colleges have "to aimlessly roam about, take up a clerk's post after graduating in Chemistry or drift to the legal profession after showing a capacity for research." What I wish to ask them is whether this aimless roaming and having to take up a vocation other than what one has trained himself in can be best avoided through continuity of labour, running from father to son, where training and vocation will have a connexion one to the other, or whether it is going to be done through a state of affairs in which each generation has to look out for its own means of livelihood and, not being able to decide on it until it comes, has to go through an aimless and taxing education, every one and all.

One paper said the other day that "we expect the Hindu University student to be as thoroughly self-reliant and as well conversant with the secret of living happily and increasing the wealth of a country as with religion and with the ways of the Rishis of old." I would ask whether the secret of living happily and of increasing the wealth of a country lies in division of labour guaranteed against mutual encroachment, or whether it lies in a situation in which each man wishes to compete out his brother, where capital is charged with exploiting labour and *vice versa*. In the West, the total wealth is undoubtedly increased under the system of modern industrialism. But the question of the distribution of that wealth remains a vexed and unsolved one even there. Can it be said that the owners or producers of wealth there are "happy," in the sense in which the unsophisticated thinker understands the term?

Training and
Vocation now
divergent.

Wealth and Hap-
piness.

As His Excellency the Viceroy remarked in his memorable speech on the occasion of laying the foundation stone of the Benares University, this movement embodies in itself a great principle and has strongly appealed to the Indian imagination. And if the spirit that animates its present promoters is handed down to those that must take their place in the fulness of time, and, if, again, funds are forthcoming to the extent required for working it up to its proper dimension—four crores is what is estimated—the results might not be unworthy of the dignity and splendour with which the institution has been launched. Whether all this is going to be or not, one cannot now predict. And a doubt has even occurred to me, although it may seem unpatriotic at this time of the day to express it. That is, whether if the inculcation of the religious and the spiritual ideals in the minds of the Hindu youths is the main objective, it could not have been arranged for at much less cost. In the face of urgent economic programmes pressing for execution, would it not have been enough to establish one or more special and separate institutions for classic and religious education at each important academic centre? Even under the new scheme, education in religious ideals is not to be compulsory. Therefore all that would be wanted, at least under the existing circumstances of the country, is to provide facilities to such Hindu youths as may choose to go in for religious education, and to provide them at the very places where they could be already following their collegiate course. It is not necessary that it should be an integral part of their regular curriculum. With the money now expended or going to be expended on one institution at Benares several could certainly be provided, and they would go direct to what was precisely wanted, instead of along with numerous other things not quite akin. Then the scope of such an institution will be limited to one department, *viz.*, religion. It would not cover the whole range of general subjects such as literature or physical science, for instance, as now. And as these latter cannot and ought not to take any colouring from any religious or spiritual ideals, there is nothing gained in teaching religion under the general collegiate roof.

If food is the primary want of man, and if, in the satisfaction of this want, socio-economic life be not properly arranged, vices and crimes of all kinds cannot be effectively helped. Caste, as it ought to be, *i.e.*, division of labour, not only with the adequate wages and honour for each but with permanence guaranteed through the prevention of mutual encroachments,

Social Disorgani-
sation, the Cause
of Religion.

represented such an arrangement in India. It is this that I recognise as *Varnasramadharmā*. And unless this *Dharma* is repaired and restored, or unless something equally good could be achieved, no scheme of education in classic ideals nor exhortation from press, pulpit or platform, can prevent irreligion or anti-socialness. But after all, are people agreed as to what is the religion which the Hindu movement stands for?

The answer to the query, what is the essence of Hinduism, does not seem agreed upon, at least not to the extent of Islam or Christianity. In the circumstances, therefore, the appointment of a competent committee of study and research is the first and the foremost need. When the results of such study and research are published and accepted by the community concerned, their application to society and to the individual will have to be next decided on and propounded in the fullest and the clearest detail. When these are also done, authoritative text-books will have to be prepared, and teachers in schools and preachers for villages duly trained. To finance a comprehensive, but none the less, necessary, scheme of this kind would not only need, but unmistakably deserve, all the money that Hindu India can afford to find. Of course, the present movement has been started under distinguished and favourable auspices and under the responsible guidance of Government. Its career is bound to be safe. Let us, therefore, wish well for it and hope that it may be possible for these and other suggestions being considered and disposed of later on. Only in the prosecution of that scheme, the incurring of every expenditure must be made the occasion for carefully considering its necessity for, and bearing on, the real object of the University's establishment.

To repeat, *Varnasramadharmā* or caste is not the obligation to follow a particular occupation, however ill-waged and ill-honoured. It is the right to inherit one's father's occupation under proper conditions of wages and honour. It is the duty of society to ensure this right. With the bulk of India's industrialism still in existence as independent hand labour, it is not a duty difficult of performance. Civil law already ensures the right to one's paternal land; and constitutional law concedes the right of a king to inherit his father's throne. What is now explained as the genius of *Varnasramadharmā* is the extension of this principle to all the labours in the land. And the only way of doing so is, as I have often pointed out, to follow the famous maxim of the great Joseph Chamberlain "Buy of one another's labour," such as they are,

but with the added responsibility of maintaining or restoring, as the case may be, their quality and quantity. If all these constitute, in the main, the scientific ordering of society and the individual, or applied religion as it may be most happily designated, there can be nothing higher for any University, particularly, a Hindu University established in the classic City of Benares, to strive after.

THE ETHICAL ASPECT OF THE VEDANTA.

BY

Professor K. Sundararama Iyer, M.A.

PART XIII.

THE FRUIT OF KARMA,—WHAT IT IS NOT.

Some modern writers on the Vedanta hold that Karma is itself competent to lead to the freedom of the living soul from the bondage of Samsara,—that it is one of the means or methods competent to lead to that result. There are passages of the Gita which, considered in themselves and apart from the general trend and purport of the work, seem to support this view, and those writers make a free use of them for establishing it. Among those passages are the following—
 “असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः” “Performing Karma without attachment, man reaches the Supreme” (III.19). “कर्मण्यैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः” “Only by Karma did Janaka and others endeavour to attain perfection” (III. 20). “कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते” “You are only qualified for Karma” (II. 47). “कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं” “Do thou therefore, also perform Karma” (IV. 15). “तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्षयसेऽगृभात्” “Therefore, I shall teach you Karma, knowing which you shall be freed from evil” (IV. 16). On these passages and others to the same effect which may be easily found and quoted, these modern interpreters of the Gita base their contention that the central aim of the blessed Bhagavan's teaching is to advocate a life of strenuous wordly activity as the means to the attainment of the highest aim of man,—liberation from the bondage of Samsara.

There is an idea abroad that the Hindu people have passed into political subjection because all the great teachers of India have interpreted the Bhagavad-Gita—which contains the teachings of the greatest of all divine incarnations—as teaching that *Gnana* or the realisation of Absolute Existence is the means to the attainment of the highest bliss, and have thereby helped to lower a life of activity in the estimation of the entire Hindu people. Sri Sankaracharya is especially made the object of bitter attack and sarcasm by some of our

modern men as they imagine that, over and above this teaching which unduly lowers Karma in popular esteem, he propounded the doctrine of Maya which, as they believe, represents the world as non-existent, or at best as a mere illusory fabrication of the mind. Their modern scientific and historical education has imbued them with the hope and desire that India may find her place of honour among the free nationalities of the Empire and the civilised world. Such a position, they hold, can only be attained if we can terminate our present condition of slavish dependence and degradation by entering on an epoch of strenuous activity and achievement extending to all branches of national life.

In order to secure the accomplishment of this new ideal, they have *in toto* adopted the conception of the Good, prevailing in the West, which had its origin among the ancient Greeks and which has, under the influence of the modern Revolutionary Gospel of fraternity and equality, been broadened in its range and made to lose its ancient narrowness and limitations. The main outlines of the Greek ideal are, the vivid realisation of the value of the rights of citizenship in the City and the State, the disinterested and strenuous devotion of the human energy to the realms of scientific knowledge and artistic development, and the perpetual interest in the life of social activity which is rendered possible by them. If this new ideal is to be achieved, what is required is, in the *first* place, the untiring application of the human will so as to exploit the environment around us in the service of the ends above enumerated, in whole or in part; and, in the *second* place, the devotion of all our talents and powers to a high moral aim so that not merely the individual self which works, but all other human beings composing the society in which its lot is cast, may share in the good accomplished or to be accomplished, and have their personalities stimulated and developed so as to co-operate in all present and future achievements which are required to reach the goal. To this ideal of moral practice is also to be added—at least according to some advanced minds—the belief in a divine element in man (or a God, if so you are pleased to name it), self-conditioning, self-determining, which dwells in, and partakes of, an eternally-flowing life of progressive value and worth. While adopting this modernised and post-revolutionary version of the rich Greek ideal of antiquity, our *novi homines* are also intensely national and patriotic. The Gita has long occupied a paramount place in public esteem among the Hindu sacred authorities, and its influence has permeated the national mind to such an extent that all systems of religious life and doctrine—even those which deny its authority and claim to be founded upon other sacred sources—are fully aware of its utility and influence and seek its sanction and support for their own views and doctrines. So patriotic Indian modernism does not wish to discard it, but attempts to explain its ultimate purport and aim so as to read into it the advocacy of the strenuous life of secular activity which fills so large a space in

the consciousness of the advanced section of educated and young India. The trend of the new opinion regarding the central teaching of the Gita is, as above stated, to support the view that Karma in the new meaning attached to it—*viz.*, activity of all kinds to promote our political rights as citizens, our industrial welfare, and the advancement of our arts and sciences—is alone advocated in the Gita as the means of liberation from Samsara.

In the first place, every one is aware of the truism that no *Kamya-Karma* (acts done under the impulse of love of fruit) can lead to *Mukti*; also no *Sastra* is needed to inculcate the secular activities which lead to the advancement of purely worldly aims. The blessed *Bhagavan* says in the Gita (XVI. 23, 24) :—

यः शास्त्रविधियुस्तस्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परं गतिम् ॥
तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहाहंति ॥

“Whoever, having given up the rules of conduct prescribed in the *Sastra*, allows himself to be impelled (to action) by desire does not acquire the fitness for (attaining) the aims of man or happiness (in this world), nor the highest goal (*i.e.*, *Svarga* or *Moksha*). Therefore the *Sastra* is your source of (right) knowledge for deciding what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Having learnt what is inculcated in the *Shastraic* code of law, you become fit to perform what is (your own) duty.”

What is *Sastra*? Sri Sankaracharya explains it to mean the *Veda* in sloka 23, and as the means to the attainment of *Jnana* (*ज्ञानसाधनं*) in sloka 24. The *Karma-Kanda* (ritualistic section) of the *Veda* (together with the *Smritis* which are accepted as founded on the *Sruti*) has always been accepted by the Hindus as their source of knowledge concerning the injunctions and prohibitions regarding practical conduct. We do not suppose that any one will explain it to mean the ethical science of modern philosophers who have taken their stand on the method of reasoning from the dicta of experience to establish their generalisations regarding right and wrong. The blessed *Bhagavan* refers to Himself (XV. 15) as “*वेदैश्च सर्वैर्हमेव वेद्यो वेदान्तकृद्विदेव चाहम्*” “I am that (the Supreme Being) which has to be known from all the Vedas. I am also the author of (the traditional teaching contained in) the *Vedanta*, and also the knower of (the teaching of) the Vedas.” Hence the *Sastra* which is referred to in the two slokas above quoted is the *Veda* (including the *Vedanta*) and the *Smritis* which are accepted as founded on the *Veda*. That none of these refer to activities based upon purely secular desires and aims we may be certain from the well-known *Mimamsaka dictum* “*अप्राप्ते शास्त्रमर्थवत्*” “*Sastra* acquires importance only

in regard to matters which *do not* take their rise in the desires of our human nature." It is only where sensuous experience and the rules of deductive and inductive reasoning fail that we resort to the Sastra—i.e., the Sruti including the Smriti—as the source of knowledge concerning the aims of life and the means appropriate to their attainment. As the Gita is a Smriti and is therefore accepted as founded on Sruti and as setting forth the Vedic doctrine concerning the highest morality and the highest reality which are contained in the Sruti, and as it is also a book of revelation emanating from the blessed Bhagavan himself, we shall be entirely in error if we suppose that the ethical principles inculcated in it are simply such as we can learn from the application of the lessons of experience and the methods of reasoning known to all who have learned to apply their intellect to the daily concerns of the social and political life of human communities. In all countries, thinkers and writers have at all times devoted themselves to the investigation of ethical and political principles and their application to the practical problems of life. The blessed Bhagavan never refers to the principles of Government known as Niti-Sastra and Artha-Sastra (politics and economics), but has in view only the Dharma which is taught in the Sruti and the Smriti. No activity can be accepted as Dharma if it is not authorised and inculcated by the Sruti and Smriti, and so cannot be regarded as the means to the emancipation of the soul from the bondage of Samsara. Sri Sankaracharya says, (Svatmanirupanam, sloka 49).

निगमेषु निश्चितार्थं तन्त्रे कश्चिदपि प्रकाशयति ।

तदिदमनुवादमात्रं प्रामाण्यं तस्य सिध्यति न किञ्चित् ॥

"If one of the truths authoritatively laid down in the Vedas is enforced conspicuously in a secular work (tantra), such an one is only (to be accepted) as a reference, but not a particle of independent value attaches to it."

Sir Rabindranath Tagore asks in a recent contribution to the Press,—“Could I hope to meet God's judgment,—on the strength of a perfect English accent?” Similarly, every true Vedantin feels impelled to ask,—could I hope to meet God's judgment, on the strength of a life in perfect accord with the essentials of a national life in India modelled on the state-systems of the West? The only possible answer is,—No. For, the Veda, as already pointed out, is the one source of correct knowledge concerning the Dharma, and the Dharma is the means to attain to the realisation of the unreality of the material world and thereby to the direct intuitive cognition (अपरोक्षज्ञानं) of the truth embodied in the formula, “अहं ब्रह्मास्मि” “I am Brahman.” The Rishi Vatsyayana says, “प्रमाणमन्तरेण नार्थप्रतिपत्तिः । नार्थप्रतिपत्तिमन्तरेण प्रवृत्तिसामर्थ्यम्” “Without an authoritative source of right knowledge, there can be no attainment of established truth; without the

attainment of established truth there can be no power to act rightly.” Sri Sankaracharya also says, (Svatmanirupanam, sloka 45).

नापेक्षते यदन्यद्यपेक्षन्तेऽखिलानि मानानि ।

वाक्यं तन्निगमानां मानं ब्रह्माद्यतान्द्रियावगतौ ॥

“That which does not require (for its being accepted as authoritative) any other source of knowledge,—that on which all other sources of knowledge depend—forms the uttered sentence of the Veda from which we gain the knowledge of Brahman and all else which is supersensuous.”

According to the Hindus, Dharma—the right conduct which leads in the end to the highest form of happiness—is not to be known by the perceptions of the senses or by the processes of reasoning on them, but from the Vakyas (uttered sentences) of the Veda. Hence the merely secular activities which are effective for purposes of modern political and economic welfare do not constitute the Karma which the Vedanta regards as a first means to the supreme end of realising the Atman. Hence the Gita, when it speaks of Shastraic Karma, cannot refer, and *assuredly* does not refer, to activities whose ulterior purpose is only to secure secular and national well-being, and through it, the purely worldly prosperity of the individual as a citizen of the state and the prosecution of such activities as lead to the advancement of knowledge, art and industry having a direct bearing on national strength and greatness. Nor has the gaining of national strength and dignity through the organisation and accumulation of material resources anything to do with the acquisition of the Elysian joys of Svarga or the spiritual glory of God-realisation and Self-realisation.

It may, of course be held that the Kshatriya, as a constituent member of Hindu society, can even now perform his own function of taking part in military and political activities, and that Brahmanas may, while doing political, military, or mercantile work, still maintain their own function as priests and teachers and their ordained system of sacrifices, rituals and worships. This must be admitted, and to that extent they can help forward the work of modern national and state organisation. But the aims of the modern national state and those of the ancient Hindu state are not the same. The former aims at purely secular and worldly prosperity, while the latter subordinates the entire organisation of state and society to the maintenance of the ethical and spiritual ideal of Dharma. Moreover, whatever activity is adopted as merely the means of livelihood in times of stress and not as the normally-prescribed Dharma can never help forward the attainment of the spiritual goal of life,—though even then the prescribed daily and occasional duties are to be maintained as far as circumstances permit, and these must help forward the spiritual elevation of the individual to some extent at least.

The continuity of the individual Jiva's life is maintained in the universe under all conditions, but we cannot claim that the merely secular duties of modern life, however earnestly and honourably performed, promote spiritual elevation. To attain this end, the conditions prescribed in the Sruti and Smriti must be satisfied, and none of the modern ideas of duty and virtue can be accepted as a satisfactory or reliable guide.

Moreover, we have to note carefully the truth embodied in the oft-quoted saying, "यत्कृतं तदनित्यं," "Whatever results from human activity is impermanent." The Upanishads repeatedly emphasise this teaching. For instance, in the Kathopanishad (I. 2, 10) Nachiketas says :—"जानाम्यहं शेषधिरित्यनित्यं न ह्यधुवेः प्राप्यते हि ध्रुवं तत् ।" "I know that the treasure (which is the fruit of Karma) is ephemeral. That (treasure called Paramatma) which is permanent is certainly not to be gained by the things which are impermanent." The Mundaka-Upanishad (I. 2, 12) also says :—"परीक्ष्य लोकां कर्मचित्ताम्ना ह्यणो निर्वेद-मायाज्ञास्यकृतः कृतेन ।" "Having examined the world's (fruits) gained by Karma, the Brahmana felt disgusted as follows,—there is nothing permanent (in this world of Samsara); so what is the use of Karma?" When the whole of the material universe has been surveyed, we find nothing therein which is permanent and satisfying without the admixture of what is evil and transient in more or less degree. For the Brihad-Aranyaka-Upanishad says :—"अथ त्रयो वाव लोका मनुष्यलोकः पितृलोको देवलोक इति सोऽयं मनुष्यलोकः पुत्रेणैव जय्यो नान्येन कर्मणा कर्मणा पितृलोको विद्यया देवलोको देवलोको वै लोकानां श्रेष्ठः" "There are only three worlds (which are capable of being attained by means advocated in the Sastras)—the world of men, the world of the fathers, and the world of the Devas. This world of men is to be gained only by sons (born of the form of marriage advocated by the Sastras) and not by any other Karma; the world of the fathers is to be gained (only) by (sacrificial) ritual (such as Agnihotra, Jyotishthoma, etc.); and the world of the Devas by worshipful meditation (on the chosen deity). The world of the Devas is the highest of the worlds." The superiority of the Deva-loka (the Brahma-world here referred to) is due to the fact that there we have ample opportunities and inducements to secure the help we need for gaining the knowledge of the Supreme and Absolute Self which lies beyond the phenomenal world of matter. The Upanishad says, in the above passage, that "this world is to be gained by sons,"—for, (as it explains later on), when the father is on the eve of death, he entrusts to his son the completion of the Sastraic Karma which he had undertaken and which remained unfinished. It is only when his son takes it up and completes it that the father is enabled to gain the purpose of his life on earth,—i.e., he attains to the world and the status of Hiranyagarbha, and thereby pervades all objects and his son's mind (and body) also,—and so he

is said to gain this world through his son. In Hinduism the status of a householder (Grihasta-asrama) is a noble and sacred one, and whoever plays his part well as a householder is assured thereby of the world of Brahma. The son is called Putra (पुत्रः) because, as Sri Sankaracharya explains, "पितुश्चिदं पूरयित्वा त्रायते" "He (the son) saves his father by filling the gap (i.e., what is left unfinished) in the ritual he had undertaken." As marriage is thus a necessary preliminary for gaining one of the chief aims of life (as also for performing one's duty to one's parents), the wife is reckoned (along with the son) as a sadhana or means for performing one's aim in life. Next, the world of the fathers is to be gained by Yajnas (sacrifices) such as Jyotishthoma, Agnihotra, etc., and the world of Brahma by the worship (Vidya or Upasana) of the Ishta-devata or chosen deity,—Vishnu, Siva, etc. All the worlds are included within the sphere of Samsara and so characterised by the fault of transiency. Hence they are unsatisfying, and productive of pain and grief. Hence what is gained by Karma and the accessories needed for its proper performance can never partake of the nature of perfect and lasting bliss,—that which is known as the absolute freedom of the Atman.

Here comes in the fundamental distinction between Karma and Jnana which is important and indispensable for the doctrine of Advaita. In the first place, while Karma is of the nature of an action to be done or not done, the Atman which is of the kind technically known as भूतवस्तु, सिद्धवस्तु, परिनिष्ठितवस्तु, i.e., a thing already existing, requires no such activity for its existence. In the second place, the fruit of Karma is of the nature of happiness or misery to be achieved and admits of various degrees or stages; and these stages are the various worlds and forms of life which are mentioned in the sacred authorities and which, though variously named, are capable of being identified and classified as the upper, intermediate, and nether regions. But the fruit of Jnana is the supreme interior Self, the one entity only without a second which is of the nature of Reality, Intelligence, and Bliss (सच्चिदानन्दं). In the third place, while Karma can be alternatively either performed, or not performed, or variously performed wherever option is allowed to us by the Sastras, Jnana depends on the nature of the thing itself and is thus always one and the same. The Atman as the one pure, perfect and permanent reality is always the same, i.e., free from the transformations leading to variety, complexity and heterogeneity. It is these characteristics of the Atman that are summed up by Sankara in the following passage :—"इदं तु पारमार्थिकं, कूटस्थं, नित्यं, व्योमवत्सर्वव्यापि, सर्वविक्रिया-रहितं, तिस्रस्तु, निरवयवं, स्वयंज्योतिस्वभावम् ।" "But this is the highest reality, unchanging, eternal, omnipresent as ether, free from all modifications, absolutely self-sufficient, not composed of parts, self-luminous in its nature."

Sri Sankaracharya also classifies the fruits of action into four divisions,—viz., उत्पाद्य (effected), आप्य (obtained), संस्कार्य (ceremonially purified), विकार्य (modified). It cannot be regarded as *effected* or *modified*,—for “तयोः पक्षयोर्मोक्षस्य ध्रुवमनित्यत्वं । न हि दध्यादिविकार्यं, क्षयाद्यं वा घटादि, नित्यं दृष्टं लोके ।” “If these opinions be accepted, the non-permanence of Moksha certainly follows, for in the world we observe that things which are modifications such as sour milk and the like and things which are effects such as jars and the like are not permanent.” Nor can the Atman be regarded as *a thing obtained*,—for, “स्वात्मस्वरूपत्वे सत्यनाप्यत्वात् । स्वरूपव्यतिरिक्तत्वेऽपि ब्रह्मणो नाप्यत्वं, सर्वगतत्वेन नित्यात्मस्वरूपत्वात्सर्वेण ब्रह्मणः, आकाशस्येव ।” “As Brahman constitutes a person's self, it is not something to be attained by that person. And even if Brahman were altogether different from a person's self, still it would not be something to be attained ; for, as it is omnipresent, like the ether, the Brahman must be known to be, in its essential nature, ever present to every one.” Nor can it be regarded as *ceremonially purified*, and therefore depending on an activity. For “संस्कारो हि नाम संस्कार्यस्य गुणाधानेन वा स्याद्दोषापनयनेन वा । न तावद्गुणाधानेन संभवति, अनाधेयातिशयब्रह्मस्वरूपत्वान्मोक्षस्य । नापि दोषापनयनेन, नित्यशुद्धब्रह्मस्वरूपत्वान्मोक्षस्य ।” “Ceremonial purification results either from the accretion of some excellence or from the removal of some blemish. It cannot happen through the accretion of excellence, for Moksha is of the nature of Brahman which, being absolute perfection itself, can have nothing added to it (to make it more excellent),—nor through the removal of blemish, for Moksha is nothing but eternally pure Brahman.” Lastly, the Self cannot be *the abode of an action* (क्रियाश्रयं). For, यदाश्रया क्रिया तमविकुर्वती नैवात्मानं लभते । यद्यात्मा क्रियया विक्रियेतानित्यत्वमात्मनः प्रसज्येत ।” “Wherever an action abides, it cannot assume its form therein without modifying it. And if the Self were modified by an action, it becomes non-permanent.” Also, it is clear that the Self cannot be modified by an action residing in something else,—for the Self stands untouched by, and unrelated to, all things external to it. Whenever we speak of the Self as being purified by such actions as bathing (स्नानं), the rinsing of the throat by the prescribed three drops of water (आचमनं), the wearing of the ritualistic thread (यज्ञोपवीतं), such predication refers to the egoistical embodied self, not to the absolutely pure Self. Finally, Sankara points out the following regarding knowledge :—“ज्ञानं तु प्रमाणजन्यम् । प्रमाणं च यथा भूतवस्तु विषयमतो ज्ञानं कर्तुमकर्तुमन्यथा वा कर्तुमशक्यं केवलं वस्तुतन्मत्रेव तत् । न चोदनातन्त्रं । नापि पुरुषतन्त्रं ।” “Knowledge, on the other hand, is the result of (the resort to) the means of right knowledge (Pramana). Pramana relates to things which are existing. Hence, knowledge cannot be alternatively, made, or not made, or made

differently according as we choose, but depends entirely on the nature of the existing object, and does not depend on Vedic injunctions or on the choice of a man.”

Sri Sankaracharya, finally, deals also with the objection that there are “विधिश्छायायानि वचनानि” “Vedic texts which have the appearance of injunctions,”—such texts as the following, “आत्मा वा दृश्यः श्रोतव्यः” “The Self is to be seen ; to be heard about.” His reply is,—“स्वाभाविकप्रवृत्तिविषयविमुखीकरणार्थानीति ब्रूमः ।” “They have the purport, we reply, of diverting men from the (external) objects towards which the senses of man naturally direct the course of his activity.” Our ordinary likes and dislikes attach themselves to such external objects ; and so long as man allows himself to be driven to act under their irresistible impulsion, he cannot realise the goal of emancipation from the trammels of Samsara. Such texts as the one just quoted divert him who is desirous to attain the final goal of man from the objects towards which man's collective personality composed of his body and senses is naturally inclined to move, and so turn the stream of his thoughts towards his interior (the highest) Self. Sankara concludes as follows :—“यदप्यकर्तव्यप्रधानमात्मज्ञानं हानायोपादानाय वा न भवतीति ॥ तत्तथैवेत्यभ्युपगम्यते । अलंकारो ह्ययमस्माकं यद्ब्रह्मात्मवगतौ सत्यां सर्वकर्तव्यताहानि कृतकृत्यता च ।” “That the knowledge of Brahman refers to something which is not a thing to be done, and therefore is not concerned either with the pursuit or the avoidance of any object is the very thing we admit ; for just that constitutes our glory, that, as soon as we comprehend Brahman, all our duties come to an end and all our work is done.” The Gita (XV. 20) also declares this final and perfect status of the living soul as follows :—“एतद्ब्रुवन् बुद्धिमान् स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत” “Having gained a knowledge of this (Sastra dealing with the object explained as above)—(and not otherwise)—one becomes a man of knowledge, and, also, he has done all that has to be done by him (in order to work out the bondage of his Karma).”

To sum up the discussion,—we cannot, in the *first* place, prove that Karma, in its Sastric significance, can ever be identified with the secular activity of the individual, or a body of men, or of the state, and so it cannot be proved to be of any tangible or substantial help towards the promotion of national life ; we cannot, in the *second* place, prove that Karma will be of any the least help towards producing or purifying the noumenal Atman, for it is already existing and has always existed in its completest form of excellence and purity. How can we bring into existence what already exists, or free from impurities what is known to be eternally pure and perfect ?

What, then, is the real import of the passages with which we commenced this article and which seemed to declare that Karma—not

worldly activity, but Karma as defined by the Shastras—directly leads to the supreme end of liberation? This will become clear when we proceed to deal (in our next part) with the fruit of Karma in its positive aspect, and so we shall now content ourselves with stating the fact that Karma does *not directly* lead to the fruit of final emancipation, but only *indirectly* through various intermediate steps. The passages quoted at first must not be understood literally, but only with the qualification just stated,—a qualification implied at first and left to be understood by the student of the Vedanta in the later stages of his course of thought and enlightenment.

THE ECHOES OF THE TEACHINGS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

BY

Dr. M. C. Nanjunda Rao.

Sivaji and Afzul Khan.

(Continued from page 310.)

Although Sivaji thought that it might be better to surprise Afzul Khan, still he was uncertain what to do. Conflicting ideas crossed his brain and worried him. At first he thought of giving battle to Afzul Khan though his ministers and followers dissuaded him from doing so and were more for peace than for battle. The following conversation between Sivaji and his ministers recorded in Mankar's "The life and exploits of Sivaji" throws a flood of light on his character. Sivaji said, "Let us fight and leave the rest to God. I would never advocate peace;" but they replied that if the attempt was successful, well and good; if not, the result would be fraught with danger. The king said that if peace was made he apprehended danger to his life, but that if a battle was given, it would be all the same for them whether they came successful or fell in it, as in both the cases their names would be immortalised. The precept laid in the Gita, he said, was in favour of such a course; there was no other alternative but that a battle should be given. The King further said that his mother Jija Bai and his young son Sambhaji should be sent to Rajagad, so that if Afzul Khan was victorious he might dispose of him (King) alone as he liked, and if he fell in the battle there was Sambhaji who might be placed on the throne and to whom fealty may be sworn. The king then proceeded to Pratapgad and ordered Nettaji Palkar to follow him to the Ghats with the army and form an ambuscade on the top of the Ghats and that he would then try to send emissaries to Afzul Khan for the purpose of apparently negotiating peace and thus seduce him to a conference. Meanwhile, Afzul Khan himself, after reaching Wai, hit upon the plan of sending an embassy to Sivaji for the purpose of negotiating with him and treacherously catching him alive. Whereupon he sent for a Brahmin minister of his, called by various names by different authors, namely, Krishnaji Panth, Gopinath Panth or Patanjali Panth, and instructed

him to go to Sivaji and deliver the following message—"Your father Shahaji and the Bijapore Government have been old friends and therefore there should be no misunderstanding between you and them. I shall request the Government to make over to you the Konkan proper as a Jagir and to ratify your possession of the hill-forts belonging to the Government already taken by you and to satisfy all your desires with regard to Sarinjams (or villages and lands granted as inams for public service); you may have an interview with the Emperor but if you do not wish it, it may be dispensed with." Afzul Khan told Gopinath Panth thus to try his best to induce the King to come for an interview with him but that if Sivaji did not wish to come, he might inform him that he (Afzul Khan) was ready to see the Rajah if personally allowed. When the envoy of Afzul Khan went to Sivaji, he sent words to him and he was received by Sivaji with the utmost distinction. As instructed by Afzul Khan the envoy at first took a high tone as to outrages and treason on the part of the Rajah and of the clemency and wisdom of the sovereign he represented. There should have been no attempt at insurrection because the cause was hopeless by force and the royal ear was ever open to suppliants for justice, if submission were made. The Rajah did not reply personally, but one of his own Brahmin officers, answered eloquently and yet respectfully "What had been done? No redress had been given for injury, for extortion and local oppression. In despair some retaliation had been made. It was the mountain custom even by village against village, and did not affect higher relations, which would only become the more firmly consolidated when the cause of quarrel was past. But", he added in conclusion, "the details are private matters and will be discussed better in privacy, and through Afzul Khan alone does the Rajah wish to have them arranged. What have we here to oppose him—we have no concealments, no means of defence against such a force as his."

"Indeed no!" said Sivaji, smiling, "an army of elephants has been sent to crush ants' nests as the proverb hath it; and if the noble Khan will remain and take charge of the country now under me I will resign it to him most cheerfully and become his servant. Wilt thou say this to him?" "Indeed my Prince" returned the Brahmin. "Afzul Khan is a humane and generous man and has no personal enmity against you, my lord." "We will at least put it to the proof," returned the Rajah good-humouredly, "You are witness that you have seen no preparation for defence or resistance, and the sooner he comes, the better. We cannot hurry him and the force; but we will at least make preparations for a peaceful entertainment; and if the Khan will accept of our rude mountain hospitality instead of the Jihad we hear he has been preaching against us, it will be a happy thing for all." So saying the Rajah ordered flowers and *pan* to be distributed in order of precedence to the Envoy and all his suit and dismissed the assembly. Sivaji then whispered into the ears of the confidential Brahmin who was with him, "See that the Khan's Envoy be separately accommodated. I must visit him privately to-night and thou must be with me Krishnaji; I will come to thee at the first watch."*

* I am constrained to give this part of the incident in detail and follow the description given by Col. Meadows Taylor in his Tara in order to show the inner workings of the minds of the various personages connected with this affair and the various circumstances that led to the final result so that Sivaji's share in this deed might be properly apprised.

Then Sivaji went in and saw his mother and said, "Mother you saw the Khan's Envoy. I expected some stupid, wrong-headed, supercilious Mussalman, but behold he has sent a Brahmin. I think the Mother will give him to me." "Fear not" she replied. "If he be a true Brahmin, the Goddess hath given him to thee, I will go to her for watching and I will pray her to guide thee" and so saying she went into the shrine.

Sivaji sat as before and mused if he could only get Afzul Khan into his power, and hold him sure as hostage that he might make his own terms. Would the Brahmin aid him in this? A word from him to Afzul Khan to guide the army to the defiles was enough—for once the troops entered his defiles they were at his mercy. There was no escape—the whole must surrender or be slain. To separate Afzul Khan from his troops was therefore his chief anxiety. As yet the means of achieving that end had assumed no more definite form; and in respect of the final result his mother, strange to say, was altogether silent; but she had again taken up the position she had assumed before the shrine of the Goddess Bhavani for many days past and his belief in her inspiration was not to be shaken.

Late that night muffled in a coarse blanket and accompanied only by the Brahmin before mentioned and a few attendants the Rajah descended from the fort and passed rapidly on to the house where the envoy had been located and sent word to say that there was a messenger from the Rajah who wished to speak with him. "Admit him" was the reply; and Sivaji could see as he entered, that the Brahmin drew towards him a short heavy dagger-sword, and placed it so that the hilt lay close to his right hand. "Be seated, friend" said the Envoy, "and tell thy business. What doth Sivaji Bhonsley desire of me?" The Rajah's face was tied up with a handkerchief, which partly concealed his mouth and he changed the tone of his voice, and he had passed his hand, covered with white wood-ashes, across his nose, eyes, and forehead, as he entered, which altered the expression of his eyes very considerably. It was evident that he was not recognised. "Sivaji Bhonsley desires the prosperity and advancement of Brahmins" replied the Rajah, "and to enrich them is his sole care. He worships them and would fain have them as powerful as in the days of the ancients, and in this desire thou canst assist." "I assist! How friend? I, a Brahmin, am a receiver, not a giver—and am only a servant to the unclean," he added with a sigh.

"It need not be so, Pandit. The fame of thy learning hath preceded thee, and the Maharajah desires thy friendship and welfare. I am sent to tell thee this."

"What can I do?" said the Envoy restlessly. "What would he have me do? And who art thou to speak thus to me?"

"No matter who I am—I am authorised to speak" replied Sivaji.

"Look, here is his ring as my authority. 'Is he a Brahmin' the Rajah said, 'and come with Moslem followers to sit in my Durbar? Alas! Alas! That it should be, that the pure and holy should serve the unclean. This is indeed the age of iron, and of debasement.' The Brahmin writhed in his seat. "There are many besides me," he said, "who serve the people of Islam."

"Who serve the destroyers of Toolja Mata, the defilers of her temple, the slayers of Brahmins and of sacred kine everywhere! O, Shame, Shame!" cried the Rajah eagerly.

"I was not at the shrine when the affray took place," said the Brahmin apologetically. "I could not help it."

"Has then a Brahmin's holiness become so debased that he says only, I could not help it?" returned the Rajah. "Is it, pleasing to the Mother, think you, that her people should fawn on those whose hands are red in the blood of her votaries?"

"I would fling my service at the feet of Afzul Khan and even of the Sultan himself could I but serve with Hindus as I desire to serve," explained the Brahmin.

"The opportunity might be found, friend" answered the Rajah, "If it were truly desired; but proof of fidelity would be required. Would it be given? What is the Maharajah's desire? Dost thou know it?" "I guess it" said the Brahmin, "for I am not easily deceived by appearances, and I understood his looks to-day, if I mistake not. Could I only speak with him? Canst thou take me to him?" "I can tell thy message to him" replied the Rajah, "and will deliver it faithfully. He chose me, else I had not dared to come." The Envoy appeared to hesitate for a moment. "Impossible" he said, "Impossible that I could tell another, what Sivaji himself should alone hear; it could not be."

"Dost thou know me friend?" returned the Rajah, as he untied the handkerchief which concealed his face, and with it wiped the white ashes from his eyes and forehead—"Dost thou know me? It is thus that I salute a holy Brahmin"; and he rose and made a lowly reverence, touching the feet of the Envoy respectfully.

The man strove to return it, but was prevented. "It cannot be," continued Sivaji, "Here, thou art a Brahmin, and I a Sudra. Let it be as I wish. It is for thee to receive the honour, not I." "What would you have me do, Maharajah?" replied the Envoy, now trembling much. "I have done evil in helping the unclean, and would now expiate it if possible."

"I have had many things in my mind, Pandit," replied the Rajah, "and the Mother sends perplexing thoughts; but one thing is clear to me—She must be avenged."

The man echoed the words—"She must be avenged." "Yes", continued the Rajah, "Day and night, by old and young, rich and poor, man or woman, there is that one cry going up from Maharashtra—Avenge the Mother! and yet before that force we are powerless." "Where are the Mawulles? Where are the Hetkurees we have heard of, and the gallant Tanajee?" cried the Brahmin excitedly. "What art thou doing, Sivaji Bhonsley? Men say of thee that thy mother holds thee back, else, 'the fire should be on the hills.'"

"Good" returned Sivaji, smiling; "It is as I thought, and there is yet a Brahmin who is true. What dost thou advise?"

"Hark!" said Gopinath, "Come nearer. If I bring Afzul Khan and his men within the defiles, will it content thee? If I do this, what wilt thou do for me?" "I have prepared for that already—a Jahgeer, a high office, secular or among the priesthood, as thou wilt,—double thy present pay, whatever it be,—and ensign of rank and—my friendship. Look, Pandit" cried the Rajah, springing closer to him and drawing a small bright knife from his breast, "It were easy

to slay thee—for my knee is on thy weapon—and so prevent my proposal being known : but it is not needed. Fear not" he added, for the drops of sweat were standing on the Brahmin's brow under the terror he felt—"Fear not! Only be true, and Sivaji Bhonsley will not fail thee. When he has a kingdom thou shalt share its honour."

"Give me time to write", said the man trembling under conviction of his own treachery and the excess of temptation to which he was exposed ; "I will give the letter to-morrow."

"Impossible, Pandit," replied the Rajah : "The messengers are ready without, and they will bear what must be written to the Khan"

"Who will take the letter?"

"The Brahmin who spoke for me this morning ; he and some horsemen are now ready." "But to the Khan himself there must be no harm done," said the Pandit. "To him and his son I owe many kindnesses : for the rest, as thou wilt. Keep the family as hostages."

"As guests yonder" replied the Rajah ; "He will be safe, he and his. Shall I send for writing materials? Krishnaji! sit there," he continued, as his attendant entered ; "see that what is written is plain."

And the Envoy wrote in the Persian character, in which he was a proficient, and which the other secretary understood :—

"I have seen the Rajah, his fort, and his people, and there is nothing to apprehend. They are all beneath notice : but in order to settle everything perfectly, and to inspire terror, my lord should advance with all the force, according to the plan devised here, which the bearer, one of the Rajah's Secretaries, will explain personally, and which would be tedious to write. In a strictly private interview, which will be arranged, the Rajah Sivaji will throw himself at the feet of the Envoy of the King of Kings and receive the pardon which he desires. More would be beyond respect." "It is enough" said Sivaji when the writing was explained to him. "It will have the desired effect. Take this letter, Krishnaji, and set out for camp at once" and turning to the Pandit, "Enough" said the Rajah, "Generations hereafter will record how Panth Gopinath served his Prince. Fear not—it will be well with thee and thine hereafter."

The letter was despatched to the Khan and Sivaji discussed with the Pandit the programme of the meeting between the Khan and himself. Both had mooted points of etiquette which could hardly be overcome. The Rajah as a prince could not visit the Khan first, nor could Afzul Khan as the representative of Royalty visit the Rajah ; but they could both meet and the barrier of ceremony once broken, it mattered little what followed. No troops were to be present. Attended each by a single armed follower, themselves carrying no arms, they might meet at a place mutually agreed to by the Pandit and Sivaji, and a pavilion was ordered to be fitted up for the occasion. If the Khan pleased, he might bring a thousand of his best horse—more if convenient—to witness the ceremony from below ; but only one attendant besides the palanquin-bearers could advance to the conference. The Pandit would attend the Khan on the one hand while another of the Rajah's if possible or needful would accompany him from above. No objection appeared, and none was made to these arrangements. Sivaji took leave of the Pandit and returned to the Fort and summoned his

confidential ministers, informed them of what had been arranged and ordered them as to the disposition of the troops and exclaimed "O, the blind confidence of these Bijapore swine! They have neither eyes nor ears, else they had guessed we are not as we seem. But the Goddess Mother has blinded and deafened them and it is as my mother said it would be."

"Where is she?" asked Mulray "and she should bless us ere we go forth,"

"She is in the temple, and uneasy. As the time comes on, they think she will have a visitation," he replied, "Ah! here is someone to tell us. What news Bheemee?"

"The Lady Mother is uneasy Maharaj, and rocking herself to and fro. It is coming on her and ye should be near to listen."

"Come, Friends, let us go" said the Rajah ; "On this revelation depends my course to-morrow."

When they went in they saw Sivaji's Mother sitting before the Goddess, her eyes shut or if opened for a moment flashing with excitement, her lips trembling and already speckled with foam ; and that peculiar sharp, rocking motion of her body which always preceded the final attack.

Suddenly the lady stretched forth her arms and shrieked wildly. Mulray would have rushed forward but Sivaji held him back. "Wait," he said in a low tone, "No one dares to interrupt her ; wouldst thou go to death between her and the Mother ; she will come, listen."

There was first a low muttering in which nothing could be distinguished ; but words at last followed, to them terrible and awful, as believing in the dread presence of the Goddess, the lady poured them forth with gasps :

"O, I thirst! My children were slain—and no one has avenged them. Blood! Blood! I thirst. I will drink it! The blood of the cruel—of the cow-slayers! All, All—the old and the young ; the old woman and the maiden ; the nurse and the child at her breast ; all—all—all!" She continued, her voice rising to a scream. "They who love me, kill for me ; for I thirst now, as I did for the blood of the Demons." And the voice sank again to a low, inaudible whisper. Soon after she awoke as if from a swoon and called for water to drink and found Sivaji alone sitting—his companions fearless before an enemy, were cowards before the dread presence in which they believed.

"Ah, thou art here, son" she said turning to him. "Did I speak? Surely the Mother was with me," and she sighed deeply again drawing her hand wearily across her eyes.

"Come and rest, mother," he replied, raising her up and supporting her tenderly. "Come, thou art weary."

"Weary indeed my son" she said—"there is no rest for me till all is finished. Come and I will tell thee everything," and he followed her into her own apartments, where she lay down. The attendant brought water, and she drank a deep draught.

"What did I say, son?" she continued. "Put no matter. It is all blood before me—Carnage and Victory! Blood!" she cried

excitedly grasping his arm and looking intently into his face. "Art thou ready? Ready for victory! Ready to cry 'Jai Kali! Jai Toolja Mata!'"

"Ready, mother—yes. There is no failing anywhere. The men are at their post, and the signals have been decided upon. No one will escape us now."

"No one will escape" she echoed—"No one must escape—no—not one—not even he."

"10 "Ah, Mother," cried Sivaji, "Not so; surely with pledged honour, soldier to a soldier, and a solemn invitation, it could not be."

"It must be, son," she said gloomily "Else the sacrifice is incomplete and of no avail. Wilt thou risk that for thine own sake—for my sake—for the sake of our faith? I see it all," cried the lady excitedly, "passing before me a triumph of glory over those defilers of the temples of the Gods; thy rapid rise to power; the legions of the hateful Mohammedans trampled in the dust by greater legions of thine own! 'Jai Sivaji Rajah!' shall be cried from Delhi to Rameshwar. Wilt thou now turn back? Wilt thou be forsworn to Her—to the Mother who is our life? Wilt thou be as vacillating as thy father! Beware! Thou art more committed to Her than he—and does She spare back-sliders?" "He is but one to be spared, mother, and that because of my promise," he pleaded.

"I tell thee it cannot be, my son. She will have him—the slayer of the priests—the murderer of hundreds of the people about Her shrine.—And that priest of his who, as all say, led the slaughter, cast down her image, and trampled on it, O, son, canst thou hesitate? Art thou—so firm and true always—now grown weak? Have I borne one in travail who is degenerate? Choose then now—Victory and future blessings; or the result which thou knowest, and we all know, if we fail Her—the death which must ensue. Both are before thee;—choose, boy; I can say no more!" And she turned away her face to the wall. But she had conquered, for there was no defying her will,—always the mainspring of the Rajah's actions—and backed by those seemingly divine revelations in which he devoutly believed, he did not resist her.

"Mother" he said, rising and prostrating himself before her, "I know—I feel that the Goddess is speaking from thy mouth still. I hear and obey. Bless me, O my mother, and my hand will be strong; put thy hands on my head, and the Mother will guide the blow surely." "I do bless thee Sivaji Bhonsley," she returned, placing her hands on his head "In the name of Her who directs us, and with Her power I endue thee. Go and fear not, but do Her bidding—thou shalt not fail. Before you go to the meeting put on a steelcap, a chain armour, wear a 'Wagnak' or tiger's claws on your left fingers and carry 'Bichuwa' (a small crooked dagger) within the sleeves of your right hand. These are Her biddings the import of which you will know only after the event."

Then Sivaji laid his head at the Mother's feet and besought a blessing, and then retired to rest.

The next morning all preparations were made for the meeting of the Khan and Sivaji. The Khan's agent, Panthjee Gopinath, being a fat man had left word at the gate that he had preceded the

Khan and would await him at the pavilion. He had seen no one since the night before and he knew only that the Khan would come to meet the Rajah both unarmed. That was all he stipulated for and his part was performed. He believed that Sivaji would seize Afzul Khan and hold him a hostage for the fulfilment of all his demands; and the line of argument in his own mind was, that if the Khan resisted and was hurt, in the fray which might ensue, it was no concern of his. But he did not know the Rajah's intention nor did the Rajah's two Brahmins who had ascended with him, and they all three now sat together upon the knoll awaiting the coming of Afzul Khan from below and the Rajah from above.

The Khan arrived first apparently unarmed but with one trained fencer and expert swordsman Syed Banda and with two other attendants. He was received by Gopinath Panth and seated on the dais in the pavilion. Sivaji dressed and armed in the way he was ordered to do by his mother arrived from above, but halted when he saw Syed Banda standing near the Khan and sent for Gopinath Panth and said, "I have the same reverence for the Khan that I have for Father Shahaji; I am afraid of Syed Banda who is with the Khan; see that he is removed to a distance." Gopinath then went to the Khan and said that Sivaji was timid and caused Syed Banda to be sent away to a distance and the Khan was left with two followers. Sivaji also came down with two followers who were made to stay at a distance and approached the Khan in the pavilion.* The Khan was a tall, robust, huge figure over six feet in height and Sivaji was a lean short diminutive man. When Sivaji approached him the Khan also advanced a few paces to receive him and as customary, both began to embrace each other and while so doing, the neck and head of Sivaji leaned to the left side of the Khan and it only reached his arm-pit. The Khan saw his opportunity and gripped the neck of Sivaji under his arm-pit between his left arm and body as in a vice and suddenly drew a heavy sword that he had concealed in the spacious folds of his trousers and thrust it into the sides of the king who however received no hurt as it only clashed against the steel chain armour in which he was dressed. In the meantime Sivaji who did not expect this, was in a fix and fortunately for him the Wagnak he was wearing on his fingers came to his rescue. The left arm being free, he plunged the Wagnak over the pit of the stomach of the Khan, the only thing he could do at the time. The pit of the stomach being a very tender spot the sudden pain caused by the Wagnak made the Khan loosen his grip of Sivaji's neck, and Sivaji like a deer bounded back. But still the Khan unbaffled hit a severe blow on the head of Sivaji with his heavy sword, but thanks to the steel cap that he was made to wear, the blow only staggered him but broke the steel cap into two pieces. Sivaji did not lose this opportunity, but bounded forward and gave a severe stroke on the neck of the Khan with his Bichuwa or crooked dagger that was hid in his right sleeve and the Khan fell down and raised a cry of "Help, help, murder, murder, treachery, treachery!" and there was tremendous confusion. Hearing this the palanquin-bearers,

* The description of what took place when these two met, are as varied and conflicting as the bias and prejudices of the writers.

Swamiji's version which I give here is corroborated by Justice Ranade as I shall show later on and by Mankar in his small book 'The Life and Exploits of Sivaji' and is the only version which is both rational and natural under the circumstances.

rushed forward and putting the Khan into the palanquin, bore him away. On the way, one Sambhaji Cowjee Mahaldar who saw the wounded Khan being carried away, wounded the palanquin-bearers in their legs and brought the palanquin down to the ground. He then cut off the Khan's head and carried it to the fort. In the meantime, Syed Banda hastened to the scene and showered his sword-blows upon the King. The king took a sword from one of his attendants and while engaged in fencing, averted four blows of Syed Banda by means of his sword. Syed Banda was then on the point of inflicting a wound on the king's hand when Jivba Mahali who was standing watching the combat between the King and Syed Banda, cut the arm of Syed Banda clean off his shoulders and thus averted what might have been a serious blow to the King. The events that followed are matters of history.

From the above narration of events which corresponds in the main with what Swami Vivekananda gave us at the time, but which is described here in the words of Col. Meadows Taylor and others, it becomes evident that Afzul Khan himself had come to meet Sivaji with treacherous intentions, carrying his heavy sword concealed in the folds of his capacious trousers; and that during the act of embrace it was he who seeing that a good opportunity had offered itself enabling him to strangle Sivaji under his arm-pit, was the aggressor and that Sivaji only acted in self-defence. All historians, Persian, English and Mahratta are agreed that the Khan used his sword on Sivaji but no one cares to explain how the Khan carried the sword when the agreement was that he and Sivaji should meet unarmed, except some of the Mahratta Chronicles who clearly show that the act of treachery was on the part of Afzul Khan rather than on that of Sivaji. Sivaji himself who in his conversation with his mother had shown how he abhorred to deal treacherously with the Khan, did not understand at first why such an insignificant instrument as a Wagnak was ordered to be worn and such a small crooked dagger as a Bichuwa to be carried hidden under the sleeves; but the events as narrated above, clearly show the purposes served by each one of them. But for the Wagnak Sivaji would not have been able to extricate his neck from the iron grip of the Khan under his arm-pit and but for the steel cap protection over the head, Sivaji would have succumbed to the heavy treacherous blow from Khan's sword, which broke the steel cap into two pieces. Many English Historians who had evidently not seen any Wagnak have written about it as a terrible treacherous instrument, but it is nothing of the sort. As an instrument of offence it is very insignificant consisting as it does of very small claw like-thimbles with slightly curved cutting blades, or as Grant Duff describes it, a small steel instrument made to fit on the fore and little fingers and it has three crooked blades which are easily concealed in a half-closed hand. This Wagnak, the broken pieces of the steel cap and the heavy sword of the Khan can even now be seen amongst the collections of Purushotham Visram Mowjee of Bombay.

All Historians, English, Mahomedan or Mahratta unanimously admit of the Khan's using the sword on Sivaji and while they accuse Sivaji alone of treachery, they have not paused to reflect upon the act of the Khan in carrying this sword hidden under the folds of his capacious trousers, when the agreement was that they should meet each other unarmed. Such is human nature which is always partial to the vanquished and the injured and ignores the motives and

underlying intentions and the compelling circumstances which necessitated the act.

After the defeat of the troops of Afzul Khan, the clemency shown by Sivaji, to all those that submitted, to women, to old and young persons are noted by even the most prejudiced of Mahomedan Historians who have called Sivaji an incarnation of Satan and it shows the great nobility and magnanimity of the King, and is in marked contrast with the wanton cruelty and barbarism of even the present day so-called more civilised nations of the West.

(To be continued.)

THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF BHAGAVAN SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

At Belur Math.

The birthday celebration of Ramakrishna Paramahansa bids fair to become a world-wide worship and festival. Ardent souls in the West, as well as in the East, are attracted in increasing numbers by his godliness and recognise in him the Guru of the age. Nowhere is the throb of this universal spirit more distinctly heard and felt than in the heart of the Mission in the Belur Math.

The Thithi Puja or the actual birthday of Sri Ramakrishna which fell on the 6th March, is really a day of special worship and prayer which are spread out all the twenty-four hours.

The superb sanctity of the day culminated in the solemnity of the Homam ceremony which commenced at about midnight and its conclusion revealed a most elevating spectacle—the giving of the Sannyasa Asramam to the chosen Brahmacharins and the initiation of disciples. In the presence of all the Sannyasins, the President Maharaj, with his mind rapt in prayer, with a heart full of compassion, with blessings on his lips, hands over to each of the chosen the Kashaya cloth and Danda as symbols of renunciation and meditation.

The public celebration of the birthday ranks among the first-rate *melas* in its extent and grandeur. Days before, placards in bold characters announced in Calcutta and its suburbs the coming celebration of Bhagavan's nativity on Sunday, the 12th March, and vigorous activities of the arrangements therefor, were prominently visible.

Incessant was the pouring in of the devotees and the spacious compound of the Math was full before noon. It is estimated that the total number that attended the function would be nothing less than 70,000. Nearly a third of them partook of the Prasad prepared for the occasion. And in this the most important of the functions, the Math authorities were willingly assisted by young men mostly from Schools and Colleges who delighted themselves in loving service and sacrifice.

The only object of engagement for a concourse of this magnitude was Sankirtana. Attempts made at lecturing were found to be futile and impossible. The picture of Sri Ramakrishna was placed in a most exquisitely decorated pandal presenting the appearance of a lovely bower, and the *shamiana* immediately in front of it accommodated a Gauranga Sankirtana party conducted by a famous Bhakta. This and a Kali Kirtana Party were most prominent and drew around them attentive and appreciative audiences. The crowd grew thicker as the day advanced and the atmosphere was thickly filled with the sound of *Hari Bole* and Sankirtana parties interspersed by shouts of "Jai Sri Guru Maharajki Jai."

At nightfall fireworks kindly provided by a Bhakta were displayed. The guests gradually began to disperse; thus ended a most imposing and inspiring spectacle.

At Bangalore.

The Tithi Puja was performed on the evening of the 6th of March in the presence of a gathering composed of the representatives of all Hindu classes and sects and Prasad was distributed afterwards to all who had assembled together on the auspicious occasion. On the following Sunday, i.e., the 12th March, the public celebration of the anniversary was a great success. From the early hour of the morning the Math grounds presented a scene of animated bustle and activity and various Bhajana parties began to arrive gradually as the morning wore on towards noon.

The feeding of the poor began soon after mid-day and lasted on till three o'clock. About a thousand poor were sumptuously fed by young men who had volunteered to do the task as an act of service.

Early in the afternoon Srīman Belur Kesava Murti Das began his Harikatha. After the Harikatha was over, Pandit Narayan Sastri discoursed learnedly for about an hour in Kannada on the life and work of the Prophet of Dakshineswar. He was followed by Mr. M. A. Narayana Iyengar, B.A., B.L., Registrar of Co-operative Societies in Mysore, whose lecture on "Sri Ramakrishna, the World Teacher," was an intellectual treat to the English educated portion of the audience. He spoke about the state of religious thought in Europe and in India in the seventeenth, eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, of how dogmatism in matters religious had been in the ascendant all along in the West, thus stunting the growth of the idea of toleration among the European peoples. On the other hand, in India, religious toleration had been the rule, bigotry ever the exception. He remarked that India had always been the renovator of the spiritual energy of the world and Sri Ramakrishna was one of such renovators. He spoke of the reshaping of Western ideas of life in the light of India's characteristic contribution to the store-house of the thought of the world. After the distribution of prasada the huge crowd dispersed late in the evening.

At Trichur.

The 81st Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was celebrated at Trichur on Sunday, the 12th March, by the local Vivekodayam Samajam. The day dawned with the resoundings of the Harinama Sankirthanam sung by the Samajam Bhajana party. At about 8 A.M., the usual meeting was held when Messrs. D. Guran and Ukkanda Menon delivered lectures on "The Saintliness of Ramakrishna" and "Life after Death". At 12 about 800 poor souls were sumptuously fed. The public meeting was held at 4 P.M., with H. H. Rama Varma, 9th Prince of Cochin, in the Chair. Dr. V. K. Nair delivered a lecture on "Our Duties towards God". The next item was the procession through the town with the Paramahansa's photo accompanied by sweet and divine music Nagasvaram. The last item was the Harikathakalahshepam by Mr. Seetharama Bhagavathar of Puthucode.

At Sivaganga.

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated under the auspices of the R. K. V. Vedanta Sangham, Sivaganga, with great enthusiasm. The Tithi Puja was performed on the 6th of March with Vedic chantings. About 600 people were fed and more than two dozens of Panchama boys were clothed on that day. The public celebration was conducted on Sunday, the 12th of March, M. R. Ky. T. V. Krishnan Nair B.A., B.L., Additional District Munsif, Sivaganga, presiding. In the morning there was the usual Aradhana. Then Bhajana followed with distribution of Prasadam. The public meeting began about 4-30 p.m. Messrs. V. Venkataramana Aiyar, B.A., B.L., Pleader, and V. Desikachariar, Sanskrit Pandit, lectured in English and Tamil to an appreciative audience on the life and teachings of the Master, which were listened to with rapt attention. The President then dwelt briefly upon the good work that the Ramakrishna Mission is doing all the world over, in the name of the great saint of Dakshineswar, and the organising head of the order at first. The meeting then ended with Aratrika at about 7 p.m. There was a Katha performance the same night, the subject being "Ramakrishna Vijayam."

At Other Centres.

Sri Ramakrishna's birthday was also celebrated by the Mission centres at Benares, Allahabad, Brindavan, Kankhal, Mayavati, Dacca, Barisal, Boston (U.S.A.), New York (U.S.A.), San Francisco (U.S.A.), etc., and at various other places, eg. Lucknow, Ariamalam, Cuddapah, Parlakimidi, Sitabaldi (Nagpur), Rajpur (U.P.), Midnapore, Ranchi, Rangoon, etc., by the societies in India and abroad.

॥ पञ्चमी वल्ली ॥**CHAPTER V.**

पुरमेकादशद्वारमजस्यावक्रचेतसः ।

अनुष्ठाय न शोचति विमुक्तश्च विमुच्यते । एतद्वैतम् ॥ १ ॥

अजस्य of the unborn, अवक्रचेतसः of undimmed intelligence (*lit.* of undevious, i.e., eternally existent intelligence) (आत्मनः of the Atman) एकादशद्वारम् with eleven gates पुरं City (अस्ति is) (तम् Him) अनुष्ठाय having meditated upon, (नरः man) न शोचति grieves not च and also विमुक्तः liberate (from the bonds of ignorance), विमुच्यते becomes free (from birth and death).

The City of the unborn, of the undimmed intelligence (Atman) is of eleven gates. Having meditated upon Him, one grieves no more, and liberated (from all bonds of ignorance) becomes free (from the trammels of birth and death). This is verily that.

[The City of eleven gates—i.e., the body which has eleven apertures, seven in the head, the navel, the two lower ones, and the one at the top of the head. Cf. Bhagavat-Gita—V. 13.]

हंसः शुचिषदसुरन्तरिक्षसद्वाता वेदिषदतिथिदुरोणसत् ।

नृषद्वरसद्वतसद्योमसद्वजा गोजाऋतजा अद्रिजा ऋतं बृहत् ॥ २ ॥

(सः आत्मा that Atman) शुचिषत् dwelling in the heaven हंसः the sun (*lit.* one who moves), अन्तरिक्षसत् existing in the sky वयुः air वेदिषत् existing on the sacrificial altar (or on earth) होता fire (*lit.* the sacrificer), दुरोणसत् dwelling in the jar अतिथिः guest (Soma). नृषत् dwelling in man, वरषत् dwelling in the superior (gods), ऋतसत् dwelling in the sacrifice, द्योमसत् dwelling in the sky, अद्रिजाः born in the water, गोजाः born on earth, ऋतजाः born in the sacrifice, अद्रिजाः born of the mountains, ऋतम् the True, बृहत् the Great.

He is the sun dwelling in the heaven, the air dwelling in the sky, the fire existing on the altar, the guest (Soma) dwelling in the jar ; He is in man, in god, in the sacrifice, in the sky ; (He is) born in the water, born on

earth, born in the sacrifice, born of mountains ; (He is) the True ; (He is) the Great.

[Note—Here the Sruti asserts the omnipresent nature of the Atman.

He is born in the water—in the form of aquatic animals and insects.

Born on earth—in the form of plants, herbs, corns, etc.

Born of Mountains—in the form of rivers, etc.]

ऊर्ध्वं प्राणमुन्नयत्यपानं प्रत्यगस्यति ।

मध्ये वामनमासीनं विश्वे देवा उपासते ॥ ३ ॥

(सः He) प्राणं the Prana ऊर्ध्वं upward उन्नयति sends up, अपानं the Apana प्रत्यक् downward अस्यति throws मध्ये in the middle (heart) आसीनं seated (तं that) वामनं the adorable विश्वे all देवाः gods (senses) उपासते worship, serve.

(He) sends the Prana upward and throws the Apana downward. All the gods worship that adorable seated in the middle.

[Prana, Apana—It was held by the ancient philosophers of India, that the whole physical function of the body is carried on by five principal kinds of vital energy known as Prana, Apana, Samana, Udana and Vyana. There are again five minor divisions known as Upapranas. All these are simply so many aspects of one vital energy which also is nothing but an expression of the cosmic force, called Mukhya Prana—the chief dynamic principle of existence manifesting both through the animate and the inanimate ; but the different names are given according to the different physiological functions performed by the vital Prana : when it manifests through the works of the lungs and respiration, it is called Prana ; when it works in the colon and bladder, it is called Apana ; when it works through the digestive system, it is called Samana ; when it works through the larynx and mouth in the production of voice, it is called Udana ; and when it expresses itself through the blood-circulation and nerve-currents, it is named Vyana. Prana is sometimes wrongly translated as 'breath' ; breath is only one of the many manifestations of the Prana.

All the gods, etc.—i.e., all the senses, including mind, worship their lord, the Atman, by the proper discharge of their allotted duties. They gather experiences from the outside world and present

them to Him,—that is their worship. All the senses and Pranas become active for the Atman.]

अस्य विसृजमानस्य शरीरस्थस्य देहिनः ।

देहाद्विमुच्यमानस्य किमत्र परिशिष्यते । एतद्वैतत् ॥ ४ ॥

अस्य of this शरीरस्थस्य existing within the body, देहिनः of the owner of the body (soul) विसृजमानस्य of him who is separated, देहात् from the body विमुच्यमानस्य of him who has been freed, अत्र here (in this body) किं what परिशिष्यते remains.

What else remains of that owner of the body, of Him who dwells in it, when separated and freed from the body (after death) ! This is verily that.

[What else remains, etc.—i.e., nothing remains of that Atman in the body, when He is gone out of it. So the whole body disintegrates thereafter.]

न प्राणेन नापानेन मर्त्यो जीवति कश्चन ।

इतरेण तु जीवन्ति यस्मिन्नेतावुपाश्रितौ ॥ ५ ॥

मर्त्यः the mortal (the body, or man in the ordinary sense) कश्चन ever न प्राणेन neither by Prana, न अपानेन nor by Apana जीवति lives, तु but इतरेण by something other (than those) जीवन्ति (they) live, यस्मिन् on whom एतौ these उपाश्रितौ depend.

The mortal never lives by Prana, nor by Apana. But they live by something different on whom these depend.

[Note.—Here Prana and Apana only are mentioned to imply all the Pranas and the senses.]

हन्त त इदं प्रवक्ष्यामि गुह्यं ब्रह्म सनातनं ।

यथा च मरणं प्राप्य आत्मा भवति गौतम ॥ ६ ॥

गौतम O Goutama (Nachiketas) हन्त now वे to thee इदं this गुह्यं the mysterious सनातनं the eternal ब्रह्म Brahman प्रवक्ष्यामि shall tell ; (च and) आत्मा the Self मरणं death प्राप्य meeting यथा what भवति happens (becomes) (तदपि प्रवक्ष्यामि that also I shall tell).

Well then, I shall tell thee (again), O Goutama, of the mysterious, eternal Brahman, (and also) what happens to the Self after meeting death.

योनिमन्ये प्रपद्यन्ते शरीरत्वाय देहिनः ।

स्थाणुमन्येऽनुसंयन्ति यथाकर्म यथाश्रुतं

॥ ७ ॥

यथाकर्म according to the work, यथाश्रुतं according to the knowledge, अन्ये some देहिनः souls who own bodies शरीरत्वाय to have a body योनिं womb प्रपद्यन्ते go (enter) अन्ये others स्थाणुं plant (lit. immovable) अनुसंयन्ति go.

Some souls enter the womb to have a body, others go to the plants,—just according to their work, and according to their knowledge.

[Note.—Here the Sruti clearly speaks of the Law of Karma and re-incarnation. According to the Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic Karma and knowledge, the possibility of man's re-birth ranges from the plane of gods down to the plant life.]

य एष सुप्तेषु जागर्ति कामं कामं पुरुषो निर्ममाणः ।

तदेव शुक्रं तद्ब्रह्म तदेवामृतमुच्यते ।

तस्मिँल्लोकाः श्रिताः सर्वे तदु नात्येति कश्चन ॥

एतद्वैतत् ॥ ८ ॥

यः who एषः this पुरुषः Purusha सुप्तेषु while (we are) asleep कामं कामं different desirable objects निर्ममाणः : shaping जागर्ति remains awake, तत् that एव verily शुक्रं the Pure, तत् that ब्रह्म Brahman ; तदेव that also अमृतं immortal उच्यते is called. सर्वे all लोकाः worlds तस्मिन् in that श्रिताः rest. तत् that उ verily कश्चन any one न अत्येति does not transcend.

The Purusha who remains awake shaping (all sorts of) objects of desires, even while we sleep, verily is He the Pure, the Brahman, and he is also called the Immortal. In Him rest all the worlds, and none can transcend Him. Verily this is that.

[Shaping all sorts, etc.—i.e., in dream.

Note.—The Pure Intelligence, remains as the witness to all the three states of consciousness, viz. (awakened state) (dreaming state) and the state of dreamless deep sleep. Even in the latter state, when the mind and the senses remain dormant, the existence of that Pure Intelligence is testified by the memory of a negative consciousness we carry with us when we come out of that state ; we feel that we had a deep sleep and were not conscious of anything.]