

THE Vedanta Kesari



"Let the lion of Vedanta roar"

—Swami Vivekananda

VOLUME IV.
MAY, 1917—APRIL 1918.

The Ramakrishna Mission,
Mylapore, Madras

INDIAN
Annually ... Rs. 2
Single Copy ... As. 4

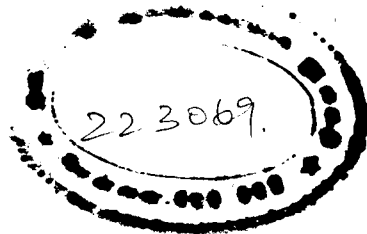
FOREIGN
Annually 4s. or \$1
Single Copy 6d. or c10

The Vedanta Kesari

VOL. IV.

INDEX.

	PAGE.
Abhedananda Swami— <i>An interview with</i> ...	339
Aggressive Hinduism ...	377
By the Way ...	325
Call to support a noble cause— <i>A</i> ...	185
Chit-Shakti (the spirit aspect of the universe) by <i>Sir John Woodroffe</i> ...	300, 356
Dakshineswar—A pilgrimage to, by <i>Sri Saila</i> ...	59
Detroit woman and her work in India by <i>Rev. William F. Hopp</i> ...	120
Durgacharan Nag, <i>The Saint</i> ...	201, 248, 272, 329
General News ...	28, 88, 124, 251
Gospels and Acts ...	42, 113, 175, 208, 242
Hindu Scriptures and Rationalism—The, by <i>Professor T. Rajagopalachariar, M.A., B.L.</i> ...	97
Hinduism and Sri Ramakrishna by <i>Swami Vivekananda</i> ...	289
In Memorium ...	87
Justice by Ancient Tamil Kings—Conception of, by <i>Sri Saila</i>	148
Krishna— <i>Sri</i> ...	70
Love for love's sake or Gopis' love for Sri Krishna by <i>Prabhulal</i> ...	75
Ladder of Higher Life—The, by <i>Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.</i> ...	169
Mantra Shastra—A Study in, by <i>Arthur Avalon</i>	35, 142, 233, 257
Meditation and Realisation ...	353
Mumukshutwam or Desire for Salvation ...	161
Nalayira Prabandam, The Vaishnavite Tamil Scripture by <i>Sri Saila</i> ...	10
Nivedita Sister, Educational Work ...	84
Notes and Comments ...	219
Power of Spirit, The—Class lecture by <i>Swami Ramakrishnananda</i> ...	369



	PAGE.
Privilege and Vedanta	129
Ramakrishna, Sri,—Birthday Celebration	346, 381
Do. Gospel of : According to 'M'	1, 33, 193
Do. The fulfilment of Hinduism by Dr. Radhakumud Mookerjee, M.A., P.H.D., P.R.S.	105, 133
Do. The Essence of his teachings by Pro- fessor B. N. Chakraborty, M.A.	50
Ramakrishna Mission Relief work, etc.	187
Ramakrishna Students' Home	26
Realisation—the Paths of by Mr. N. R. Kedari Rao, M.A., L.T.	66
Reviews	23, 216, 379
Sivananda Lahari	196, 266, 294
Temples, Temple finance, and Education by Mr. N. Subra- mania Aiyer, M.A.	15
Thy Captive My Freedom	284
Upanishads—Prasna	29, 89, 125
Mundaka	189, 221, 253, 285, 349
Varnashrama Dharma in the light of Modern thought by Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.	335, 364
Vedanta—the Glory of	77
Vedanta and the three policies by Mr. N. Subramania Aiyer, M.A.	313
Vivekananda, Swami—Birthday Celebrations	342
Do. Contribution to Modern India by Mr. A. Krishnaswami Aiyer, B.A., B.L.	8, 7
Do. A page from the life of	372
Do. Reconciliation of religions by Mr. N. R. Kedari Rao, M.A., L.T.	4
Do. Special Message to Modern India... ..	157
Wandering Thoughts of a Rambler	153
Which way by Swami Suddhananda	225
You are a coward	276

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. IV.]

MAY, 1917.

[No. 1.]

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA.*

Sri Ramakrishna in the Temple of Dakshineswar with Srijuktā Bakhal, Pranakrishna, Kedar and other Devotees. 1st January, 1883.

The Master is in Samadhi,—he continues to be in that mood of transport for sometime past: The body is motionless,—the eyes are steady, winkless,—and the respiration uncertain.

After a long pause he draws a deep breath,—as if, in returning to the world of the senses.

Sri Ramakrishna (to a devotee): "Not only is She formless, but She has form also. It is possible to see Her forms. By Bhava⁽¹⁾ and Bhakti they can be seen! Mother does appear in various forms!

"Yesterday I had a vision of Mother: I saw Her clad in a seamless ochre-coloured garment, and talking with me.

"Another day She came to me in the form of a Mahomedan girl. She had a *tilaka* on her forehead, but was nude,—a young girl six or seven years old; She began to stroll about with me and make funs.

"When I was in Hriday's⁽²⁾ house, I had a vision of Gouranga—He wore a black-bordered cloth.

* Translated from the original Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita by M.

(1) Spiritual mood.

(2) Hridaya Mukherji, Sri Ramakrishna's nephew.

"Haladhari ⁽¹⁾ used to say that God is beyond both *bhava* and *abhava*—being and non-being—beyond all mood, mode and want. I went and told Mother what Haladhari had said and asked if then all the (divine) forms were false. Mother came to me in the form of Rati's mother, and said 'Let thee remain in *bhava* alone.' I also repeated the same thing to Haladhari.

"At times I forget it and suffer. I broke my teeth for my not being in the *bhava*. So, until I get some command from God or see His vision, I shall ever remain in *bhava* and with bhakti. Ay, what do you say?"

The devotee : "Yes, sir."

Sri Ramakrishna : "And ah, why I am asking you! The One Who is within me is doing all these through me. At times I used to get the mood of God-hood,—I could never be pacified unless being worshipped. I am the instrument and He is the driver,—I do as He makes me do,—I speak as He makes me speak.

¹ Prasad says I have floated my bark into the sea of life and I sit there calm ; —Shall tide up when it flows up, and down when it ebbs down.'

"It is like the dry leaf before a gale,—now it is blown up into a good place, and now thrown down into the dirty drain,—it goes wherever the wind takes it.

"The weaver once said that it was all by the will of Rama. 'By Rama's will they committed the robbery. By Rama's will I was caught by the police, and by Rama's will again I was released.'

"Hanuman said, 'O Rama, unto Thee I have taken refuge ; bless me that I may have pure Bhakti to Thy lotus-feet, and further, that I may not be deluded by Thy world-deluding Maya.'

"A frog when pierced unknowingly by the bow of Rama, said, 'when I am caught by a snake I cry to Thee saying, O Rama, save me, but now that I am pierced by the bow of the same Rama Himself, I am keeping quiet.'

"Formerly, I used to see vivid visions—with these eyes—as I am seeing you ; now I get visions only in trance.

"After God-realisation one gets the nature of a child. One approximates the nature of the being one meditates upon. God's nature is just like a child : a child plays in house-keeping,—now builds her doll-house—now breaks it,—He is also doing the same in Creation, Protection and Destruction. As a child is not bound by any quality, so He is beyond all the three *gunas*, Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas.

(1) Sri Ramakrishna's cousin.

"Hence you see Paramahamsas keep some children around them that they may adopt their nature."

From Agarpara a young man of twenty-two years of age has come to the Master. Only recently he has begun coming to the place. When he comes he calls the Master aside and whispers out his mind to him. To-day he sits on the floor near the Master.

Sri Ramakrishna (to the young man) : "Through adoption a change comes to the nature. By adopting the feminine mood, passions and lust get annihilated. The mode of conduct becomes exactly that of a woman. Those who take female parts in a drama, behave, I have marked, while bathing, exactly like women,—they cleanse their teeth and speak like women.

"You come on any Tuesday or Saturday."

Sri Ramakrishna : (to the devotee) : "Brahman and Sakti are inseparable. If you do not accept the Sakti, the whole world becomes false,—you, I, the house, the family, everything, becomes non-existent. Because of the Sakti, the whole creation exists. If there be no main side-poles, no framework can be made, nor the beautiful image of Durga on it.

"Unless one gives up the worldly propensities, there never comes the true awakening, nor the God-realisation. Worldly propensities beget only hypocrisy and duplicity. He cannot be attained save by the simplicity of the heart.

'Let thee have such Bhakti within Thy heart and give up all cunning and deceit,

Have devotion, service and resignation, and easily shalt Thou get the chief of the Raghus.'

"Those who are engaged in business, such as work in the office or trade, should also stick to truth. Truthfulness is the *tapasya* of this age of Kali."

The devotee : "It is said in the *Mahanirvana Tantra*, 'O great Goddess, they should abide by this Dharma, being truthful, self-controlled, ever-engaged in doing good to others, unperturbed and magnanimous.'"

Sri Ramakrishna : "Yes, all those things are to be fully comprehended and borne in mind always."

*अस्मिन् धर्मे महेशि स्वास्त्यवादी जितेन्द्रियः ।

करोष्यकारजितो निर्विकारः सदाशयः ॥

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S RECONCILIATION OF RELIGIONS.

BY

Kedari Rao, M. A., L. T.

The teachings of Swami Vivekananda are many and varied ; but all of them are full of grandeur and nobility. To him the path of Heaven is not steep and thorny as others would have it ; it is not forbidding or discouraging to tread it ; it is the royal road and prince or peasant, there is room enough for all.

First and foremost, he has been able to realise that the principle of Unity in Diversity is applicable to every one of the affairs of mankind. Hence he considered it his special mission to find out the Unity in all the great religions of the world ; and went on to the formation of the ideal of a Universal Religion. The mere theoretic ideal was there for a very long time ; and hundreds of attempts had been made in India, in Alexandria, in Europe, in China, in Japan, in Tibet and lastly in America to formulate a harmonious religious creed, to make all religions come together in love ; but they had all failed for want of a practical plan. It was Swami Vivekananda's glory that he had with him an excellent plan to realise this goal. He said, 'Do not destroy or condemn the existing beliefs of mankind. Help if you can, but if not, remain quiet. Say not a word against any man's convictions so far as they are sincere. Secondly, take a man where he stands and give him a lift from there. As God is the centre of all the religions, each one of us is moving towards that centre according to our own lines ; and we shall all in time come to know the highest truth ; for, after all, we must teach ourselves. What can an external teacher do ? He may remove the obstacles a little ; but there his duty ends ; therefore help if you can, but do not destroy ! It is owing to this constructive programme that he was able to advance the ideal so far and make it possible of realisation in the near future.

This was so, mainly because he spoke on the subject like one with authority and not as the scribes. He had studied the great religions of the world not merely as they obtained in practice but viewed them through the eyes of their very founders. He was eager to study even the religion of the Jews and so began his enquiries into the Talmud with one of his Jewish disciples in America.

From such an extensive study, he arrived at the general truths concerning the origin and spread of religion in mankind and the various phases it assumed according to the different degrees of civilisation attained in any particular age.

The earliest form of religion known to man is that of ancestor-worship. Man wants to keep up the memory of his dead relatives and thinks of them as living even when their body is dissolved. He places food before them on occasions and in a certain sense desires to worship them. In the case of the Egyptians, the Babylonians and the Chinese it is clear that ancestor-worship was the very beginning of their religion.

The idea of the Egyptians was that every human body contained in it another form similar to it which went out of the body as soon as a man died ; but continued to live as long as the body was kept in tact. This is why the Egyptians have so carefully preserved the dead bodies of their ancestors and have built those huge pyramids which are still the wonder of the world.

In China, the only form of religion that flourishes is that of ancestor-worship and in India, the Hindu is familiar with the Shraddha and other functions which have as their basis this idea of worshipping the departed.

Apart from this, there is the other idea that all religion originates from the personification of the forces of nature ; and those who uphold this theory argue as follows :—"Though ancestor-worship is everywhere present in Hinduism, still in the Rig Veda Samhita which is the oldest scripture of the Aryans, we find no trace of it. On the other hand, we have hymns in praise of Varuna the god of rain, Indra the lord of thunder, Surya the Sun-god and Chandra the Moon-god and so forth. The fact is that the human mind wants to get a peep behind the mighty powers of nature ; the beauties of sunrise and sunset, the warmth of summer and the cold of winter, the mild southern breeze and the fierce hurricane—these have exercised for a long time the human mind in its attempt to understand something about them. In the struggle that ensues, it (the human mind) endows these phenomena of nature with attributes sometimes beautiful, sometimes transcendent ; so was it also with the ancient Greeks and the Scandinavians and the ancient Germans."

Thus, a strong case has been made out on both sides and though they may seem contradictory to each other, Swami Vivekananda has reconciled them on the common basis that both represent 'the eternal struggle of man to go beyond the limitation of the senses,

Whichever of the two may be the origin, one thing is certain, *i.e.*, that man is ever desirous of rising high above the bondage of the senses.

Now, all the great religions of the world trace their origin to one or other of these two things—ancestor-worship and nature-worship; and since Swami Vivekananda has reconciled these two he has found out one of the threads of unity in all the great faiths of the world.

Besides this, we find in every religion the recognition of a state of mind which is above reasoning—the state of super-consciousness, ecstasy, inspiration, Samadhi or whatever else it may be called. And the great founders of religion, the great Rishis, Prophets and Seers of every clime have all gone into this state in which alone the realisation of God can be had. For instance, the Hindu Rishis are so many seers of mantrams; they had realised so many facts in the spiritual kingdom *by means of actual experience* and these facts have been recorded in the mantrams ascribed to them. Similar to this is the case with the Jews and the Christians.

Some exception may be taken to this by the Buddhists. Since they do not believe in God, there is no necessity for realising Him; and so, there can be no such state as that we are describing. But even the Buddhists believe in an Eternal Moral Law, which was given out to them by Lord Buddha. And Lord Buddha had perceived this Law not by means of Reasoning—for it transcends Reason—but in His super-sensuous state: so that even Buddhism is no exception to the rule.

Thirdly, it may be noted that the inspired words of every one of the founders of religion are all concerning some abstract ideal, such as an Omnipresent Being, or the Almighty God or the Infinite Unity. Every human being has an ideal of infinity—be it of riches, power or knowledge; and all our activities arise in our struggle to reach this ideal. But it is impossible to manifest the infinite through the finite. We learn this sooner or later and so give up the attempt. This giving up or renunciation is the background of all Ethics—the basis on which all religions stand; for, all of them say, “Not I but Thou”; “myself last and all the others before me.”

Fourthly, corresponding to the level of civilisation reached by mankind, its idea of God also varies. If the Biblical saying is true that God has made man in His own image, it is no less true to say that “Man has made God in his own image.” If we love power and self, we think of our God as possessing infinite

power and authority. If we love virtue and hate vice, our God is all virtuous, with no particle of vice in Him. If we desire to acquire knowledge and lead a life of spotless purity, we imagine our God as all-knowing and all-perfect. It is obvious then that as our goal of life differs, our idea of God is also bound to differ. Hence it is that in the earlier days of Humanity, it worshipped the God of Revenge and the God of Terror; but later on, has dethroned them from their high position, and now has conceived of God as an all-powerful but all-merciful Being, full of love and kindness and overflowing with beneficent intentions towards mankind as a whole.

There are some who may set this down as an anthropomorphic idea and therefore not worth much consideration. But merely giving it a long Latin name does not explain matters. The fact is that in the earlier stages of society, when nomadic life was the order of the day and success or prosperity to one meant defeat and adversity to another; when every one lived, so to say, for himself and worked against the interest of others; it was natural that there was room for hatred and jealousy; and as every one shared this feeling, they thought of God as having in Himself an Infinity of Hatred. Later on, when they settled in cultivated land, when it was no more possible for any one to lead a life of isolation; when the good of every one depended directly or indirectly on the good of every other, there came in the ideas of peace and good-will, of mercy and forbearance. Hence our God is one having an infinity of these qualities. In other words, the idea of power was there all the time; the difference lay only in the use of it—for the good or evil of mankind.

Simultaneously with this evolution in the idea of God came in the struggle between the plurality of Gods and the one All-knowing God. In earlier times there was the idea of several Gods ruling this earth and controlling its destinies. But later on, this has been superseded by the thought that God is one and not many.

Even here, there were many different ways of picturing to us the functions of God. For a time, it was thought that God is the author of the Universe, creating it at his pleasure and sending it arunning with the initial energy He had given it, like a watch-maker manufacturing a watch. God is here the watch-maker and the whole of creation is the watch. And just as once in a day or in a week the watch-maker winds his watch to keep it working, similarly once in a thousand years God comes to the world as an incarnation and gives it the required impetus to go on until a fresh era dawns and a fresh avatar comes in.

This theory however very soon went out of favour, because it bemeans the creator to a very large extent. The human mind craved for some loftier conception of God. Gradually, there dawned upon the minds of men the theory regarding God as the Universe itself and not as a Being outside the Universe. God is yourself, myself, the animal, the tree, the stalk and the stone—in short the sum total of the whole of the Universe, manifested or unmanifested.

“How is it then that they all appear as different things and not as the same?”

This is a difficult question, the complete explanation of which has been attempted only by the Vedanta Philosophy. Let us learn the explanation by means of a beautiful illustration.

In a calm still lake, the image of the Sun appears as a single whole. But in the same lake, when a rough wind blows ruffling the surface of the water, we perceive a thousand divided images. But does it follow on this account that there are a thousand divided Suns? No: the Sun is one whole: only, by the intervention of other forces, it appears as several.

Similarly with this Universe. God who is the Universe is one: but owing to the intervention of another force, it appears as if split up into ten thousand different things. This extraneous force that intervenes is called ‘Maya’ or ‘Illusion.’ Corresponding to the stormy wind that disturbs the calm lake, here is the veil of illusion disturbing our vision of God as a unity. And just as we have only to still the winds in order to perceive the one image of the Sun in the lake, similarly here we have to clear our mind of Maya before we can have the sight of God as the Eternal Unity in this Universe.

And this is the Theory of Monism—the highest that man has ever thought of.

Swami Vivekananda has thus re-interpreted for us the old Vedantic ideals of life and illustrated the same in his own pure and lofty career. His ‘Thoughts on the Vedanta’ are alike invaluable for their depth of knowledge and their lucidity of expression.

The Vedanta Philosophy, he upholds, is the most ancient of the philosophic systems of the world, being the outcome of that mass of ancient Aryan Literature known as the Vedas. Its peculiarity consists in that it is perfectly impersonal and yet without antagonism to any of the religious faiths of the world built round a personality such as Muhammadanism, Buddhism or

Christianity. Its first principle is that man is essentially Divine, (whatever may be the conditions under which he is placed) and as such inherits the Infinite Ocean of Existence, knowledge and Bliss (Sat, Chit and Ananda) as his birthright, as his inborn nature.

Clearly then all external differences are caused by the greater or less measure of manifestation of the Divinity in us. A delicate film covers all our eyes preventing us from the knowledge that we are God Himself. If however we are doing good deeds and leading a pure life, it is easy for us to see the scales falling off and stand face to face with the Almighty, the Brahman, the Atman, the Soul of all creation.

But though the Vedanta maintains that man is potentially Divine, it has still no quarrel with those who do not understand this idea. It simply says *consciously or unconsciously* man is unfolding his Divine Nature. If he does so consciously, it is all the better; even if not, there is no harm!

This central idea that man is God is summed up in the celebrated Aphorism त्वमसि, ‘Thou art That.’ Having accepted this, it is easy for us to derive the other principles of the Vedanta, as they are, and their applications in different spheres of life.

For instance, the ethical explanation of being pure in word, thought and deed may be given as follows:—“Thou art one with the Universal Being: and as every soul that exists is also one with the Universal Being, every soul that exists is your soul: and every body that exists is your body. So in hurting any one, you hurt yourself, whomsoever else you may hurt or not. Similarly, in loving any one, you love yourself, whomsoever else you may love or not. By doing good deeds, by speaking gentle words, and by breathing good thoughts, you do good not only to others, but to yourself also. Hence do all the religions say with one voice:—“Love thy neighbour as Thyself.” “Do unto others as you would wish they should do unto you.”

Thus we see, how Swami Vivekananda has reconciled all the different revealed religions of the world—ranging from the crude dualism of the religion of the Jews up to the transcendental concept of monism of Vedanta—with the statement that these are but so many readings of that one Truth from different view-points, and as such, they are different revelations of the Truth got in, and suited to, the different stages of Human evolution.

THE NALAYIRA PRABANDAM : THE VAISHNAVITE TAMIL SCRIPTURE.

BY

Sri Saila.

In dealing with the life of the Saiva Saint, Nambi-yandar-Nambi, in an earlier issue of the *Vedanta Kesari*, I had given an account of the manner in which that priceless anthology—the Devaram,—saw the light of day. In this article I propose to take up the question of the origin and importance, of another equally precious anthology held in great veneration by the Vaishnavite population of South India.

The Nalayira Prabandam is as its name implies, a collection of 4,000 hymns by 12 different saints. This is less voluminous than the Devaram which consists of the songs of three saints. The exact dates of the composition of the different portions of the 'Nalayiram' cannot be stated with certainty. Scholars differ as to the chronology of the Alvars. Bishop Caldwell would bring them down to the 13th or 14th century A.D., while the traditional accounts would take them back to the Yugas other than the Kali. Even our modern archæologists, who favour neither extremes, are still unable to stand on *terra firma*. But on one point we may be certain; that is the activities of the Alvars had ceased before the 9th or 10th century A. D.

The saints whose hymns compose the Nalayiram, are Poygai, Bhutam, Pey, Tirumazhisai, Perialwar, Kulasekhara, Tondaradippodi, Tiruppan, Nammalwar, Tirumangai, Madurakavi and Andal. They have come from all ranks and conditions of life. Nammalwar was a Sudra ; Tirumangai was a bandit chief belonging to the Kallar caste, Kulasekhara was a royal saint, and Tiruppan came from the depressed classes. All the others were Brahmins. And again, Tirumalisai had professed other religious faiths and gone astray before coming into the Vaishnava fold. Tondaradippodi was a debauchee. Perialwar was an ignorant flower-gardener and Andal was a love-sick lady.

We need not trouble ourselves with the miraculous way in which God manifested Himself to these devotees and reclaimed them, but we cannot resist the temptation of giving an account of the beautiful episode connected with the three saints, Poygai, Bhutam and Pey. The songs attributed to these saints are perhaps the earliest part of the Nalayiram, and as these formed the nucleus, as

it were, of the later famous anthology, a traditional account of their origin may not be uninteresting. The three itinerant saints, unknown to each other, had by chance reached Tirukoilur. A storm was then raging and the saints were compelled to seek shelter in a dark and narrow gang-way leading into the house of a Brahmin. Poygai reached it first, and comfortably laid himself down there, when Bhutam came and solicited shelter. The former said that there was hardly space for one to lie down, but that where one could lie down two could sit. So Bhutam was admitted and a few minutes later, Pey also came there for shelter. The earlier inmates said that there was scarcely space for two to sit, but that where two could sit three might stand. Thus the three Bhaktas made each other's acquaintance, and began to discuss spiritual topics, when, all on a sudden, the pressure of a fourth person was felt in the room. The saints instinctively learnt that their Lord Vishnu had joined them, and one of them declared that he would find out the stranger with the aid of a lamp for which the receptacle was the earth, oil was the ocean, and wick was the sun. Bhutam said that for his lamp he would have his devotion for the receptacle, adoration for the oil and love for the wick ! What miracles could not then be performed with these strange lamps and under these unique circumstances ! The glorious and majestic form of Vishnu was seen in all its splendour and beauty. The devotees went into ecstasies at once, and gave vent to their feeling by each composing a centum of verses in praise of the Resplendent Vision before them—verses which were afterwards included in the "Tyarpa" section of the Nalayira Prabandam. They thus form a fitting prelude to the scriptures that "have shaped the lives and consoled the minds of millions for the past so many centuries."

Equally miraculous was the origin of some of the other portions of the Anthology. Tirumangai mannan was waylaying the Lord Himself, when he was initiated into the sacred "Ashtakshara,"—the mystic Eight Letters,—and he immediately began to sing those melodious and soul-stirring hymns which have the burden, "I have found out the name of Narayana." Saint Perialwar began to sing "Hallelujah" to the Lord, when his image was taken in procession along the streets of his city, and so on.

The songs of these saints appear to have been in fragments obtainable only in those parts of the country where their scenes of life were laid. Nammalwar, Perialwar and Andal belonged to the Pandya country. Poygai, Bhutam, Pey and Tirumalisai came from Tondamandalam. Tirumangai, Tondaradippodi and Tiruppan hailed from the Chola territory. Kulasekhara's birth place was in

the Malayalam land—Tiruvanjankulam. There could not have been much intercourse in those days of difficult travelling and, in consequence, the hymns of these saints,—Alvars as they are called—had only a local reputation. The honour of collecting and compiling them into an anthology belongs solely and exclusively to the sage Nathamuni who is said to have been a contemporary of the Poet Kambar.

Sage Nathamuni was a native of Viranarayanapuram—now known as Kattu-mannarkoil in the Chidambaram Taluk of the South Arcot District. While he was worshipping his God in the temple there, he heard some of the devotees from Kumbakonam singing the hymns beginning with “Aravamude.” The melody of the verses and the sentiments expressed therein were so very solacing to the sage that he at once determined to gather them. The devotees were however unable to help him, but directed him to Kumbakonam as the place where he could probably get the hymns. The sage went to Kumbakonam but was not able to obtain there any more hymns than the decad of “Aravamude.” Still undaunted he directed his steps to the birth place of saint Nammalwar in the district of Tinnevely with the hope that he would be able to get the whole collection of the saints’ hymns. We may not believe the miracle by which Saint Nammalwar appeared in person before Nathamuni and gave him a version of the hymns not only of himself but also of the other Alvars. But we cannot deny the fact that the sage was rewarded for his troubles, and he returned home with a complete collection of the hymns of the Alvars which he arranged and called as the Nalayira Prabandam. Nathamuni was well versed in music and as he found the hymns to be capable of being sung to tunes, he assigned each decad to a particular tune, and thus set the whole collection to the gamut, though the tunes to which they are now sung in temples, etc., are far from musical or melodious.

Sage Nathamuni’s work in this connection, cannot be over-estimated. He can be compared to the sage Vyasa and to the Saint Nambi-yandar-Nambi. But for his labours, we would have lost the priceless treasure which has for so many centuries, infused Bhakti into the minds of countless millions, and the Scripture which the Vaishnavites affectionately call the ‘Tamil Veda’ would have been lost for ever. Nathamuni’s claim to canonisation would be well-founded at least for this philanthropic act, if not for his saintliness and Acharyaship.

We cannot exaggerate the importance and significance of the Nalayira Prabandam. As we have stated already, it has st

the morals and inspired the faiths of millions. The Sanskrit Vedas were sealed books to those that were ignorant of that language and belonged to the lower ranks of the social order, and to these classes of people, the Nalayiram is a Bible. Nammalwar’s poems, Tiru-viruttam, Peria-tiruvandadi, Tiruvasiriyam and Tiruvoymozhi are considered respectively to be the essence of the Rig, Atharva, Yajus and Sama Vedas. They form the central core of the Nalayiram and cover not less than a third of the whole text. Tirumangai mannar’s Peria-Tirumozhi is considered to be the essence of the Vedanga’s and both these form about two-thirds of the whole collection. The hymns of the others, though small in volumes, are singular compositions. The sweet harmony of words, the musical flow of the verses, and the beauty of thought and language are seen everywhere, and it is no wonder that the Vaishnavas regard these as works of pure inspiration. Perialwar, who evinced his deep interest in the Lord’s welfare, and sang the “Tiruppallandu,”—Hallelujah—has the place of honour in the collection now extant. He was a devotee of the Lord in His incarnation of Sri Krishna, and the Bhakta lives over again the happy and beautiful early life of Sri Krishna. St. Andal, who stood in the relation of a daughter to Perialwar, was born like Sita, from the earth. Highly emotional in temperament, she had developed a passionate love for everything connected with Sri Krishna, and her Tiruppavai,—a poem in 30 verses,—is a living monument of her abiding faith in the Lord of the Brindaban. She was mad after God and in a verse addressed to the God of Love she says that she would commit suicide if Manmatha ever allotted her to be a helpmate of a human being. Her Nachiyar Tirumozhi contains the outpourings of ecstatic love for God, and as the contribution of a lady, is held in peculiar veneration by the Vaishnavites. In fact her poem beginning with “Varanamayiram” in which she describes her dream of marrying the Lord, is actually sung during the Vaishnavite weddings while the bride and bridegroom roll cocoanuts from one to the other.

Kulasekhara’s works are known as Perumal Tirumozhi and in point of richness of imagery and beauty of expression, they are unrivalled. His songs breathe a true spirit of renunciation. “I don’t want riches, I don’t want fame,” he says. He wishes to become anything,—chetana or achetana,—in the Venkata Hill, and prays for an humble position as a door-sill in front of the Lord over which devotees could walk and stand. Everyone of the similies which he employs in his poem “Taru Tuyaram,” is beautiful and quite apt.

Tondaradippodi’s “Tirumalai” is the oft-quoted and oft-repeated portion of the Nalayiram. It is the essence, as it were, of

the loftiest philosophies found in all the Upanishads. Passing over the hymns of some others, we come to the soul-enchancing verses of Nammalvar which are collectively known as "Tiruvoy-mozhi". What Sundarakandam is to the Ramayana, what Bhagavad Gita is to the Mahabharata, that Tiruvoymozhi is to the Nalayiram. Students beginning a course of the Nalayiram commence from the Tiruvoymozhi. Nammalwar's hymns are very dear to the devotee, to the philosopher, to the yogi and to the literary critic. They are "beautiful examples of Indian poetic genius, of that type of literary expression wherein emotionalism is combined with philosophy, and beauty of style with beauty of thought." They are the reminiscences of one who was ever from birth in the super-conscious stage, in communion with God. Orthodox Vaishnavas represent him as the soul of a great spiritual body of which the other Alvars are limbs. Nammalwar is its head, Poygai and Pey are its eyes, Perialwar its face, Tirumalisai its neck, Kulasekhara and Tiruppan its arms, Tondaradippodi its chest, Tirumangai its navel and Madurakavi its feet.

Tirumangai's "Peria Tirumozhi" is a noble production full of the sentiments of repentance for past actions. His songs are highly melodious and beautiful and have earned for their author the reputation of "Nalukavi Perumal" i.e., an adept in the four kinds of poetic compositions.

Speaking generally, the Alwar movement is one with an avowed object of rebelling against the Vedic exclusiveness, and the Nalayira Prabandam which came in its wake, was the means of salvation for the many millions who were denied the same under the then existing conditions of social and religious life. How well the movement succeeded and how much importance was attached to the Nalayiram, the subsequent history of Vaishnavism could testify. The significance was soon perceived, and the movement was at once recognised. The saints were canonised and due provision was made in the temples for the recital of the hymns of Nalayiram. A schism was thus averted, and the social fabric was made intact.

TEMPLES, TEMPLE FINANCE AND EDUCATION.

BY

N. Subramanya Aiyar, M. A.

[Adopted from the Presidential address delivered on the occasion of the distribution of prizes in the Rameswaram Devasthanam Patasala on Friday, 23rd February 1917.]

We have just listened to the report by the Principal on the progress of the Patasala. A copy of the scheme approved by the High Court under which this institution has been constituted has also been kindly given to me. I find from section 2 that its object is to impart instruction in religion, Sanskrit and Tamil. Section 5 authorises the Advisory Committee to frame the course of study and directs that provision may be made, as far as may be found practicable, for the study of the following among other subjects :—

- (a) Vedas with Basyas, Niruktha, Sandhi Sutras ;
- (b) Smrithies with Nibandhana Granthas ;
- (c) Kavyas, Alankaras ;
- (d) Tharka, Meemamsa and Vedanta ;
- (e) Agamas with rituals and worship, Ithihasas and Puranas, especially Sthalapuranas ;
- (f) Hindu Mathematics and Astronomy ;
- (g) Tamil.

Section 6 provides that the Principal shall be a Brahmin and a Master of Arts in Sanskrit or Bachelor of Arts with Sanskrit as the Second Language. Section 11 provides for "further or other directions or modifications of this scheme as necessity or occasion may require." I understand that this institution now receives an annual allotment of Rs. 6,000, out of the Rameswaram Devasthanam Funds.

From the report, it is seen that the Patasala commenced with 10 students divided into three classes, and although in the course of a week the number rose to 21, the strength at the close of Fasli under report was only 16, 4 out of the 21 having been Vaishnavite non-boarders who, it is said, "found it difficult to continue in the Patasala as no allowance was made for meals, etc., and hence ceased to attend." In regard to the staff, there appears to be, in addition to the Principal, one Assistant Pandit and another called Tamil and English Pandit. The Advisory Committee appears to have framed a course of study for the various classes according to which, "certain select portions of the Vedas and elementary works in English were included along with works in Sanskrit literature and

grammar" and text-books have been selected so as to enable, as far as possible, consistently with the provision of this scheme, those who may so intend, to appear for the Oriental Title Examination (Siromani). The Principal reports that the allotment sanctioned is insufficient and asks for its being raised. These are, I think, the main features of the report so far as they interest the outside public.

KINDRED INSTITUTIONS.

I had also the pleasure recently to read the last Annual Report of the Madras Sanskrit College at Mylapore, founded by my dear and esteemed friend, the late-lamented V. Krishnaswami Aiyar, C.S.I., "for reviving the study of our ancient Shastras under modern critical methods." The year under report was, it is said, marked by the success achieved by 11 students in the Siromani Examination of the Madras University in the Vedanta Group, out of the 12 that appeared. In that report, one section is headed "employment," and it seems that of the men turned out, one, the first Vedanta Siromani of the Presidency, has been appointed as the Supervisor of the Sanskrit Schools, Madras, on a pay of Rs. 60 per mensem, that another has secured the post of a Sanskrit Pandit in the Udumalpet High School on pay of Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 and that three others attended the Vidwat Sabhas at Chidambaram and Triplicane and were suitably rewarded. This College had 26 students at the close of the year under report, of whom three were in the English section, and that, of these, two were Government Scholarship-holders, two College stipendiaries, 18 free boarders, and four non-free boarding students. This College gets account of interest on its funded endowments, about Rs. 7,000 in round numbers and a grant of Rs. 1,000 from the Government. The disbursements on account of this College amounted to about Rs. 7,000 roughly. This is Rs. 1,000 more than the allotment of the Rameswaram Devasthanam Patasala. There is again the Hindu University which, though a much larger institution, is the embodiment, more or less, of the spirit that has prompted the founders of the Madras Sanskrit College, or the Patasala whose anniversary we are assembled to celebrate.

Now, Gentlemen, I hope I have not tired you by these references. My object is to take this opportunity of drawing attention to the means that India is now devising for the revival and preservation of her ancient learning and culture and to consider how far they promise to fulfil the purpose in view, so that public opinion may be roused and stimulated to afford us still greater help.

A REFLECTION.

What lies at the bottom of all these movements is the general feeling that Indian literature, Indian languages and Indian religion are fast losing the place which they once occupied in her national life and that, unless some systematic efforts are made, some

special institutions are set up on modern lines, this decline must go on unchecked. While deploring the decadence of our ancient learning, etc., we feel that, under present-day conditions, the road to material and political well-being lies in a different direction. We therefore start institutions in which we propose to combine the teaching of Sanskrit and Sanskrit learning with the enabling of those so taught to make a living for their after-life. But it is only in a few cases do we propose to make, and in a still fewer cases do we succeed in making, this Sanskrit training the means of livelihood. This is evidenced by the fact that, in respect of the men trained in the Madras Sanskrit College and passed out of the University at their Oriental Title Examination, the last Annual Report shows that appointments to the educational department afford the only scope for them and that, even here, only two have so far succeeded in getting employed. Poor prospects these!

SANSKRIT AND ENGLISH SCHOOLS COMPARED.

However, our idea in starting Patasalas and kindred institutions is primarily to revive our ancient learning, religion, etc. The first point to be noted is that every revival pre-supposes a decline; and that if the cause of the decline be not ascertained and remedied, attempts to correct the decline must be obviously fruitless. The second point to be made clear is, is the real cause of the decline the want of Patasalas and institutions of that kind, or is it the want of ways of living in after-life for those that may be trained through them or through other agencies? The answer, of course, would be that it is the latter. We know that the existing Pandits and Vedic Scholars are suffering for want of encouragement, i.e., demand for their services, and are pining away on little wages and less honour. Is it then the policy of statesmanship to add to the supply when the demand is steadily growing less? For instance, let us compare and see how other nations and other religionists are working, and are enabling themselves, to work, for the maintenance and development of their language, culture, religion, etc. Do we not see that while our Patasalas, including the Sanskrit Colleges of Madras and Tiruvadi, have to be kept up by subsidising, with food and clothing, poor boys who come in simply because they could not afford to pay for English education, parents of our would-be-English-literates have to beg on bended knees the Principals and Headmasters of English Schools and Colleges for the admission of their children, offering to pay high fees sometimes even out of proportion to their capacity, to pay for costly text-books not only abundant in number but changing with almost every year, and to take the risk of difficult examinations. As these are patent facts, and as any commentary is needless, I do not propose to dwell on them. I simply put it to you whether, if to-day English is not to be the medium of all education that leads to the services and honoured professions, the same

process as we are adopting in regard to the Patasalas will not have to be adopted to fill English Schools and to keep up the knowledge of the English language?

THE KEY TO THE REVIVAL OF SANSKRIT AND VERNACULARS.

Now, is it possible or desirable to make Sanskrit or the vernaculars perform all the functions that English now does? No, it is neither. For India under modern conditions, English must be the common language for all the higher purposes of Government and public life. But may I ask, are there not other ways of living which could be made equally paying and honourable. India is an old nation arranged in various labours or ways of living with special education likewise arranged for each; and it is intended that these labours should be maintained under the force of responsibility on the part of all people, for keeping up the demand for each other's labour at any cost or temporary disadvantage. India's survival as a nation and to the extent that it does when all the contemporary nations have vanished into time is due to this system of social division and in proportion to this sense of responsibility. As Sir Valentine Chirol wrote to me sometime ago referring to the proceedings of the last Varnashrama Dharma Conference, which I would like to call the Madras Provincial Sociological Conference, no other system of social disposition "would have enabled Hindu Society to maintain its vitality and cohesion through long centuries of internal commotion and repeated foreign invasions and migrations." But, by our ignorance and lack of responsibility we have disemployed many of our brethren, we have disestablished many of our independent labours, and to that degree impaired our cohesion, vitality and staying power. With the disappearance of the diversified labours, went out the diversified education that we had for each labour, and with them our literature and our languages. Now, if these are the steps in the decline, they must be the steps by which we must ascend. If the disemploying of our brethren of their long-standing labours to Society be the 'fons et origo mali,' the re-employing of them and the reinstating of the various kinds of vocational education for which the language of one's home and one's own country is the most suitable, must be the steps in the ascent. Then will be furnished the necessary scope for the vernaculars to live, grow and develop. Then would it be possible to requisition and pay for the services of religion and Sanskrit culture, etc., in more generous measure than now. The result would be that we get economic stability and permanent restoration of religion, Sanskrit and vernaculars at one endeavour. This consummation, I venture to think, can be secured only in the manner above outlined and in no other, whatever our well-intentioned publicists or benevolent Government may do. But when that is done, as sure as night follows the day, Patasalas would become necessary in even greater fulness and in larger numbers, just as more and more English professional colleges

are now wanted to meet the growing demand for the men trained in them.

THE FUNCTIONS OF A TEMPLE-PATASALA.

Now, Gentlemen, kindly ponder over these statements and satisfy yourselves if they are true. If they are, let them be propagated and accepted as guides in practical life by all who mean well for our country and for our civilisation. And what other institution can do this work of training preachers and propagandists than a Patasala established under the auspices, and with the help, of one of the shrines of our land? Of course, arrangements should exist side by side to employ the men so trained on handsome and attractive salaries, like their analogues among other nations. A Patasala maintained from temple funds should also have as its first aim the training of Priests for the temple and domestic rituals, to serve Hindus of all castes, like the great Church and Mission Organisations of the Western Nations. The funds of Devasthanam may also be specially devoted to the propagation of Hinduism and of its Kshethra, Sthala and Theertha Mahatmyas and of the universal ideals of our ancient religion—ideals which could not be better expressed than in the prayer, in regard to which familiarity should not breed irreverence, contained in the words "Lokah Samastha Sukhino Bhavanthu." In fact, what I advocate is the creation of a religious or ecclesiastic service for the country. I use the words in their widest and most comprehensive sense. For this purpose, each Devasthanam should not act in self-sufficient isolation. When the funds of each Devasthanam have been applied for its fullest purposes, it must extend its helping hand to such other Devasthanams in the district as may need help. In this manner, all Devasthanams in the Presidency may be federated and worked as a whole. When this is done, what a number of Brahmins would find congenial and remunerative occupation—Brahmins who, till a generation or two back, entered into no competition with other classes in the field of non-religious employments! And what relief would that mean to the great tension that now exists and threatens to grow between and seriously harm, all component parts of our national family, a tension that is due to nothing more than a struggle for existence! In any case, a "Patasala maintained from temple finance should be a special school for equipping people who had already had a certain kind and quantity of preliminary education for certain specific services connected with religion, to which they should be harnessed immediately after the close of such equipment on suitable conditions of pay, etc. While every labour should have its own special education, religious labour should not be an exception. In fact, education should be organised. In the words of Mr. Bhole, I. C. S., the Dewan of Cochin, "the aim of society is not to metamorphose one who might with appropriate training become an efficient artisan into a third-rate clerk or to

induce the son of an agriculturist to seek the *summum bonum* in an office attender's post, but to increase their efficiency in their own walk of life unless specially fitted for another career, in which case the door is always open for the really competent." Acting in the light of this principle, let Hindu temple Patasalas be organs for the elucidation and propagation of Hindu religion and practice. At all events temple money should not be used for purposes other than those above indicated.

DIVERSION OF TEMPLE FUNDS

There is, however, now a school of thought that pleads for the diversion of temple funds to non-temple or non religious purposes. While I do not for a moment question the excellent intentions of those that advocate it, I must say, as I have always said, that it is wrong. It is we that once endowed these temples. The idea, now, of taking that away, instead of continuing to give, shows the condition in which we are at present. It is of course an understandable act of automaticity, like bloodless organs drawing upon organs better supplied with that vital fluid. But it is wrong all the same. Do other nations, whom we rightly copy in several respects, use or have the need to use Church money for non-church purposes in their own country? They may use it in other countries and that for purposes akin to religion or connected with its propagation. And after all, how does the much-talked-of surplus accumulate in temples? Are the gentlemen who talk of temple-surpluses satisfied that the legitimate purposes of the temples are now fulfilled? How do our priests compare with Christian priests and clergymen? Do they afford no room for improvement in the matter of culture and character, leave alone *Tapasic* power? Are our temple establishments adequately paid so as to attract men who would do their duty well and not bring discredit on the institutions they serve? Do we, the educated classes, that speak in the name of Hindu temples and give authoritative assurance that their finances could be diverted without prejudice to their original object or violence to the sentiments of our brethren, really believe in them, and show our belief in our actions, individual and collective? Is it not a fact that in every town where there is a church, the educated Christian feels the force of public opinion, so much, let alone the promptings of his own self, that he will think twice before he gives up his regular Sunday attendance? Looking to ourselves, educated Hindus, are we not more shy than proud, to be considered regular temple-goers for fear we may be herded with women and old men? Again, let us honestly ask, are our temples themselves so worked as to attract the average educated Hindu, however pious and religiously minded he may be?

DHARMA RAKSHANA SABHAS.

A word in regard to the Dharma Rakshana Sabha, whose object is to protect the interests of temples and to which our heartiest

thanks are due for the work it has been doing. Now, there is the misgiving which, I know, is felt in several quarters, that the Sabha is more concerned with the safe guarding of temple revenues against misappropriation than their application to the purposes which temples are intended to serve in the economy of Hindu national life. To an outsider, the sight of a temple like Madura, making revenue by converting several of its prominent portions as stalls for the vending of all and sundry, of temples like Chidambaram, Rameswaram and Tirupati levying a tax on worshippers for worship and giving of offering—is one that would make angels weep. Talking as one with perhaps deficient knowledge both of facts and reasons, I must say that the Dharma Rakshana Sabha has yet to impress the people with the feeling that it is as much concerned with the internal administration of the temples and making them pure and perfect houses of God as with the safeguarding of their revenues. Otherwise, especially when the public mind is disturbed by the views occasionally expressed by some Dharma Rakshana Sabha members regarding the diversion of temple finances, the average Hindu must be pardoned if he should think that many of those that so express themselves do not honestly believe in temples and act more from a desire to see money secured so as to be kept available for other purposes eventually. This is certainly a distrust which is fatal to the interest of the Sabha's usefulness and which, speaking personally, I emphatically think it does not deserve. But it is just as well to take note of the fact.

CHATHRAMS AND THEIR FUNDS.

Some again come forward with the proposal to utilise the funds and savings of chathrams and choultries on general education and institutions like hospitals, schools, etc. On the making of supplies and services to these chathrams hinge a number of independent labours; and to them, pilgrims of all classes have learnt to look for shelter and assistance. But is charity-giving to be a perennial thing for all people and for all time? Man does not depend on charity unless he is so ordained by society as in the case of the Brahmin; nor do any other classes seek relief in a charity house, unless opportunities for self-dependent ways of living are lessened. But chathram funds are primarily intended for the religious class of Hindu Society and by way of remuneration as it were, for doing religious services which, if they are not doing now, they must be made to do. These funds should not ordinarily be spent on other people or for other purposes. They could be expended in directions to which temple surplus could justly go. This does not mean—and it is foolish to think so—that the other, i.e., non-religious classes, should be neglected and allowed to starve. In the past, it is these latter classes that endowed these chathrams. Of course, they are now reduced, in the general economic depression of the country, to the

state of need and temptation for going in for what they have themselves given. What I propose is that all of us, Brahmin, Kshathriya, Vaisya and Sudra, should work together and elevate the producing classes of our society. Instead of reducing them to depend on their own former charity or trying to help them with unproductive labour, or with education that fits them for it only, our ambition ought to be to reinstall them in their old self-dependent productive labours and enable them to continue to be the lords and supporters of the religious class. The inscriptions recently unearthed and referred to by Sir S. Subramania Aiyar the other day only strengthen this view. None of them support temple and chattram money being expended on other than the religious class or for purposes not connected with religion or religious culture.

NATTUKOTTAI CHETTIES AND TEMPLE RENOVATION.

Speaking in this city, I must not omit to mention the name of the Nattukottai Chetties. It is the fashion now-a-days to find fault with them for their temple-building programmes and to view with ill-concealed smile, bordering on disfavour their old-world spirit. The Nattukottai Chetties are a great community, deeply imbued with the instincts of 'Bhutadaya' (kindness to fellow creatures) and 'Daiva Bhakti' (devotion to God), and whoever, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, damps their charitable ardour or lightly seeks to divert their traditional charities incurs a grave responsibility. Yes, Nattukottai Chetties are the great temple-builders. And are not temples the chief remembrancers of our ancient greatness in religion, fine arts, etc.? Should they be allowed to go to ruins? Should they not be improved and even beautified? Do we not know how much skilled and other labour temple-building gives to our people and how much it has done to keep up the various arts of carpentry, masonry, painting, indigenous engineering, etc.? By keeping up thus industrial labours of various kinds, temple-building keeps up industrial education, and to that extent conserves the vernacular language. If we decry therefore—I don't say we do—but if we decry temple-building, and do it in the service of education generally and of the vernaculars in particular, shall we not be destroying what we seek to preserve? Here, the misuse of the word education should be noted. That which enables a person to earn his living by doing a service to society is education. And are not the various kinds of education just referred to, education in that sense? Is the mere literary education of our schools creating a rush to Government service and the bar, the only education?

REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

"Copper-plate Inscriptions belonging to the Sankaracharya of the Kamakoti Petha."—*Edited by Mr. T. A. Gopinatha Rao, M.A., Superintendent of Archaeology, Travancore State ; 137 pages. Price : not stated.*

Archæologists and others interested in the History of South India would welcome this nice publication of the copper-plate inscriptions preserved in the treasury of the Sankaracharya Mutt now at Kumbakonam. Our congratulations are due to Mr. Gopinatha Rao for the excellent manner of his work, and we beg to offer our profound and respectful thanks to His Holiness the present Swami of the Mutt for having commanded the editing of these valuable historical records. We feel sure that a similar publication of all the inscriptions preserved in the other mutts of India would somewhat tend to lift the veil that now hangs before some dark periods of Indian History, and we hope that the example of the enlightened Swami of the Kamakoti Petha would be followed by all other mathadipathis.

The grants under review are ten in number, the earliest bearing a date corresponding to A.D. 1291 and the latest, A.D. 1687. Nine of them record the grant of villages or lands to the mutt, while the last one purports to be a gift of some lands belonging to the mutt to a certain Brahmin on the occasion of a lunar eclipse. Five of the records are in Nandinagari character, two in Telugu and one each in Grantha, Tamil and Nagari. As regards the language of the grants, six are in Sanskrit, one in Tamil, one in Telugu, one in Telugu and Sanskrit, and one in Sanskrit, Telugu and Persian. The Emperors of the Vijayanagar dynasty are responsible for five grants, the Teluguchoda King Vijayagandagopala has made one grant, the Nayak ruler of Madura, one, the vassals of the Tondaman Raja of Pudukota, one, and the Moghul Emperor, one.

The records show that the Kamakoti Petha was situated at Conjeeveram till 1686, and that, owing to the frequent raids of the Mussalmans, it was first temporarily removed to Tanjore, and finally to Kumbakonam. Incidentally we learn some details of the civilisation of South India, and of the beneficial results of the mutt.

The most important of these grants is, undoubtedly, the *firman* of the Moghul Emperor Bahadur Shah ; coming as it does from the immediate successor of the bigoted and iconoclast Aurangazib, it appears like a silver lining in a dark cloud, and forcibly reminds us of the religious policy pursued by these two rulers. Bahadur Shah was not the only Mussalman ruler to countenance other faiths than his own. The records in the Sringeri Mutt go to show that that

Petha was to some extent patronised by the Muhammadan rulers of Mysore.

The printing and get-up of the work leave nothing to be desired, and reflect great credit on the proprietors of the Law Printing House, Madras. We should not, in this connection, omit to convey our warm thanks to Mr. S. Rm. M. Ct. Pethachi Chettiar, the liberal-minded Zemindar of Andipatti, who undertook to bear the expense of printing the book and enabled its publication possible.

"The Maxims of Tiruvalluvar."—Translated into English by Mr. V. V. S. Ayyar, 89, Dharmaraja Covil Street, Pondicherry. Pages xliv—278. Price Rs. 2-12-0.

India is pre-eminently rich in the possession of a large number of moral and ethical codes. Several of them are connected with, or attributed to the names of Gods or rishis, e.g., Manu, Vyasa, Yajñavalkya, Parasara, etc. We do not know for certain whether they are genuine works or literary forgeries. Works of individual authorship, however, are not wanting. Kautilya's "Arthashastra," and Kamandaki's "Nitishara" are but two examples of such genuine works in Sanskrit, and Tiruvalluvar's "Kural," is the best and first ethical code in Tamil.

Kautilya's Arthashastra has recently been edited and translated into English, and we are thereby enabled to have an exact idea of the ancient form of Hindu polity. The 'Kural' can also be made to yield such fascinating results, and the first step in that direction is the publication of a scholarly translation of that work into the English language.

Messrs. Ellis, Drew, Robinson, Lazarus and Pope have made translations into English of the whole or portions of Kural at various dates between 1820 and 1886. It is needless to point out that these translations were far from accurate. The authors, to whom Tamil was not their mother-tongue, could not bring out the force or beauty of the original, and it was reserved for Mr. V. V. S. Ayyar to publish a translation wherein the spirit of the original has been so beautifully preserved.

The author of the original, Tiruvalluvar, is supposed to be an outcaste, the child of a Brahman father and a Pariah mother. We are not inclined to believe in this tradition. We may as well say that nothing is known of the parentage of the author. He was a moralist, and his fame and name had such a hold on the minds of the Tamils that he was canonised, and a special temple in his honour was erected at Mylapore.

The Kural, which derives its name from the metre employed therein, is a didactic work, and has been broadly divided into three parts, corresponding to Dharma, Artha and Kama. The manifold

duties of the householder and the life of the ascetic have been treated in the first part. The author seems to have faith in the Karmic theory of life, and says, "What is there that is mightier than Destiny? For even as its victim is meditating a plan to overcome it, it forestalleth him and bringeth him down." And yet his outlook of life is not gloomy, but healthy and cheerful. The second part, treating of wealth, is a comprehensive discourse on politics and economy addressed chiefly to a prince. Not a single function of the statesman is unfamiliar to the author. He pleads for the preservation of order in the State and abhors anarchy and misgovernment. The duties of a ruler, his ministers, etc., have been detailed with a minuteness that is characteristic of the poet. The third and last part, treating of Love, is a masterpiece, containing as it does a delicate analysis of the hundred varying moods of the lover's heart. Space forbids us from giving extracts from this classic, and we sincerely recommend this translation to all those that are unable to read and appreciate the original.

There is an excellent critical introduction to the work, and the Brahmavadin Press is to be congratulated for the neat get-up of the volume.

It may be of interest to our readers that Kural has been translated into German and Latin by Doctor Graul, into French by M. Ariel, M. de Dumast and M. Lamairesse. A Sanskrit translation, in fragments, appeared in the pages of the "Sanskrit Journal" published at Kumbakonam some years ago.

Pre-Mussalman India.—By Mr. M. S. Nalesan, Teacher, Hindu Secondary School, Trichinopoly. Sri Vani Vilas Press, Srirangam. Pages xxi—138. Price Re. 1-8-0.

This is an attempt to give out in simple language the broad and salient features of early Indian History and civilisation. The author has avoided all topics which are either controversial or doubtful, and has wisely refrained from hazarding his opinion on any theories. But we cannot but remark that the information given in the book is meagre and in some respects wanting in proportion. For instance, in a work professing to relate to the pre-Mussalman period, he has detailed the life of Muhammad the Prophet in about four pages, while he has dismissed the founder of Jainism in a short paragraph of twelve lines. Lord Buddha fares better with four pages. While two pages have been devoted to the Cholas, the poor Pandyas are to rest content with only four lines and the Cheras, seven lines. "Society in the Epic Age" has been laconically described in ten lines. The work, as a whole, suggests the idea of "notes" jotted down to be amplified later on. The inclusion of a few maps, a bibliography and last, but not the least, an index would have greatly added to the value of the book.

THE RAMAKRISHNA STUDENTS' HOME.

Those who have been watching the work and progress of the various institutions in Madras that have been toiling for the amelioration of the condition of the student population and the environments under which they have to carry on their studies would not have failed to observe the notable results of the work attempted and achieved in this direction by THE RAMAKRISHNA STUDENTS' HOME located in Mylapore. The Home, which owes its birth to the late SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA'S love of humanity and deep interest in the welfare of students, was started in the year 1905 with the object of affording *free* boarding and lodging to Hindu students sufficiently intelligent but too poor to prosecute their studies. It has been in existence for the last twelve years and that it has steadily increased in usefulness and grown into importance would be evident from the fact that the number of boarders has risen from 10 in 1905 to 80 in the present year and the income from public donations and subscriptions has gone up from about Rs. 400 at the commencement to over Rs. 6,000 for 1916. Several students have passed through this institution and are now occupying decent stations in life with credit to themselves and to the Home. The Home has had the privilege of being visited by several distinguished visitors including principals and professors of Colleges and the head of the Educational Department of the Government, one and all of whom have borne testimony to the excellent work done by this institution and its usefulness to the students.

2. An education that aims merely at the cultivation of the intellect and pays little or no attention to religious training and the development of character does not represent real culture and it has therefore been the steady aim and endeavour of those responsible for the management of the Home not merely to impart religious instruction to the inmates but also to give them a training in the habits of self-reliance, co-operation and service.

3. It must be a matter of keen regret to all true lovers of education that an institution intended for the benefits of Hindu youths in general irrespective of caste distinctions, with such lofty ideals and with such a record of work behind it, has no permanent habitation which it could call its own. The ordinary buildings available for rent are not obviously suited for the purposes of a student's home; and because of the steady growing demand of the Home for additional accommodation as shown by the fact that a large number of applications is pouring in from all parts of the Presidency, the construction of permanent and suitable buildings for the location of the Home has become imperative and can no longer be deferred.

4. Fortunately for the Home, one of its ardent supporters, Mr. S. G. Srinivasa Raghava Chariar, District Munsif, Panruti, has made a generous gift to the Home of a big plot of land in Mylapore, measuring over 15 grounds in extent and it is this generosity that encourages us to make an appeal to the public to come forward and supplement this help by liberal donations towards the construction of suitable buildings for the Home. The buildings should accommodate at least 100 boarders and for this purpose at least 36 rooms are necessary. The probable cost of the entire buildings is roughly estimated at a lakh of rupees and we venture to think that the estimate is far from extravagant considering the present needs of the Home and the immediate necessity that there is for extending its scope and usefulness. One of the several ways in which this scheme could be helped forward is by each donor undertaking to defray the cost of construction of one or two rooms. Appropriate brass tablets will perpetuate the memory of such generous help to succeeding generations.

5. The gift of education is regarded as the noblest of all forms of charity. The general advancement of the community in all directions depends in the greatest measure upon the spread of culture throughout the country. The endeavour of the Home has throughout been to place education, in the truest sense of the term, within the reach of the poor students of the land. Will it be too much to hope that philanthropic and public-spirited ladies and gentlemen all over the country will enthusiastically come forward to render such assistance as they can to this scheme and that before long the Home would be enabled by their help to have a commodious habitation of its own, suited to the modern requirements of such institutions?

Subscriptions, however small, may be sent to—

Swami Sharvananda, President, The "Ramakrishna Students Home," Mylapore,

or

S. Vasudevachariar, B.A., L.T., Treasurer, "The Ramakrishna Students' Home," Mylapore,

or

C. Ramaswami Aiyangar, B.A., Secretary, "The Ramakrishna Students' Home," Mylapore.

All communications in connection with this appeal may be made to

The Secretary,

"The Ramakrishna Students' Home,"

Mylapore.

BRAHMANANDA,
President,
The Ramakrishna Mission.

GENERAL NEWS.

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram at Brindavan sends us a favourable report of its humanitarian work in that holy city of Sri Krishna. In a place where thousands of pilgrims flock from all parts of India and medical aids most inadequately metted out from one small municipal hospital, the necessity and utility of an institution like the Sevashram in reference can better be seen and felt than described. In the month of April, there were about 30 in-patients, of which 20 were discharged cured, one died, and 9 still under treatment. During the period there were about 3,265 out-door patients. Besides these, nine persons were helped with medicine and doctor's attendance in their own respective homes. The accounts of the month show Rs. 325-3-9 as the total receipts, and the total expenditure Rs. 530-18-0. The Sevashram is badly in need of a permanent building of its own, for which it has already made an appeal to the generous public, which we sincerely hope will be responded to adequately.

In the year 1914, a Ramakrishna Sevashram was started in Tamaluk, the great Tamralipti of ancient fame. The Ashrama has been doing very good work in rendering aids in various ways to the distressed and needy of the town. Sometimes strangers coming to the place for trade or other purposes fall ill and suffer without getting any medical treatment and care. The Ashrama people search out such suffering ones, bring them to the Ashrama and nurse them with all attention and care till they are cured. Those suffering from age and infirmity are also helped by the Ashrama. Srijukta Sripati Charan Basu, a reputed Vakil of the place, has earned sincere gratitude of the people by dedicating a piece of land for the permanent building of the Ashrama; and with the help of the charitable public, we are glad to hear, the building work has sufficiently advanced. We hope and pray that the building may ere long be completed and the Sevashrama may extend its pious work of the 'worship of the Divine in the poor and afflicted' more and more every day.

We are glad to receive the First Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Home of service, Silchar, 1916. The idea of organising a Sevashrama at Silchar was first conceived by Swami Bhumanandaji of Belur Math who went there with the noble object of alleviating the distress of flood-stricken people of the district of Cachar; the young men of the town showed much enthusiasm and it was practically realised in September 1915. Besides giving relief to the diseased, poor and the needy, the Home of Service has opened one Vivekananda Night School for imparting free education to the so-called depressed classes.

We print elsewhere an appeal made by His Holiness Swami Brahmanandaji the President of the Ramakrishna Mission for the building of the Ramakrishna Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras. The appeal speaks for itself. The foundation stone of the future building was laid on the gift site with adequate religious ceremonies on the 6th May last by His Holiness Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj during his sojourn in Madras. We hope through his blessings and kind co-operation of our friends and well-wishers the building will soon be an accomplished fact.

अत्रैव देवः स्वप्ने महिमानमनुभवति । यदृष्टं दृष्टमनुपश्यति श्रुतं श्रुतमेवार्थमनुसृणोति देशदिगन्तरं च प्रत्यनुभूतं पुनः पुनः प्रत्यनुभवति दृष्टं चादृष्टं च श्रुतं चाश्रुतं चानुभूतं चाननुभूतं च सच्चासच्च सर्वं पश्यति सर्वः पश्यति ॥ ३ ॥

एषः this देवः god (mind) अत्र here स्वप्ने in dream महिमानं grandeur (power) अनुभवति perceives (enjoys) यत् what दृष्टं दृष्टं whatever seen अनुपश्यति sees again श्रुतं श्रुतं एव whatever heard अर्थ object अनुसृणोति hears again देशदिगन्तरैः in different places and quarters च also प्रत्यनुभूतं perceived पुनः पुनः again and again प्रत्यनुभवति is perceived दृष्टं seen च and अदृष्टं unseen, श्रुतं heard अश्रुतं unheard अनुभूतं perceived अननुभूतं unperceived च and सच्चा real असच्चा unreal सर्वं all पश्यति sees (स्वयमपि itself) सर्वः all (सत् being) पश्यति sees.

Here, in this state, the god enjoys its power in dream,—it sees again whatever has been seen before, hears whatever has been heard before, enjoys again what have been enjoyed in different places and quarters. It sees all becoming all, that has been seen and unseen, heard and unheard, perceived and unperceived, real and unreal.

[Note.—When all the senses lie dormant in sleep the mind builds up in dream a world of its own out of the impressions received in the awakened state and enjoys the visions. All the different component parts of a dream are impressions of actual experiences obtained, it may be, in different times, but they are curiously and fantastically linked together in sleep when the controlling power of both reason and will is absent, and so we find that we experience things in dream that we have never seen or heard in the awakened state. But ordinary dreams can be better explained physiologically than by mere psychology, although there are dream-phenomena that directly prove the existence of Psychic mind and the *Linga Sarira* of man.

Enjoys its power—i.e., unlike the awakened state, enjoys its single nature untrammelled by the senses.]

स यदा तेजसाऽभिभूतो भवति । अत्रैष देवः स्वप्नान् पश्यत्यथ तदैतस्मिञ्छरीरे एतत्सुखं भवति ॥ ६ ॥

सः he (the mind) यदा when तेजसा with the power अभिभूतः overpowered भवति becomes अत्र here (in this condition) एषः this देवः god (the Jivatman) स्वप्नान् the dreams न पश्यति does not see. तदा then एतस्मिन् शरीरे in this body एतत् this सुखं bliss भवति becomes (is enjoyed).

When it is overcome by the power, the god sees not the dream,—then in the body the bliss is enjoyed.

[It is overcome by the power.—In the original the word is *tejasā* which means light as well as power. Sankaracharya explains it as “the light of the sun, which is called *chitta* and is in the nerves,” but it rather obscures than explains the term. Ordinarily, the mind is conceived as a self-effulgent light lighting up everything it comes into contact with ; but in the deep sleep that self-effulgence of the mind is overpowered for the time being by some other power which might be of the Nature or the body, and of the *Tamasic* kind.

Then in the body, etc.—i.e., the blissful calm repose of the deep sleep which has a ray of that beatific peace enjoyed in the super-conscious state.]

स यथा सौम्य वयांसि वासोवृक्षं संप्रतिष्ठन्ते ।
एवं ह वै तत्सर्वं पर आत्मनि संप्रतिष्ठते ॥ ७ ॥

हे सौम्य O my young friend (*lit* good-looking man) वयांसि the birds यथा as वासोवृक्षं the tree where they roost संप्रतिष्ठन्ते run towards, एवं so ह verily तत् that सर्वं all these परे the superior आत्मनि in the Atman संप्रतिष्ठते go (are established).

As birds, my young friend, go to the tree to roost, so all those rest in the superior Atman.

[All those.—i.e., what are delineated in the next Brahmana.

Superior Atman.—i.e., the jivatman,—the atman related to body etc.]

पृथिवी च पृथिवीमात्रा चापश्चापोमात्रा च तेजश्च तेजोमात्रा च वायुश्च वायुमात्रा चाकाशश्चाकाशमात्रा च चक्षुश्च द्रष्टव्यं च श्रोत्रं च श्रोतव्यं च घ्राणं च घ्रातव्यं च रसश्च रसयितव्यं च त्वक्च स्पर्शयितव्यं च वाक्च वक्तव्यं च हस्तौ चादातव्यं चोपस्थश्चानन्दयितव्यं च पायुश्च विसर्जयितव्यं च पादौ च गन्तव्यं च मनश्च मन्तव्यं च बुद्धिश्च बोद्धव्यं चाहंकारश्चाहकतव्यं च चित्तं च चेतयितव्यं च तेजश्च विद्योतयितव्यं च प्राणश्च विधारयितव्यं च ॥ ८ ॥

पृथिवी earth पृथिवीमात्रा the subtle earth element च also, आपः water आपोमात्रा the subtle water element, तेजः light तेजोमात्रा the light element वायुः the air, वायुमात्रा the subtle air element, आकाशः the ether, आकाशमात्रा the ether element, चक्षुः the eye द्रष्टव्यं object of sight, श्रोत्रं the ear, श्रोतव्यं the object of hearing, घ्राणं the smell, घ्रातव्यं the object of smell, रसं taste रसयितव्यं the object of taste, त्वक् the touch स्पर्शयितव्यं the object of touch, वाक् speech वक्तव्यं the object of speech (i.e., what can be spoken) हस्तौ the two hands, आदातव्यं what can be taken, उपस्थं the organ of generation आनन्दयितव्यं the object of enjoyment, पायुः the organ of excretion विसर्जयितव्यं the object of excretion पादौ the two legs गन्तव्यं what can be walked upon, मनः the mind, मन्तव्यं the object of thought, बुद्धिः the intellect बोद्धव्यं the object of intellection, अहंकारः the ego अहंकर्तव्यं the object of egoism चित्तं the memory चेतयितव्यं the object of memory तेजः the light विद्योतयितव्यं what is to be lighted up प्राणः the Prāna (Energy) विधारयितव्यं what can be held up, (एते सर्वे आत्मनि संप्रतिष्ठन्ते all these rest in the Atman.)

Earth and its subtle element, Water and its subtle element, Light and its subtle element, Air and its subtle element, Ether and its subtle element, the eyes and what can be seen, the smell and what can be

smelt, the taste and what can be tasted, the touch and what can be touched, the organ of speech and what can be spoken, the hands and what can be taken, the organ of generation and its object of enjoyment, the organ of excretion and what can be excreted, the feet and what can be walked upon, the mind and what can be thought of, the intellect and what can be comprehended, the ego and the object of egoism, the memory and its object, the light and what can be lighted up, the Prana and what is to be sustained (—all these rest in the superior Atman in deep sleep).

[*Note.*—All the gross and subtle elements with their respective senses of perception, all the organs, both motor and sensory, all intellections, even the egoism rest unmanifested in deep sleep in the Atman. Then the Jiva remains in his *Karana* sarira vested in Avidya alone without the further super-imposition of her ramifications or products. In this sense deep sleep can be called nearer to the native glory of the Atman than even the awakened state.]

एष हि द्रष्टास्मृष्टा श्रोता घ्राता रसयिता मन्ता बोद्धा कर्ता
विज्ञानात्मा पुरुषः । स परेऽक्षरे आत्मनि संप्रतिष्ठते ॥ ९ ॥

एषः He हि verily द्रष्टा the seer, स्मृष्टा the feeler, श्रोता the hearer घ्राता he who smells, रसयिता the taster, मन्ता the thinker, बोद्धा the perceiver, the knower, कर्ता the doer विज्ञानात्मा the self of knowledge पुरुषः the person (with all the qualifying adjuncts.) सः he परे supreme अक्षरे immutable, imperishable आत्मनि Atman संप्रतिष्ठते is established.

It is he who sees, feels, hears, smells, tastes, thinks, knows ; he is the doer, the intelligent soul, the Purusha. He is established in the supreme immutable Atman.

[*Note.*—Here the Brahmana refers to the Jivatman inasmuch as the intelligence of the Jivatman makes all perception and intellection possible, the senses and the mind being only instruments through which it acts, or better, for whose existence the mind and he senses function.

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. IV.] JUNE AND JULY, 1917. [No. 2 & 3.

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA.*

Different God-Visions and Brahma-Jnana.

The Master has now seated himself on the small cot in his room,—and is still continuing to be in the Bhava. Constantly he is in the mood. He is now looking at Rakhal with the eye of that Bhava (*Bhava Chakshu*) and is being filled with the tender feeling of paternal love ; and there is horripilation in the body.

Even while looking at him he enters into Samadhi and all the devotees assembled in the room are beholding this Bhava state of the Master in speechless wonderment. Coming down to the natural state, the Master observes : "Do you know, why there comes an awakening at the sight of Rakhal ? The more you advance (towards God), the more you will find His attributive grandeur falling off. The first vision a Sadhaka gets is of the ten-handed form (Durga)—in the form of the Supreme Mistress of the Universe. In that form there is a great expression of power and grandeur. Next, She appears in two-handed form,—then no more are there the ten hands with all the respective weapons. Next comes the vision of Gopal form,—then there is absolutely no expression of power and grandeur,—simply it is the form of a tender child. There is a vision even superior to this,—the vision of the effulgent Light.

* Translated from the original *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita* by M.

"After attaining to God, after the attainment of Samadhi in Him, one feels no necessity of *Jnana Vichara* (the self-discrimination of knowledge). *Jnana Vichara* is possible only so long as there is the perception of multiplicity—so long as one has the consciousness of 'I,' 'thou', the world, the Jiva etc. When dawns the real knowledge of the absolute unity, there comes the perfect quietude to the man. As it was the case with Trylinga Swami.

"Have you not noticed it in the feast? At first you hear a good deal of noise,—but the more the dishes are served to the guests and their hunger is appeased, the less becomes the noise; and when the last course of curd and sweets is served, then you hear no other noise but one of gentle 'soop', 'sap' only. Next comes the sleep—Samadhi. Then there is absolutely no noise.

"There are many who speak of Brahma Jnana but themselves remain constantly occupied with lower things,—such as house, money, name, sense-enjoyments etc. As long as you remain down at the foot of the monument, you see only the pedestrians, the equipages, the houses, etc. but when you ascend to the top of it, you notice only one expansive sky unrolling the infinity, then you find no satisfaction with those things below, they appear like mean crawling insects.

"When there dawns the real knowledge of Brahman, all attachment for the world, all pleasures in woman and wealth, disappear. There comes then a perfect cessation of all these (passions). While burning, wood makes much crackling noise, but when it is wholly burnt and reduced to ashes, no more do you hear the sound. With the destruction of attachment disappears also the keenness of the thirst (for pleasure)—finally comes Peace.

"The more you approach God, the more you will get Peace—Peace, Peace, the Supreme Peace. The nearer you go to the Ganges, the greater you will feel the coolness;—still cooler will you feel on bathing.

"But, Jiva, Jagat and all the twenty-four Principles exist simply because He is. Nothing remains if you eliminate Him. When you put zeros only after one, it increases the value, but delete the one, the zeros will have no value."

Perhaps to show his grace to the devotees the Master now hints at his own state.

Sri Ramakrishna :—"Yet, there are some who come down and remain with 'the ego of knowledge', or 'the ego of devotion', even after the attainment of Brahma Jnana and Samadhi. Even when

the market is over, some remain in the market of their own accord such as Narada and others. They remain with 'the ego of Bhakti' to teach mankind. Sankaracharya kept his 'ego of knowledge' to teach humanity.

"He can never be attained if there be even a little of attachment. Thread can never enter into the eye of a needle if there be even the least protruding fibre.

"The passion and anger of one who has attained God, remain but in name,—in appearance only; as a burnt rope, though it has the appearance of a rope, is easily blown off by a puff!

"When the mind becomes free from all attachments, it gets His vision. Whatever appears in the pure mind is His message. What is pure mind is the same as pure intellect, and again the same as pure Atman: for there is nothing truly pure except the Lord.

"But attaining to Him, one transcends both Dharma and Adharma (virtue and vice)," and with these words he begins to sing in his inimitable voice the following song of Ramaprasad.—

Come, let us have a stroll, O Mind,
There wilt thou get four fruits* under the wish-yielding tree of Kali.
Of thy two consorts Passion and Dispassion, take Dispassion with thee;
And truth thou shouldst ask of her son, the Righteous Discrimination
(Viveka).
The goats of Dharma and Adharma let thee tie down to the poles of
Insignificance;
If they be not amenable, sacrifice them with thy sword of Knowledge.

A STUDY IN THE MANTRA SHĀSTRA (The Tattvas)

BY

Arthur Avalon.

A knowledge of this subject involves an understanding of the thirty-six Shaiva-shākta Tattvas. Thus it is said that Shakti is in Shakti-tattva, Nāda in Sādākhya Tattva, Bindu in Īshvara-Tattva. What then are these Tattvas to which reference is made both in the Shaiva and Shākta Tantras? Unless these be fully understood no progress in knowledge of the Mantra Science as here described may be expected.

The Shaiva Shāstra calls experience by the term Vimarsha. Experience has two elements—the "I" (Aham) and the "This" (Idam); the subjective knowing aspect (Grāhaka) of the Self and

* The four kinds of Supreme Attainments—Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha.

the objective or known (Grāhya) aspect of the Self. For it must be remembered that an object is nothing but the one Self appearing through Māyā as non-Self to itself as subject. At base the experienced is nothing but the experienter : though this is not realised until the bonds of Māyā which make subject and object appear to be different are loosened. The "I" side of experience is that in which the Self rests in the light of one's own Self without looking towards another (Ananyonmukhah aham-pratyayah); just as the experience (Vimarsha) which looks towards another is called Idam (yastu anyonmukhah sa idam iti pratyayah). But this "Other" can only be the Self for there is in reality nothing but the one Self. It is experienced however, differently. In the Supreme state it exists with the Aham in a mingled union ; in the pure experience between this state and Māyā the "Other" is recognised to be an aspect of the Self ; in impure experience governed by Māyā the object appears to be different from the limited self.

Experience again is, at its two poles, Perfect Experience of the Perfect Universe and the limited experience of the three worlds of reincarnation. Between these two extremes there are intermediate experiences marking the stages whereby the one pure Spirit or Consciousness involves itself in matter.

The Hermetic maxim says "as above so below." Similarly the Vishvasāra Tantra says "What is here is there, what is not here is nowhere." Shaiva doctrine says "that which appears without, only so appears because it exists within." Therefore what exists in our experience, evolved from the Supreme also exists in the Supreme experience though in another way. The Supreme experience called Parāsamvit is not a mere abstract objectless knowing (Jñāna). It is the coalescence into one undivided unity of the "I" and the "This", that is of Shiva and the supreme unmanifested Shakti. The former is the illuminating (Prakāsha) knowing aspect and the latter that Vimarsha aspect which is "the known". But here the two are undistinguishably one. This Supreme experience has the immediacy of feeling. It is Bliss (Ānanda) which is defined as "Resting in the Self" (Svarūpa viśhrānti). In the Māyik world the Self concerns itself with what it takes to be the non-self. Here the Universe which is the object of Shiva's experience is the Perfect universe that is Supreme Shakti which is but another aspect of Himself as consciousness. She is beautifully called in the Parāpravesīkā "The heart of the Supreme Lord" (Hridayam parameshituh). For the Māyik experiencer (Māyā pramātrī) the universe is the manifested world of objects seen as different from himself. Supreme Shiva and Shakti exist in mutual

embrace and love. "Bliss is supreme love" (Niratishaya-premāspadatvam ānandatvam). The Supreme state is described by the Brihadāraṇyaka Upanishad in the words "He indeed was just as man and woman in embrace" (Sa ha etāvān āsa yathā strīpumaṅsau samparisvaktāu); when there is neither within nor without, when all thought of lover, loving and loved are forgotten in the joy of blissful unity. The experience is spaceless, timeless, full, all-knowing, almighty. This is the state of Shiva without Kalā (Nishkala) or Paramashiva. This is Parāsamvit which is beyond all Tattvas (Tattvātīta). This is the Supreme Paradise of Shiva named Kailāsa. As the perfect Universe it is called Paranāda (Supreme "Sound") and Paravāk (Supreme "Speech"), Paramashiva is an experience of the Perfect Universe that is of Paranāda (Āmarśah paranādagarbhaḥ). Such universe is pure Shakti (Shakti-svarūpa).

Our worldly experience is as it were an inverted reflexion of all this seen in the causal waters of Māyā. Māyā Shakti is the sense of difference (Bhedabuddhi) which makes the Purusha who is subject to it see the Universe in the form of an observing self with a multitude of objects conceived of as being outside of and separate from it. In the Māyik world each self excludes the other selves. In the Supreme experience there is one Self experiencing Itself. The Purusha is consciousness, subject to Māyā and the five Kanchukas which are limiting forces contracting the natural perfections of the Self. Thus the Perfect state is formless ; the world state is with form ; the first is spaceless, timeless, all-pervading ; the latter is the reverse and so forth. Kāla produces limitations of time. Niyati destroys independence (Svatantratā) regulating the Purusha as to what he should or should not do at any given moment of time. The supreme experience is full and in want of nothing (Pūrṇa). Rāga Kanchuka creates interest in objects as something other than the self and therefore desire for them. The all-knowingness (Sarvajnatā) and all mightiness (Sarvakatritā) of the Supreme Shiva are circumscribed through the action of Vidyā and Kalā and the Purusha becomes a "little knower" and "little doer."

The intermediate Tattvas next described explain the process how from the creative aspect of the Perfect Experience the imperfect World-experience comes into being. Shiva has two aspects in one of which He is Transcendent and in the other Creative and Immanent. The creative (Sakala) aspect of the Supreme Shiva (Nishkala Paramashiva) is called Shiva-tattva wherein is the Unmani Shakti previously mentioned. Through operation in His creative aspect Shiva becomes His own object as the Manifested

Universe. For in truth there is nothing else than Paramashiva. Shiva Tattva is the first creative movement (Prathama spanda) of the Unmoving Paramashiva. Shakti-tattva is only the Negative aspect of or in the Shiva-tattva. The function of Shakti is to negate (Nishedha-vyāpāra-rūpā). She who is Consciousness negates Herself that is deprives experience of the element of objectivity which is Itself as Parā Shakti. There is thus left only the other side of experience which is Prakāsha Mātra that is what we should call the "I" (Aham) side of experience when regarded as consisting of an "I" and "This" (Idam). Because in this experience there is no trace of objectivity whatsoever, either of such objectivity latent or expressed as exists in the Supreme or other lower and derived form of experience, the Shiva Tattva is called "the very void" (Shūnyātishūnya). It is the experience in which the Self is not looking towards any other (Ananyonmukhah aham-pratyayah). The objective content, so to speak, of Consciousness is a mere negation. It is Shūnya because it is empty of objective content. Shakti-tattva is also spoken of as the Will (Ichchhā) of Shiva as yet Unmanifest and inseparable from Him (Samtā-samavāyini).

This account of Shakti's operation is extraordinarily subtle explaining as it does how the supreme unitary experience is also the first source of dual experience. Such latter experience and the stages whereby the latter is fully developed can only be produced by positing an aspect in which there is a breaking up of the unitary experience. This is done by first blotting out from the Perfect experience its object or the Perfect Universe (Parāshakti, Paranāda) thus leaving a mere subjectivity. To the subjectivity thus disengaged there is again gradually unveiled the universe at first as unmanifested and then (through Māyā) as Manifested Shakti. In Parāsamvit the "I" and the "This" existed as one undistinguishable unity. In Shiva Tattva through the operation of the associated Shakti Tattva the "This" (Idam) is withdrawn from experience so that the "I—experience" (Aham vimarsha) alone remains. To this the Idam or Universe is again by degrees presented when there is no longer an undistinguishable unity of "I" and "This" but an "I—this" in which both though distinguishable are yet part of the Self which eventually through Māyā-Shakti becomes an "I" and "This" in which the two are severed the one from the other. How this occurs the description of the remaining Tattvas explains. The Shiva-Shakti Tattva is not an emanation because it ever remains the same whether in creation or dissolution. It is the seed and womb of the whole universe.

The first emanation or manifestation (Ābhāsa) of and by Consciousness is called the Sadākhyā or Sadāshiva Tattva. Here it is to be observed that the cause ever remains the same and what it was though appearing differently in the effect. The Supreme experience changelessly endures even though in its creative aspect it gives birth to the Universe. This Ābhāsa is like the vivartta of Māyāvāda the difference between the two lying in the fact that according to the former the effect is real and according to Shankara unreal. This difference again depends on the definition given of reality.

Real evolution (Parināma) in which when one thing is evolved into another it ceases to be what it was, exists only in the compounded products of the material world.

In Sadāshiva Tattva there is the commencement of the first subjective formation of ideas. It is called Nimesha (closing of the eyes) as contrasted with Unmesha (opening of the eyes) of the next stage of experience. In the former the Universe as Shakti is seen only faintly. The Self barely experiences itself as object. It is the first step in evolution and the last in involution. Unmesha is the distinct blossoming (Sphutattvam) and externalization (Bāhyatvam) of the Universe. The "This" (Idam) is faintly perceived by the "I" (Aham) as part of the one Self the emphasis being therefore on the "I" side of experience. Sadāshiva is He whom the Vaishnavas call Mahā Vishnu and the Buddhists Avalokiteshvara who sheds compassion on all. According to tradition this is the source whence the Avatāras come. It is in this Tattva that there is what the Mantra Shāstra calls Nāda Shakti.

The third stage of the developing consciousness is Īshvara-Tattva the externalization of the last. The Universe (Idam) is experienced by the "I" (Aham) distinctly and yet as part of and not separate from the one Self. As in the last experience the emphasis was on the "Aham" here it is on the "Idam." This Tattva is called Bindu in Mantra Shāstra and is so called because consciousness here completely identifies itself with the Universe as unmanifested Idam and thus subjectifies it and becomes with it a point (Bindu) of Consciousness. Thus by way of example the mind is completely subjectified and exists for each of us as a mathematical point though the body to the extent to which it is not subjectified appears as an object or extended thing.

The fourth Tattva is known as Vidyā, Sadvidyā or Shuddha-vidyā. In the experience of this stage, emphasis is equal on the "I" and the "This" (Sāmānādhikaranya). In Shiva Tattva there is the Aham Vimarsha ("I-experience"); in Sadāshiva the I-this

experience (Aham-idam Vimarsha) ; in Īshvara Tattva the Idam-aham vimarsha (This-I experience). In each case the stress is laid on the first term. In Vidyā Tattva there is an equality of either term in an experience which is that of the nature of the true relation of the Aham and the Idam consisting of a synthesis (Sanggamana) of the two on a single "basis" (Adhikarana) and not on two different "bases" according to the experience of those under the influence of Maya (Mâyāpramātri) thus eliminating the duality which exists in the latter experience.

By equality of the "I" and the "This", experience is in the state of readiness for the next stage in which the two are to be severed. Sadvidyā as being the intermediate stage between the Pure (Shuddha) and impure (Ashuddha) creation is called Parāpara-dashā. It is also spoken of as experience of difference in the form of Mantra. (Bhedābheda-vimarshanātmaka-mantrarūpa). It is experience of difference because the Idam is separated from the Aham. It is the experience of non-difference because they are still regarded as part of one Self. The experience is compared to that of the Īshvara of the Dvaitavādins who sees the Universe as different from Himself and yet as part of and in connection therewith. "All this is my manifestation" (Sarvo mamāyam vibhavaḥ). The experience is said to be in the nature of Mantra because here we are in the region of pure spiritual ideation. As yet there is no objective manifestation such as exists in our world. Below this Tattvā it is said that there were created eight Pūḍgalas, that is, Jivas in the form of knowledge (Vijnāna Rūpa) and then seven crores of Mantras and their Mandalas.

At this point Mâyā Shakti intervenes and divides the Aham and Idam, and the Kanchukas or limitations of the natural perfections of consciousness make it subject to time, space, birth and death, limitation, and desire for objects which it now conceives of as persons and things other than itself. This is the Purusha-Prakriti Tattva. Purusha in Shaiva-Shākta philosophy is the Ātmā or Shiva subject to Mâyā and to the Kanchukas which are limiting forces whereby the Self as Pure Consciousness loses its natural perfections.

Prakriti is the Shānta Shakti of Shiva in contracted form existing as the equilibrium of the Gunas which are themselves a gross form of the Shaktis of will (Ichchhā), action (Kriyā) and knowledge (Jñāna). All things exist in Her who is of the nature of feeling in a homogeneous mass. Purusha is enjoyer (Bhoktā) and Prakriti the enjoyed (Bhogyā). The latter is at first the barest objectivity seen as different from the experiencing self as Purusha.

Prakriti then differentiates into the Tattvas of Mind (Antahkharana) senses (Indriya) and matter (Bhūta) which constitutes our universe.

Purusha does not merely mean man nor indeed any animal. Every single thing in the Universe is Purusha. Thus an atom of sand is a Purusha or Consciousness identifying itself with solidity (Prithivi) manifesting its limited Consciousness as atomic memory and other ways. What Consciousness thinks, that is, identifies itself with, that it becomes.

To sum up the Supreme Experience (Parāsamvit) has a creative aspect, (Shiva-Shakti Tattva) which is a consciousness of "I" (Aham vimarsha) which gradually experiences the Universe (Idam) as part of Itself at first faintly with predominant "I" then clearly with predominant "This" and then as equal "I and This" ready for severance by Mâyā. The latter then cleaves consciousness in twain thus setting up a dichotomy of subject and object, though in truth the object is nothing but the Self as its own object. Lastly Shakti as Prakriti differentiates into the multitudinous beings which make the Universe. But throughout It is the one and only Shiva whether as the Supreme Experience or that of the Consciousness embodied in solid matter. Shakti, Nāda, Bindu mentioned in previous articles are Shakti Tattva, Sadākhyā Tattva and Īshvara Tattva here described considered from the objective stand-point of Shakti as movement.

With the Tattvas the Kalās to which I referred in the previous article are associated. These are the forms of activity (Kriyā) of the Tattvas as Shakti. Thus Srishti (Creation) is a Kalā of Brahmā, Pālani (Protection) is a Kalā of Vishnu and Mrityu (Death) is a Kalā of Rudra. It is however not always as easy to see the appropriateness of the Kalās as in the simple examples given. The Shākta Tantras speak of 94 Kalās, namely, 19 Kalās of Sadāshiva, 6 of Īshvara, 11 of Rudra, 10 of Vishnu, 10 of Brahmā, 10 of Fire, 12 of Sun, and 16 of Moon. Out of these 51 are Mātrikā Kalās which manifest through the Pashyanti, Madhyama and Vaikhari stages (Bhāva) as the gross letters (Varna). These 94 Kalās are worshipped in the Wine Jar which holds Tārādravamayī or the Saviour-Mother in liquid form. She Herself is called Samvit Kalās and so the Yoginīhrīdaya Tantra says,

Deshakālapadārthātmayadyadvastu yathā yathā

Tadladrūpena yā bhāti tām shraye Samvidam Kalām.

THE GOSPELS AND ACTS

A SHORT STUDY

The originals of the New Testament are in Greek. For the external facts connected with these documents, that is, their literary side, we may refer to *The Bible and Criticism* (The People's Books), a little work lately published giving the latest results of the investigations of European scholars into the *text* of the New Testament. This book says,

"there are known to be about 8,000 manuscript New Testaments and Lectionaries. . . . Here, then, is an immense mass of material from which to correct the text. To it is to be added the testimony of versions, and also that of patristic quotations. . . . The patristic quotations are more precarious as authorities on account of a very common habit of verbal laxity with regard to them. . . . These three sources—ancient manuscripts, versions and quotations, furnish the materials with which the textual critic works."

That is, our versions of the New Testament are derived from the above mentioned three sources.

Three types or divisions, as regards the text, are made out from these various originals :

- (1) "The Alexandrian, represented by the two oldest manuscripts, the Vatican and the Sinaitic."
- (2) "The Western—seen especially in the Codex Bezae, &c."
- (3) "The Syrian, representing a compromise and a settlement of the text perhaps made at Antioch, on the basis of which most of the later manuscripts were founded."

The dates of the manuscripts are said to range from the second to the tenth century.

Among this mass of manuscripts none is regarded as more authoritative than another, not even the oldest manuscripts. On the contrary, it is stated of these,

"It is well known that many corruptions came in long before these manuscripts were written, some of the worst of them as early as the second century. Origen, writing before A. D. 250, had occasion to study difficult questions of textual criticism. Plainly, then, it is not enough to go back merely to our oldest manuscripts, since they are to be dated a century later than his time."

Our oldest manuscripts therefore date from A. D. 350. The above remarks apply to type (1) above.

Of the Western or (2) type it is stated,

"there are so many curious additions to the generally accepted texts in the 'Western' type which look like the marginal notes of copyists, that most scholars regard it as secondary and not so pure as the texts that omit them," and it is added, "this text cannot be preferred to the Alexandrian."

Of the Syrian or (3) type we have already been told that it is a compromise between (1) and (2). It cannot, therefore, be of greater validity than the others.

On account of these difficulties in the accepted texts, "it is now felt that more weight must be given to the testimony of the various witnesses"—meaning no doubt the "versions" and "quotations" mentioned above.

The result of all this investigation is stated thus ;

"and now that the latest form of Prof. Nestle's Greek Testament has been issued by the British and Foreign Bible Society we may take this as giving us as nearly as possible the original text of the New Testament books as far as scholars have been able to recover it."

To sum up then, according to scholars we have, first, to "recover" the "original" text, and secondly, this recovery amounts to accepting a minimum in regard to which there is a general agreement among the documents.

The critics therefore do not help us very much in our study of these scriptures. They have merely sorted out the documents for us, they are unable to go any farther and to discriminate in regard to the *matter*—which is our study. They cannot enlighten us on the nature of the different parts of which the gospels are composed. With them the matter has no parts, it is all one *narrative*. Thus they fail to recognise the true value of the writings which they so laboriously investigate.

But a mere literary study of the gospels does not satisfy the enquiring student of religious literature, who would like to examine into the internal structure of the compositions and see for himself what scriptural truths are to be discovered in them.

MATTHEW AND MARK.

It is of little use to enquire why these two gospels bear the names they do. The book from which we have quoted says, in reference to Matthew,

"we must conclude that our Gospel of Matthew was not written by Matthew the publican, and this for two reasons, &c."

Other responsible writers, for instance the writer on *Matthew* in "The smaller Cambridge Bible for Schools," evade the difficulty by referring to "unbroken tradition" which attributes the book to the Apostle.

As regards Mark it is stated in the same book, "Papias (an early Catholic Bishop) informs us that Mark was the interpreter and companion of Peter, from whose preachings he derived his materials."

The authorship of the books is after all a matter of doubt and conjecture. Besides, the question for us is not, Who wrote the books? but, what do they contain?

As to the date when these writings were recognised as scripture, we are told,

"With Irenaeus, about A. D. 185, we first find New Testament passages cited as of scriptural authority," also,

"Nowhere else (excepting 2 Peter) in the New Testament is the term (scripture) applied to any but Old Testament writing."

Therefore it would appear that the writings now called the New Testament were not so recognised till near the end of the second century. Probably they were then first put together.

Mark is admitted to be the earlier of the two gospels. We read,

"that there is literary relationship of the most intimate kind, the relationship of parentage between Mark and Matthew, &c.The author of our first gospel took Mark and split it at five places inserting in each of the gaps a block of teaching—the Sermon on the Mount; a group of parables; a charge to the Apostles; denunciation of Pharisees In addition Matthew prefaces his gospel with the story of the birth of Jesus; he also adds an account of the resurrection."

Matthew according to this analysis is Mark with some additions. But Matthew we shall see is more than this.

It is noticeable that 18 out of the 16 chapters of Mark are taken up with the doings and, chiefly, teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. That is, Mark is, essentially, a narrative book containing the narrative of, or in narrative form, the sayings and doings of Jesus. We should also notice that the book begins with the declaration of the mission of Jesus—"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ." Even as it is written in Isaiah, the prophet, 'Behold I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way; the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make ye ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'"

These verses are usually interpreted as referring to John, who is here introduced into the narrative, but the word "Even" clearly shows the continuation of the sense from verse 1 to 2. If the words are to be taken as referring to another person, then we must suppose that they are addressed to Jesus, for it is said, "I send my messenger

* Not the same as Jesus of Nazareth, as we shall see.

before thy face, who shall prepare thy way," and so on, but the words are not addressed to Jesus, they are put as if spoken to "the Lord"—the Divine Spirit in man—for whose benefit the messenger is sent. Again, the words, in the original, refer to a messenger to a people, and not to one who is a messenger to another.

See also Chapter II, 38 where Jesus is stated to proclaim His mission, "to this end came I forth."

Hence we may take this book as telling us specially of the mission and work of Jesus of Nazareth. We may therefore designate it, "The book of the Mission of Jesus of Nazareth" or "The Narrative of Jesus of Nazareth."

At this point we will leave Mark for a while and enquire into the composition of Matthew.

MATTHEW.

If we take out from Matthew the collection of Sayings borrowed from Mark, and the similar matter added thereto, we find that Matthew contains the following:—

- (a) The Emmanuel—Christ conception.
- (b) The Crucifixion of the Christ.
- (c) The legend of Jesus, the babe of Bethlehem.
- (d) The "resurrection," or return to earth life of Jesus.

And we may add here that nothing of the story of Jesus of Nazareth belongs to this gospel. Accordingly, the notion of the "synoptic gospels" falls to the ground.

At v. 18, Chapter 1, we have the genealogy or birth of the Christ. The Holy Spirit descends upon Mary and a *Spiritual Son* is born ("that which is conceived in her is of Holy Spirit").* It should be known that though in v. 18 of our versions the words are "the birth of Jesus Christ," the words in some of the oldest manuscripts are said to be, "the birth of the Christ." † The idea is the same as that of Grecian Philosophy, as expressed by Philo, for instance. Dr. Hatch in his Hibbert Lectures, 1888, *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*, referring to their ideas on the origin of the world says: 'God is conceived as the Father, His Wisdom as the Mother: "and she, receiving the seed of God, with fruitful birth-pangs brought forth this world, His visible Son, only and well-beloved."'

Verse 22 contains the Jewish expression of the same idea, which is, moreover, more explanatory as to its meaning—"The virgin shall be with child, &c.....And they shall call his name

* This genealogy appears to have suggested to some one the idea of a parallel genealogy of Jesus of Nazareth, and his descent is taken back to Abraham, the semi-sacred forefather of the Hebrew nation.

† See also Weymouth's *New Testament in Modern Speech*.

Emmanuel : which is, being interpreted, God with us." The student of religious philosophy and symbolism will recognise the figures here employed. The Son is the Divine Son Emmanuel, the dual divine and human principle, "God with us ;" Spirit and Matter or Mind.

In connection with this subject it is interesting to quote the remarks on this verse (18) to be found in a footnote by Rotherham in his translation of the text of Tregelles. He says : "The absence of the Article (the Greek Article *the*) in these instances (before the words Holy Spirit) is highly suggestive : for what is the logical effect of the omission ? It is, to send the mind at once to the nature of *Spirit* as opposed to flesh.....In other words Holy Spirit is indefinitely named in order that it (the child) may be 'characteristically' set forth as *Spirit*, and as *holy*. The emphasis on the word Spirit in the second instance sustains this view."

That is, the wording in the original strikes the writer that the idea here is that of an ineffable principle and not anything material—the *holy* child, the Christ or Emmanuel is a principle.

The idea of the Christ given in this Chapter of Matthew is the same as that expressed in Genesis 1, 2—"the spirit of God moved upon the waters" and thence came the light—the manifested Spirit. Thus both the Old and the New Testament Scriptures begin with the idea of the Christ, the Logos, the Light ; and necessarily so, because from it comes the whole *god-story* or gospel. The Christ or Logos is the Greek term for the idea. The writer of Matthew was probably a Hellenised Jew. He writes philosophically and shows that the Greek idea is contained in the Jewish Scriptures. No doubt this is the sense of the words, "all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, &c." The term, the Christ or Emmanuel expresses the idea of the Divine in Man ; and this Divine Man, this Divine Son of God, is the theme of every Scripture. Hence it is the theme with which Matthew begins his gospel.

In Chapter 2 we have the second phase of the sacred drama—the legend of the Babe of Bethlehem.

The scene comes down to the plane of our life. The babe is born in Bethlehem. That is, the birth-place of the child is localised ; that of the Christ child, we should note, is not localised.

The name of the place where the child is born is Bethlehem, a word which means—"the house of bread." It is a "natural" child, as distinguished from the Christ child which is pure *Spirit*, and it is nourished with "bread."

The babe is destined to great things, "And those Bethlehem..... art in no wise least (among the cities).....for out of thee shall come forth a governor, &c."

This high destiny we read is foreseen by wise men from their reading of the stars, the Magi or Eastern priests, men who, in all ages, have been held to be learned in all divine and scriptural lore, and who thus find an appropriate place in this Jewish Scripture, for it is through "wise men" only that the Scriptures are preserved and made known, and divine events revealed.

But the life of the child is very early threatened and he is taken away to Egypt. Then after all danger is past he is brought back again, according to the prophecy, "out of Egypt I have called my Son."

The student will easily recognise the salient points of the above story ; the phase of difference from the Christ child ; he is nourished on bread ; his destiny is read in the stars by wise men ; his life is early threatened and is subject to dangers, even to extinction (the massacre of the infants) ; he returns at last from the land of bondage, "Israel is my Son, my first born" (Exodus, Isaiah, &c.). The picture is vivid and unmistakable. That the babe of Bethlehem is not to be identified with Jesus of Nazareth is plain from John VII, 41, 42, where the implication clearly is that Jesus was a Galilean and not from Bethlehem, or of the seed of David.

At this point of Matthew the matter from Mark is inserted and continues up to Chapter 26. Here we come to another phase of the Christ teaching—the "crucifixion."

We should note that it is "Christ, the Son of God" who is to be crucified (v. 63 and 66). He is subjected to indignities and mocked, "Prophecy unto us thou Christ, who is he that struck thee ?" Then there is the incident of *Barabbas*. "Whom will ye that I release unto you, Barabbas or Jesus who is called Christ ?" "If thou art the Son of God come down from the cross." It will be seen that the emphasis is strongly on the Expressions the Christ, the Son of God ; the signification is obvious.

Then we have to notice that the Christ is crucified *in place of* Barabbas, who is a robber, a prisoner of note. The word Barabbas means "Son of the Father" a variation of Jesus of Bethlehem. On this point we may mention that the Church Father Origen, it is stated, read in a very ancient manuscript of Matthew's gospel that Barabbas was called *Jesus Barabbas*. The substitution of the Christ, as the victim, for Barabbas would mean that the higher principle in man (Christ) suffers on account of the lower, represented by Barabbas ; the Christ is crucified owing to the offences of Barabbas.

The Resurrection story appears to embrace two mystical ideas. First, the return to earth life, of "Jesus" (of Bethlehem, the representative of man). He lies buried for (nominally) two days, and "very early" on the morning of the *third* day, as all the Evangelists are careful to relate, the visitors to the sepulchre see *heavenly*

messengers, in shining robes of white, who tell them he is gone, he is risen and gone before to Galilee.

Secondly, the idea of the final release of the soul, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on the earth"—he has passed through his period of probation; finally he ascends to heaven.

The student will recognise a genuine gospel in Matthew. It is, moreover, an ancient gospel, more ancient than would be generally supposed, in fact as ancient as the Jewish Scriptures upon which it is based. We have been told that Origen (who lived about A.D. 250) had seen "a very ancient manuscript of Matthew's gospel," and scholars inform us that the earliest known Matthew's gospel was written in Hebrew. The gospel must have been originally a purely Jewish gospel, forming most probably the scripture of some Jewish sect—perhaps a cult of Jesus (of Bethlehem), such a cult as is referred to in Acts XVIII, 25, 26. Its Greek character, fitting it for the new culture to which it required to be adopted, must have been given to it later.

But the word gospel is used here, *not* in the sense of *godspell*, good story, good news, but in the sense of *God spel*, God story, that is, the account or teaching of the "god" or divine principle in man, which is the special function of scripture. Scripture can never be a mere narrative, "a tale that is told," it is the most momentous record that can be penned, the record of man's origin and destinies and that record must, necessarily, be one and the same, at all times, and for all races of men. In *Websler's International Dictionary* there is an important note on this word. We read there:—

"It is probable that gospel is from O. E. *Godspel* God story, the narrative concerning God; but it was early confused with *god spell*, good story, good tidings, and was so used by the translators of the A. V. of scripture.....

(Example) *thus the literal sense (of gospel) is the "narrative of God"... ..—Skeat"*

God story certainly expresses the true meaning and function of scripture, for, as the student of religious philosophy knows, every scripture, including the Bible, is found to have for its subject the god-story of man, that is, the story of the divine principle in man—God in man, Emmanuel, whence the word.

Man represents the divine spirit "manifested" in nature, that is, the Christ or Logos, the Greek terms used in the New Testament to express this conception.

It is his progress or pilgrimage through nature or manifested existence that is the perpetual theme of every religious philosophy, as it is that of science. Thus science and scripture go hand in hand in testifying to the great destiny of man on earth.

And it is not unlikely that the word may have been used in this truer sense in old English times, prior to the introduction of Antiochan doctrines. We are told in *Illustrated Notes on English Church History* (S.P.C.K.) that "Gildas a British ecclesiastic who lived early in the sixth century.....after describing the defeat of the druids under *Boadicea*, A.D. 61 immediately goes on to say, "In the meantime, Christ the true sun for the first time cast his rays, *i.e.*, the knowledge of his laws on this island.'" The expression "Christ the true sun" is suggestive and points to the *light of Apostolic teaching*. We shall have reason to see later that this teaching is to be distinguished from any later Antiochan teachings, the expression "the true sun" suggests a *teaching* (light), in contrast to dogma.

There is also the story of the bringing of *Holy Grail* to Britain and the establishment of the party at *Glastonbury*, which also is said to have taken place at a very early date. It seems probable that these traditions mark the introduction into Britain of Apostolic scriptural mystical teachings, and if so, then it is easy to understand that the word gospel may have been used in the sense referred to.

Our book of Matthew most probably contained at first only the gospel proper, *viz.*, the Emmanuel-Christ and the Babe of Bethlehem mystical legends. Later, the "sayings" from Mark were added to it, and with these, other additions were introduced and links formed with the object of adopting the old writings to a new system of doctrines. One such link is verse 21 of Chapter I where we read "thou shalt call his name Jesus." But the "name" in verse 23 is Emmanuel. Evidently this was put in to link up the Christ section with the Bethlehem section, so that these may read as one, together with the narrative matter taken from Mark, relating to the sayings and doings of Jesus of Nazareth, and the whole as an historical record of a real personage. The student will perceive, however, the resulting difficulties,—

- (i) the philosophical incongruity of attempting to identify the conceptions of the Christ and the Babe of Bethlehem.
- (ii) an extraordinary and superhuman character, which has to be supported by the introduction of supernatural occurrences and "miraculous" doings;
- (iii) the impossibility of establishing the reality of such a character from history, notwithstanding the existence at the time, of all the conditions necessary for historical corroboration.

With regard to the introduction (into Matthew) of the most important of the additions to the "sayings," namely, "The Sermon on the Mount," we notice the same inconsistent manipulation of the text. The sayings in Mark will be found to be accompanied in each case by a statement of the circumstance or occasion which called it forth. As, for instance, Jesus is eating with a mixed gathering and the Pharisees ask him to justify his action, and he tells them, "I came

not to call the righteous but sinners." "The sabbath was made for man, &c." is his reply to those who questioned his "going on the sabbath day through the grain fields." His answer as to who was his brother and sister and mother, and others. Whereas, the long string of maxims in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of Matthew is said to have been *preached* by Jesus from the top of a mountain. It thus seems that the compiler's idea of Jesus was that of an itinerating missionary *preacher*, haranguing from a pulpit. This alone would stamp the interpolation of the *sermon* as a late addition.

Mark's presentment of the "sayings" is quite in keeping with our conception of an Oriental Teacher, that is, as one who takes hold of opportunity and occasion to import useful and instructive lessons. Such a *teacher*, moreover, never *preaches*. For preaching is talk, whereas *teaching* is the imparting of ideas, which expands the intelligence of the learner. Jesus, even when speaking to ordinary people, did so in "parables," which is a mode of *teaching* and appeals to the understanding. The essence of scriptural teaching is that it should expand the Intellect as well as elevate the Mind Element or Feelings, and so complete the building up of the man.

(To be continued.)

ESSENCE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS.

BY

Prof. B. N. Chakraborty, M. A.

The 19th century has witnessed in India one of those astounding Phoenix rebirths which have been a special feature of India's spiritual history all through the ages. This century put to the test once more the civilisation of India based on the loftiest ideals of spirituality and renunciation and on the most enduring principles connected with all that is best and noblest in human nature—principles that are poles asunder from the ideals of material triumph which breathed into the other types of civilisation their life's breath. It passed through the furnace of this trial as scatheless as it had done through many a previous trial equally relentless. When the materialistic civilisation of the West came upon India like a mad inundation threatening to sweep away in its irresistible waves every vestige of the old, when the youngmen of the Universities who had drunk the cup of the new spirit, dregs and all, were chanting aloud their poems of "Ring out the Old, ring in the New", it seemed, as the radical reformers think even to-day, that a new India would spring upon the ashes of the old in the same sense as a new Egypt has risen upon the ruins of the old. And yet that

was not to be. Providence, though guiltless of an excess of zeal in safeguarding the temporal interests of India, has saved her from spiritual crises all through the ages. Here we propose to discuss in our humble way some aspects of the teachings of one who was the gift of Providence for India at this period of storm and stress, and who came to humanity with authority from on High to minister to the human soul the balm for removing the scars of that corroding conflict between matter and spirit.

The life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna illustrate the truth, of the words of Christ which have maintained their freshness through these twenty centuries—God reveals things to babes and hides it from the wise. More marvellous things happen on the spiritual plane than in the world of matter even in this age when science has thrown wide open unlimited possibilities of wonder and marvel before the spell bound spirit of man, and yet few things even in the spiritual world could be more marvellous than the potent influence which the sage of Dakshineswar was capable of exerting over all who came within the magic circle of personal contact with him. Here was an illiterate priest who could hardly sign his own name in the vernacular exercising tremendous spiritual sway over men whom in the beginning mere idle curiosity or sometimes even the worse spirit of irreverent analysis had attracted to his side. They had come to him with their minds saturated with Darwin and Huxley, Mill and Fawcett, and perhaps with the last snatches of the new Marseillaise they had learnt from their preceptors of the West still lingering on their lips. And yet once they beheld the beatific rapture and ecstasy of this wonderful man, they felt the touch of a magic wand over their frozen spirits which awakened a higher vision of life in them. Well might the saint have said at a later day when Narendra Nath, the sceptic and scoffy was serving his novitiate for the vocation of Vivekananda the apostle, what Jesus of Nazareth had said to Saul of Tarsus, "It was hard for thee to kick against the pricks." Hard indeed! In his presence the most arrogant intellectual wiseacres felt themselves helpless like babes, and for the moment at least had to yield themselves without resistance to the spiritual force which emanated from him in his normal moments, but much more in those moments of elevated spiritual consciousness called in the world's language, moments of abnormal trance—the high tide of this spiritual force swept away all the pride of birth and wealth, reason and intellect and against their will, as it were, they were made to brood, with a child's innocent wondering, over visions of the unknown which Sri Ramakrishna's words, but far more his personality, had suggested to their souls incapable

of seeing anything but the ephemeral pomp and glory. Though he himself would vehemently repudiate the name and pretensions of a teacher it is hardly possible to produce a man who was better fitted to be a spiritual teacher than Sri Ramakrishna for breaking through all the shows and mummeries of this world as he did. Ever standing in direct contact with the central core of truth, who could speak to us about the inexplicable problems of life with greater authority than he? It was not the skin-deep methods of reading and syllogising, but the more direct process of intuition and realisation that had brought to him the conclusions which he forced upon his spell-bound audience with that amount of authority which a father or an elder brother might use in instructing an inquisitive child on matters about which he can speak with perfect certitude. Whatever else he was or he was not, he can at least claim to be a man who was farthest removed from the race of ratiocinative babblers building up their babels of half-truths and cant to be only demolished by the analysis of reason and experience of the advancing age. When weary of the titanic conflict between honest doubt, a flat negation and a desperate attempt to believe, Narendra Nath approached him with the query "Have you seen God"—an emphatic 'yes' was the answer with which he strove to assuage his stormy soul. And when he said this it was a true man who spoke, not an imposter.

Sri Ramakrishna's teaching is based on the old Vedantic ideas which had always an attraction for the Hindu mind, which had dominated Hindu thought in all ages and which has in the course of the last century invaded the domains of Western thought and brought about a wonderful upheaval of the old systems of thought-current there. The Vedantic cult has been the source of India's strength and weakness in one. Guiding their daily life in the light of the belief that the Brahman alone is true, and that the phenomenal world is nothing but an illusion and that the individual human souls are sparks from Brahman, the central mass of fire, the Indians have shown greater readiness to abjure the things of the ephemeral world than any other nation on the surface of the earth. This tendency has installed our race on an elevated platform in the domains of spiritual culture and built up a 'nation of Philosophers' the like of which is not visible anywhere on the face of the Earth. But on the other hand it has made us yield to other nations in respect of what is known as the 'race of life'. Even spiritually it has been a source of weakness to us. It is but a common platitude that nothing obstructs the march of the human mind towards the attainment of truth more effectively than the

tendency to remain satisfied with cant, and no where is the peril of cantishness more pronounced than in lands where ideas are as common as the common air. In ElDorado where gold is cheap children might play at marble with nuggets of gold. So, in India where it is believed that a child sucks in philosophy with its mother's milk and where the meanest peasant who is as much in touch with the progressive tendencies of the modern world as his antediluvian compeer, yet tries in his rude, unlettered fashion to understand something of the unknown and unseen and to tackle some of the obstinate riddles of life, there is felt too often the tendency to speak glibly of profound, philosophical aphorisms without realising their significance. When one notices this tendency one is inclined to cry out like Hamlet, "Did the bones cost no more the breeding than to play at maggots with them?" In the spiritual world there is one set of men whose condition is so hopelessly abject as that of the 'light half-believers of their casual creeds, who never deeply felt, nor clearly willed, whose vague resolves have never borne fruit in deeds.' Depth of feeling and realisation is found wanting in another class of men in India who make the domains of philosophical enquiry a happy hunting ground for their academic subtlety and wit. Submerged in their bottomless oceans of Tikas and Vashyas, philosophy to them becomes synonymous with crabbed metaphysics which invites them to come and enjoy with gust their scholastic game. It ceases to be the master key for riddle of life and the universe which true philosophy is meant to be. What would the academic philosophers care for the solution of the riddles of life—they who are determined to play to a finish their scholastic game and enjoy the delicious sensation of finding themselves 'in wandering mazes lost?' It was the mission of Sri Ramakrishna to make vital for us once more the lofty Vedantic ideas which we had been so long in the habit of regarding just as a field for the exercise of our stiff intellectual faculties. He breathed into Vedantism the needed element of pathos and human tenderness which most of its previous exponents taking their stand too much on Pure Reason had denied it.

The consciousness that there is but one Fountain who is the source of all the rivers that flow into the Valley of Life, and the necessity of the soul's eternal longing to find itself back once more in its Eternal Home in the bosom of God after breaking through all the snares and traps that are placed before it to keep it bound to this world of clay—these are the two corner-stones of Sri Ramakrishna's religious teaching. We feel his words as a clarion-note of "Journey Homewards." We listen to them like an exile who have established a new home and new associations in a foreign world

and who hears a song which striking the chord of old memories breeds in him a potent resolve to leave his new home and his new associations to find himself once more in the land of his birth. With many of us, perhaps, the result is only short-lived. Yet these moments when we can raise our souls from the quagmire of the world's vanities and are filled with the eternal longing to know what we are, what the final destination of our jagged march through the myriads of existence is—these moments to us are far more worth-living than ten thousand lives of blind and stupid absorption in the ephemeral interests of human life. There is an undercurrent of logic born of pathos and pathos born of the profoundest realisation running through the inspired utterances by which the Master tries to induce the captive soul of man to break off the fetters that bind it to earth and attain the final emancipation of absorption in the Deity which is the passionate desire of all hearts to which Vedantism is not a mere name. Intoxicated by the wine of worldly success and by his belief in the solidity of all the varied cobwebs of human life the worldly man might say—"Ah! but religion, immortality of the soul and final emancipation might be all moonshine. Why should we leave the solid pleasures of this tangible world for something which might be after all a mere will-o'-the-wisp?". For him the Master has his answer ready—"The moth once seeing the light never returns to darkness; the ant dies in the sugar-heap, but never retreats therefrom. Similarly a good devotee gladly sacrifices his life for his God by renunciation." Or again, "Little children play with dolls in a room apart just as they like, but as soon as their mother comes—they throw aside the dolls and run to her. You also are playing in this world deeply absorbed with the dolls of wealth, honour and fame and have no fear or anxiety. But if you once see the Divine Mother entering in, you will not find pleasure any more in them. Leaving all these, you will run to her." There we may notice that the relation of a child to its mother was the relation on the analogy of which he tried to understand his own relation to God. He believed in the motherhood of God because he says "the child will be more free with its mother and consequently she is dearer to the child than any one else." This idea of the motherhood of God surely brings God nearer to us and establishes relations with Him on a more solid footing than the Hebrew way of looking upon God as the Ruler of Israel and the vanquisher of Israel's foes and the Christian way of thinking of God partly as Ruler and partly as Father. Frequent were the occasions when singing one of the inspired songs of Ramprasad Sen he would bathe himself and his hearers in child like tears of ecstasy and

frequent also were the occasions when he would call out to Kali, the Divine Mother of the Universe with the restless yearning with which a terrified child might demand to be taken back to its mother. Kali is to our Master the feminine principle in the nature of the Deity. She tyrannises over all tyrants. She charms and lords it over all being. Yet, She is the Mother of all creation. Her tremendous power is a guarantee that she can save and protect those who come to her as children. Believing as he did in the incarnation of Shakti in womankind, establishment of carnal relation with woman was for Sri Ramkrishna a matter quite out of the question and that is why in his trenchant way he urges us to renounce woman. It should not be understood, however, that he urges us to be misogynists. Nor does he want us to sacrifice our chivalrous instincts; but on the contrary he exhorts us to substitute the baser chivalry which demands homage unto the beauty and youth of woman and which might go hand-in-hand with the belief that woman is but a carnal play-thing to minister to the carnal appetite of man, by that loftier type of chivalry which consists in paying unsullied homage to the soul of womankind looking upon it as the embodiment of Shakti or the vital spirit-energy of the Universe.

There are thousands who sometimes feel a spasmodic resolve to start on their voyage in the quest of eternal life. Some of them do start. But after some progress through the wilderness of life comes the inevitable spiritual reaction and they cry out "Ah! the way is so long. Weariness overtakes us and yet the goal is as far as ever." In his usual brotherly way the Master whispers into their ears words of hope and assurance. "The breeze of His grace is blowing over thy head," he says "unfurl the sails of thy boat if thou wantest to make rapid progress through the ocean of life." When we listen to words like these we feel that the intellectual and rational supremacy of man, his free will and all the powers that are attributed to man and on the strength of which he tries to take the guidance of his life in his own hands—we feel that all these are mere empty babble. When we take up the work of carving out a path for ourselves in the world of spiritual culture we are like mariners sailing in a shoreless ocean without chart or compass. It is a wonder that with the shores of life strewn thick with the bones of such ambitious mariners who staked their soul's salvation for the luxury of testing their human powers, humanity is not yet tired of such desperate ventures. Unerring, however, is the emphasis that Sri Ramkrishna

lays on Faith. The English poet strikes a high key-note of feeling when he says—

The meanest worm that treads the sod,
In love and worship blends with God ;

But Sri Ramkrishna has surpassed him in the following words "Bhagavan Sri Ramchandra had to bridge the ocean before he could cross over to Lanka. But Hanuman, the faithful servant, with one jump crossed the ocean through the firmness of his faith in Rama. Here the servant achieved more than the Master simply through faith." Of the other attitudes towards religious problems—*viz.*, controversy and ratiocination, our Master is always suspicious. They lack the power of carrying us into the inner heart of Truth. Equipped with these alone we have to rest content with a shadow which in our self-complacency we regard as the substance. The true mental equipment of a religious thinker should be that of a magnified child who divests himself of all sentiments born of an inflated egoism and who stands on the threshold of Truth not like a conqueror fired with the resolve to carry its citadel with the might of his intellect and reason, but like a suppliant clothed in the garb of humility and intensest spiritual longing, yet trusting in faith as a passport ensuring admission into its innermost sanctuary. Few have breathed the air of this world who possessed a more widespread or more all-embracing charity towards mankind than Sri Ramakrishna. He was one of those who could say without bringing themselves open to the charge of cantishness, "I can hold the world in my bosom and keep it warm." Yet while referring to men who make of religion a field for the exercise of their faculty for ratiocinative controversy he speaks in a language which borders on irony. Here is a parable of his which will illustrate the truth of my remark. "Two men went into a garden. The worldly-wise man no sooner did he enter the gate than he began to count the number of the mango-trees, how many mangoes each tree bore, and what might be the approximate price of the whole orchard. The other went to the owner, made his acquaintance, and quietly going under a tree began to pluck the fruit and eat it with the owner's consent. Now who is wiser of the two? Eat mangoes. It will satisfy your hunger. What is the good of counting the leaves and making vain calculations? The vain man of intellect is uselessly busy finding out the 'why' and 'wherefore' of creation ; while the humble man of wisdom makes the acquaintance of the creator and enjoys supreme bliss in this world". There is another "The vulture soars up high in the air, but all the time he is looking down into charnel-pits in search of

putrid carcasses. So the book-read pundits speak glibly and volubly about divine knowledge but it is all mere talk ; for all the while their mind is thinking about how to get money, respect, honour, power, etc.—the vain glory of their learning." It is this generous disdain of controversy which dissuades Sri Ramkrishna from attempting to give a dogmatic verdict over problems which have been a bone of contention among the various schools of philosophy from time immemorial.

It is true that the natural sanity and serenity of the Hindu mind have prevented the controversy from reaching that fatal extreme which it has done in the West. We can take legitimate pride in the fact that the pages of the religious history of India have not been defiled with the account of an Inquisition, a Crusade or a Jihad. And yet of bloodless controversy we have had enough. The names of philosophical and religious sects in India—of Dwaitavadis, Advaitavadis and Visisthadvaitavadis are a legion. The difference of these sects from one another has been very insignificant and yet what wrangling it has raged over these microscopic shades of difference. With his usual determination to penetrate into the inner kernel of Truth instead of spending his spiritual energies by brooding on the outward husks of religious controversy Sri Ramakrishna tries in his usual tolerant way to hear the schism between the various camps of religious thoughts. Some one asks the Master, "Is God with or without form?" He expects a long philosophic harangue but what is his surprise to find him saying in his usual direct and trenchant manner, "As a boy begins to learn writing by drawing big scrawls, before he can master the small hand, so we must learn concentration of mind by fixing it first on forms ; and when we have attained success therein we can easily fix it upon the formless". Or again "As a marksman learns to shoot by first taking aim at large and big objects and the more he acquires the facility the greater becomes the ease with which he can shoot at the smaller marks on the target. So when the mind has been trained to be fixed on God having form, it becomes easy for it to be fixed upon God having no form."

The same spirit of toleration made him emphasise the equality and oneness of all religions which have held out promises of eternal rest to the weary soul of man and in the light of which thousands have lived and died. This attitude of toleration towards other religions appears to be perfectly consistent with the spirit of Hinduism. In speaking of the Hindu religion as being exclusive we confuse religion too much with society and however intimate

the relation may be between religion and society it is yet possible to draw the line of demarcation somewhere. Whatever else, the true Hindu is not a minnow of the creek. Other religions may claim for themselves the exclusive right of holding in their hands the key of salvation and thereby look upon God as a tyrant who has kept reserved Eternal Bliss only for those who subscribe to one set of dogmas and who bow to Him in one way and not in another; the Hindu mind has been always at one with the sage who said "As the various rivers flowing through various courses at last mingle their waters in the sea, so various men following various creeds, O Lord ! at last mingle in thee". Sri Ramakrishna had felt profoundly the truth which we may thus express in the words of the English poet,—

The unseen power, whose eye
For ever doth accompany mankind,
Hath looked on no religion scornfully that man did ever
find.
Which has not taught weak wills how much they can ?
Which has not fallen on the dry heart like rain ?
Which has not cried to sunk, self-weary man,
Thou must be born again ?

If the following words of his are not potent enough to cure a bigot of his bigotry, his malady must be pronounced incurable. "As the same sugar is made into various figures of birds and beasts, so one sweet Mother Divine is worshipped in various climes and ages under various names and forms. Different creeds are but different paths to reach the Almighty."

A PILGRIMAGE TO DAKSHINESWAR

BY

Sri Salla.

It needs no saying that pilgrimage is the spice of life to the religious people, and in consequence, every religious faith has made some provision for it in its code. The Mussalman is enjoined to visit Mecca at least once in his life-time and to assume the coveted distinction of a "Hazi." The famous 'Wars of the Crusades' arose partly for the preservation of the holy land of Palestine and for the protection of the Christian pilgrims who frequented that part of the world in the early centuries. The stupas over the relics of the Tathagatha raised by the pious Buddhistic rulers have the idea of pilgrimage as their background; the consecration of several favoured spots in India as so many places of pilgrimage was the result of a similar desire on the part of the eminently religious Hindus.

The pilgrimage-idea is contagious. Its origin was in religion, but now every phase of human life is more or less connected with it. A student, on completing his university career, proceeds on a tour, ostensibly for enlarging his vision of men and manners. The snatakas of old were imbibed with a similar spirit in India. Lovers of the muse undergo personal inconveniences in visiting the places where a Shakespeare, or a Dante had lived. Political pilgrimages are also on the increase, and in course of time, several places of political importance would claim the pilgrim's attention.

Places of natural beauty, historical interest, geographical significance, etc., have, from time out of memory, fascinated the minds of the Hindus, and it is to this fact that we are to ascribe the very large number of places held in sacred veneration in India. From Kedar nath in the Himalayas to the Cape Comorin in the extreme south, and from Dwaraka in the West to Jagannath in the East there are countless places associated with the names and deeds of our heroes, and with the memory of saints and scholars. The supreme desire of every pious Hindu is to visit these shrines once at least in his life-time, and this desire was the direct cause of the institution of circumambulating the earth, so devoutly wished for by every Hindu that in its attainment he would sacrifice his everything.

The Hindu does not seem to be satisfied with this legion of the places of pilgrimage, for we find several new spots raising up their heads and putting forth claims for renown and pilgrim's

attention. For example, Tillaivilagam, a tiny village in a corner of the Tanjore District, rose into importance, a few years ago, and bids fair to rival the ancient shrine of Tirupati in drawing a large number of votaries for ceremonial tonsure before the shrine. The discovery of a natural spring in an obscure village in the Ambasamudram Taluk of the Tinnevely District led our credulous brethren to undertake pilgrimages to that spot, and, we presume, a local Sthalapurana would soon be "discovered" in the all-embracing Brahmanda Purana.

But as if to compensate for this abnormal growth in the number of sacred places, we are forgetting or discontinuing our patronage from, a large number of ancient places of importance and renown. There are in out-of-the-way places in South India, several villages hallowed by the lives and life-deeds of our saints. Our pilgrims rarely visit them and the only persons who occasionally go there 'with a purpose' are the officers of the Archaeological Department. I wonder how many of our pilgrims have heard or visited the birth place of Saint Vyasa of blessed memory. It will be news to many to be told that the glorious saint was born at a pretty spot at the confluence of three rivers, Sanka, Koel and Brahmini, near Panposh Station on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. The introduction of Railways and the superior importance of places like Rameswaram and Benares would have had something to do with this unhappy state of affairs in which our former shrines are allowed to fall into desuetude, but at the same time, we must not forget to give due credit for our craze for novelty.

The shrine of Dakshineswar, a description of which is the purpose of this article, came to prominence quite recently. It owes its origin to the piety and beneficence of Rani Rasmani, a rich Bengali lady who erected the well-known temple in the Bengali year 1262 corresponding to A D 1856. Accustomed as we are, to the stately halls, vast courtyards and a wealth of sculpture of our South Indian temples, the shrine at Dakshineswar does not impress us much either with its grandeur or with its religious importance. But its chief and only claim for renown is its connection with the remarkable saint Bagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva of Kamarpukur. For over thirty years, the saint had lived in the temple garden at Dakshineswar, and has infused so to speak, a spirit of religious veneration therein, that when entering into the garden, one feels as though he treads on a thrice hallowed spot. The situation of the temple and its garden is quite picturesque and adds a charm the like of which we fail to see in our imposing temples of South India.

The foundress of the temple, Rani Rasmani, was an exceptionally devout lady. Her piety, devotion and charity were celebrated all over the land. A small story is told about the origin of this temple. The Rani once desired to go on a pilgrimage to Benares from her native place near Calcutta. She made all preparation for the purpose, and when she was about to start, she had a vision in the night, of the Divine Mother telling her that there was no need for her to go to Benares; that she would attain her desired object if she would build a temple on the bank of the Ganges, and instal therein Her image and carry on Her worship in the proper manner. In obedience to the command, the Rani gave up her proposed pilgrimage, secured the plot of land on the bank of the Ganges in Dakshineswar and began erecting the temple in the year 1847 and completed it in 1856.

Orthodoxy was so rampant in Bengal in the sixties that no Brahmin could be found to do the duties of a priest in the temple erected by Rani Rasmani,—a non-Brahmin Lady; but Pandit Ramkumar, the elder brother of Sri Ramakrishna was of that type in which erudition and breadth of views had combined quite harmoniously and he therefore came to the rescue of the Rani by agreeing to become the priest in the Dakshineswar shrine. He saw nothing derogatory in performing puja in a temple erected by a non-Brahmin, and his advent into Dakshineswar scored a victory over the bigotry of conservative Brahmins of Bengal, and heralded the dawn of a new era of harmony of faith and catholicity of views.

Bhagavan Ramakrishna,—or Gadhaddhar as he was then called,—often used to come to the temple and was, in course of time, appointed as assistant priest therein. He had already served his apprenticeship at Pujas in the houses of some respectable families of Jhamapukur and was therefore, so it was thought, a welcome addition to the priestly staff of the temple. But no body then knew of the mettle of which he was made, and when, in the course of a few days, a change came over him, people began to entertain doubts as to his sanity. He would sit alone for long hours before the image of Bhabatarini,—Kali,—and would be lost to all consciousness. In their ignorance, his people tried to bring him round by his marriage, with a six-year old bride,—Saradamani Devi,—from a village adjacent to his own. The marriage, rather wedding, was over and Gadhaddhar returned to his duty at Dakshineswar. He saw strange visions of Divine forms, and he would so forget himself in his service as to place on his own head the flowers intended as offerings to the Mother or to go on waving the Arati lights, etc., even after the service had ended. The temple authorities found

out the incapability of Gadhadhar for further service, and he was pensioned off, so to speak. Rani Rasmani's son-in-law, Mathur Babu, had the keenness of intelligence and perception to look upon Sri Ramakrishna as a Prophet sent by God for the salvation of mankind and not wishing to lose him, had assigned him a room within the temple premises, where the Bhagavan lived and instructed all those who cared to go to him.

The extraordinary nature of Sri Ramakrishna and his madness after the Lord were known to only a few persons. Tota Puri, a holy man, a Brahmin Sanyasini, Pandit Bhaishnab Charan and Mathur Babu were the persons who had the privilege of knowing his true character at that time, and believed that he was sent by God to wean mankind from an irreligious and suicidal path in which it was triumphantly marching for some time past.

Ramakrishna's fame began to spread abroad, and men of light and leading such as Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Keshab Chandra Sen, Rajendra Lal Mitra, Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Kristo Das Pal, Girish Chandra Ghosh and a host of others came to visit the saint. The temple garden was frequented by earnest seekers after truth, by men prompted by curiosity and by college students. The increase, quite without his knowledge, of the saint's renown was naturally followed by an increase in the number of visitors, and in consequence, Dakshineswar soon became a centre of pilgrimage.

Volumes have been written about the teachings of the Bhagavan. The words of wisdom that fell from his lips are so very consoling to the troubled minds that they may fitly be characterised as so many solaces of life. The Bhagavan taught that God might be seen and that all religions pointed to a unique harmony. His teachings were not confined to a select few. His door was open to every body. All men irrespective of creed or colour, sect or age, could approach him and put him questions. His instructions were supplemented by a wealth of illustrations drawn from every day life, and were given in his own mother tongue so that his hearers might know the exact shade of meaning of every word or idiom he used.

Dakshineswar is situated at a distance of about four miles to the north of Calcutta on the banks of the holy Ganges. The view is most picturesque if seen from the river. With the high towers of the temples, the tall trees of the garden and the broad expanse of the Ganges with her strange crafts, the whole landscape looks like a scene from a theatre. The ghat in front of the temple has been provided with broad brick steps leading down into the very waters of the

river, and it was here that Sri Ramakrishna used to bathe. East of the ghat is the chandni or porch where the watchmen of the temple stay on duty. A notice in a conspicuous position informs you that Mussalmans and Christians have no admittance into the temple while Hindus can go in anywhere, but not with leather shoes on. The Porch is midway between a row of a dozen temples, rather shrines dedicated to God Maheswara and erected by Rani Rasmani in fulfilment of a pious vow.

The courtyard adjoining these temples and porch is a vast parallelogram paved with tiles set in concrete, and resembles the courtyards of the famous Tanjore temple. This serves as a Dining hall when, on special occasions, such as Kali puja or the birthday anniversary of the Bhagavan, a very large number of people are to be fed. There are two temples in the courtyard, one facing west and the other south. The former is dedicated to Radha and Krishna, and the floor of the shrine is paved with marbles, and clusters of lamps hang from the ceiling.

The southern temple is dedicated to Kali in Her aspect of Bhabatarini or the saviour of the World. Its floor also is paved with marble. The image of the Goddess stands on the prostrated body of Siva* lying on a silver lotus of a thousand petals. As can be expected, the appearance of the Goddess is awe-inspiring.

This shrine seems to be a museum in itself; images of lion, guana, female fox, black-bull and goose are kept inside; miniature images of Rama and Vishnu, and a Bana Lingam also find a place therein. Legends connected with the existence of these objects are worthy of consideration, but we have to deny ourselves the pleasure of describing them, for want of space.

In front of this shrine is the spacious Nât-mandir or theatre hall, a rectangular terraced building supported by rows of columns. Theatrical performances etc., take place here on special occasions, such as, the Kali Puja, and hence its name.

It may be mentioned here that no fish or meat is offered to Radha and Krishna, while they are not prohibited for Kâli. Goats are offered Her on Amavasya days, and in this respect the difference between a South Indian temple and the Dakshineswar shrine, is striking.

We may pass over some of the minor buildings of the temple, such as the Guest house, kitchens, store-room and office-rooms; but the most interesting structure in the temple is the master's

* For the esoteric significance of this form, vide "the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna."

chamber in the north west corner of the courtyard. It is immediately to the north of the dozen temples of Siva, and in which Sri Ramakrishna used to pass his days in sweet and holy communion with God. The room is flanked on the west by a semi-circular verandah looking out on the Ganges. Like the master, the room is unpretentious and simple in appearance, but, when looked at with a reverential attitude presents a feature that instils devotion and Bhakti into the minds of the spectators. I thought as if I would pollute the sanctity of the spot by my entrance therein, and were it not for the repeated requests of the Panda to step in, I would not have dared to enter that sacred chamber. In it are now preserved the various articles used by the master, such as, his cot, bedding, furniture, dress, etc. A photograph of Jesus Christ was found hanging from a wall and I was informed that it had been put there by the master himself,—a proof, if one was needed, for the cosmopolitanism of the master.

The other, spot equally interesting in the garden is the Panchabati, i.e., a collection of five trees viz., Vata, Peepul, Neem, Amalaka and Bael. They were planted at the desire of the master and have now assumed gigantic proportions. It was at the foot of this Panchabati that the master went through various religious practices. He seems to have been greatly enamoured of this place, and he caused to be scattered about the place the holy dust that he had brought from Brindaban. The cool shade of the Panchabati is as refreshing to the enervated body of the visitor as the thought of the saints memory is to the troubled mind.

Close to the Panchabati is an old banyan tree with a circular terraced seat at the foot of the trunk and provided with steps. This has also been hallowed by the master for he used to sit upon the platform and call to the Mother with a yearning that equalled that of the cow crying for the calf or that of the child crying for its mother. This tree is hoary with age and in the many hollows that are found in it, birds and reptiles have taken shelter. Besides these holy spots there is another place in one of the corners of the garden, where under a bael tree, Sri Ramakrishna had his *Panchamundi asana* and performed thereon the Tantric Sadhanas. The spot is still marked out by a raised platform around the bael tree.

The only other place of which we may speak in some detail is the Flower garden attached to the temple. A narrow pathway running along the banks of the Ganges from the southern extremity of the temple up to the Panchabati is lined with flower beds on both sides and here the master used to wander like a madman, plucking flowers here and there and singing songs. A

friend of the writer has seen the master several times, while he was going to and fro the flower beds in a frenzy of love for God. The splendour and beauty, not to speak of the fragrance of the beds, can be imagined from the variety of flowers grown there. Mallika, madhavi, Gulchi Champak, Jaba, amaranth, Jassmine, shefalik, oliandar, rose etc., grow in profusion, and little platforms of tulasi plants occur here and there. To the master's mind the various flower plants were so many nose-gays,—things of beauty decorating the macrocosm.

The temple garden can also be approached from the eastern side, *via* Baranagar, through metalled roads, and the magnitude of the garden can best be appreciated if one comes by this way. Nowhere in South India do we meet with an example of a temple situated in a garden. Our temples are encased by lofty walls which are in their turn surrounded by streets more or less kept clean. But a temple within a garden is a phenomenon unknown to South India.

The temple garden at Dakshineswar has become an abode of joy and gladness. The view of the mighty river, though muddy in appearance flowing past the garden conjures up vistas of thoughts that appeal to the highest nature of man. Song-birds fill the heavens with a melody that is cheerful and pleasant; and there is peace everywhere. What gives the finishing touch to this picture of fascinating beauty is the memory of the saintly figure of the master, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, but for whose sojourn here the place would not have come into so high a prominence.

As is the case everywhere, the temple authorities, i.e., the descendants of the foundress Rani Rasmani, had a quarrel among themselves about the ultimate disposition of the surplus proceeds of the temple estates, and as a consequence thereof the estates are now under the control of a receiver appointed by the courts. The towers of the central shrine are badly in need of repairs, and if they are not attended to at once, they may probably become more damaged and would involve a larger expenditure in repairs. May the master who strove for the harmony of religions, bring harmony to the minds of the litigants.

The fame and glory of the temple garden is a little eclipsed by the Ramakrishna mutt at Belur which is also near Calcutta. The birthday anniversaries of the master, which were formerly celebrated at Dakshineswar are now taking place at Belur. It would be in the fitness of things if a small monastery be established at Dakshineswar, so as to keep bright always the flame that was lit there,

THE PATHS OF REALISATION.

BY

N. R. Kedari Rao.

'The Realisation of the Divinity in man constitutes the essence of all Religions. Such being the case, the question arises, what are the means of this Realisation ?

The means must depend mainly upon the nature of the people who seek for this Realisation. And as there are diverse natures in this world, no stereotyped method can be set up for all of them. And yet without a method it is worse than hopeless to solve the problem. The Vedantist were aware of this difficulty and after years of experience and strenuous thought they have come to as perfect a solution of the problem as human imperfections would allow.

True it is that the greatest diversities are found in human nature. Still they may all be classified in certain well-marked groups. For convenience' sake, they have divided human nature into four broad divisions. First of all, there is the *active worker*—the man with superfluous energy in his muscles and nerves who wants to do something concrete and not to abandon himself to abstractions, nor is merely sentimental—the *Rājasic* type of man, so to say. Secondly there is the *Emotional man* whose aesthetic sense is highly developed and who therefore adores the sublime and the beautiful. He is not satisfied with cold reasoning but wants to go further and place his faith in the God of Love and Mercy, and not in the mere Dispenser of Justice in the form of Law. Thirdly there is the *mystic* whose mind is always working in the metaphysical plane, trying his best to understand and control the subtle forces that are working in the universe. And finally, there is the *philosopher* who wants to weigh everything and use his intellect in solving the mysteries of Life.

Now the Vedanta provides scope for all these different kinds of men to attain their goal each through his own tastes. For instance, for the man of active temperament is given the Karma Yoga to follow. It is most suited for him. The Karma Yoga shows us the path of attaining God by means of work. It explains to us the secret of work and teaches how to employ our energies to the greatest advantage without frittering it away, to the task before us.

All actions bring with them their due re-actions, hence arise bondage and misery. But the principle of karma yoga teaches us how to elude that reaction even while doing action, hence it becomes a means of self purification and self-realisation. The truth of it might be explained thus :—

I do good to a human being, but there is always lurking behind my action some selfish thoughts ; the motive might be that either he must be grateful to me and acknowledge me as his benefactor, or I should get some name or fame or something worse. In case the reverse becomes the result, I become filled with grief. So, this attachment for the work caused by a selfish motive is really responsible for my misery and bondage, and not work itself.

So, Karma Yoga teaches us to work for work's sake and without attachment to the fruits thereof. Viewed then from this aspect the position of the active worker is much improved ; he is always the giver, never caring to receive anything in return and thus eludes the grasp of pain and attains that happiness which leads him to salvation. The same idea is expressed in the Bhagavad Gita where the Lord Sri Krishna says addressing Arjuna:—

कर्माणि संगं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।

कर्तव्यानीति मे पाथे निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥

Actions should be done leaving aside attachment and the fruits, O Parth that is my certain and best belief.

'Work without attachment' then should become the motto of the active worker in order that he may attain the goal of self Realisation, or God realisation.

Now, about the Emotional man. Has he any such means of realising God ? Yes, he too has got a method best suited to his temperament and that is the Bhaktimarga preached to us in the Bhaktiyoga. The natural disposition of such an emotional man is for a display of his emotion, and that he can do to his supreme benefit by loving God. Bhakti yoga teaches him how best to love God. Generally people feign a love for God, or show devotion to Him not because they feel any real attraction for Him, but for some selfish motives. They wish to go Heaven, or attain wealth and prosperity in this life, or get some honour and fame in the world, and so they seek His grace. Bhaktiyoga teaches us that all this is a lower form of love, and as such cannot give the infinitude of the transcendental joy which will be ours if we can love Him for His own sake and not out of any base motive. God is love or joy itself.

It should be remembered however that it does not condemn even the lower kind of love, for, this is only an inferior expression of it. Through this preparatory step may be attained the superior kind of Love, Para Bhakti the love which does not care for any recompense,—which forms an end by itself.

Bhakti yoga further teaches us the various stages in the development of our love towards God progressing from the lowest to the highest. The lowest type is the ordinary common place love. Then comes the Dasya Bhakti when one considers oneself as the faithful servant of the Lord, as typified in Hanuman's unfailing devotion to Sri Ramachandra in the Ramayana. Higher still is the Sakhya Bhakti, the love of the lord as our beloved friend and companion, as our dearest playmate in this game of life. The next type is the Vatsalya Bhakti the love of the lord not as our father or mother but as our child. Highest of all is the Madhura Bhakti, the love of the lord as our husband, pouring out all the love that a chaste woman will give to her husband at the altar of god, as typified in the extraordinary devotion of the gopis towards Sri Krishna.

He who has gone through all these stages is sure to come out cleansed of all his impurities, to realise God and to find in the Glorious Presence, Love, Lover and the Beloved merged in One.

Next let us take up the case of the mystic. What course has he to follow in order to attain the Atman in him? For him is intended the Raja Yoga. It teaches us the strict psychological way for self-revelation. For the attainment of any kind of knowledge the first thing necessary is concentration of the mind. And it is obvious to those who have tried it that it is a most difficult thing to achieve. As soon as we calm ourselves and try to think of a particular object in view a thousand stray thoughts come in to disturb our peace, thus wasting a considerable part of our energy. Therefore, concentration of mind is the one thing necessary for the mystic to attain his goal. For that is the one call, the one knock which opens the gates of nature and lets out the floods of light. That is the only key to the treasure-house of knowledge. And this precious lesson of how to concentrate our attention is taught in Raja Yoga.

In order to attain concentration of mind thoroughly, we have to pass through eight steps, namely, yama (the practice of non-injury and continence) Niyama (cleanliness and contentment) Asana (or posture,—a series of physical exercises designed to bring under control every nerve and muscle of our body) Pranayama or control over our breath—a series of breathing exercises designed

to increase longevity of life, Pratyahara or making the mind introspective, Dharana or concentration, Dhyana or meditation and Samadhi or super-consciousness. And so he who steadily practises these will in course of time acquire that concentration of mind which ultimately leads to realisation of God.

And finally about the Philosopher. The path which leads him to Self-Realisation by self-analysis is Jnanayoga. The Philosopher wants to go beyond the senses, into the very heart of being, by seeing Reality as it is, by realising It, by being It, by becoming one with that Universal Being. It does not satisfy his soul to say that God is the father or mother of this universe. To him God is the life of his life, the soul of his soul.

Although he thus describes with clearness and firm conviction that all these four methods are equally helpful for the realisation of God according to our varying natures, still Swami Vivekananda leaves us in no doubt as to which is the best of these.

The ideal of the Gnana Yogin is very grand no doubt but very difficult of fulfilment. Karma Yoga demands from us work without attachment which is almost impossible to be accomplished under modern conditions. The path of Raja Yoga requires patient practice for a very long time and what is more has got a number of temptations on the way. For instance, the sciences of hypnotism, of thought-reading, of performing small miracles, etc., are all incidental gains that one may get in the practice of Raja Yoga; but if one fritters away one's energy and mind then, one becomes weaker and weaker in his purpose, until at last he strays away from his goal and drifts into ruin and destruction. It goes without saying then that for the present condition of affairs Bhakti Yoga is the easiest and the most practicable way of realising God. It is also due to this that the Swami makes the largest number of references to Bhakti as *the* way of salvation for us in this age.

Thus his clear and lucid analysis of the Vedanta philosophy and his popularisation of the same not only in India but in England, America and other countries of the world have justly earned for him the position of a great Redeemer.

SRI KRISHNA.*

When God incarnates, they say the infinite becomes finite, but does the infinite really become finite ?

The great teacher, whose life we are going to think about, has said : " Whenever religion declines and irreligion prevails, I body Myself forth".

The soul of every man is infinite, so man is really infinite ; but by reason of Maya we are regarding ourselves as finite. But if we are infinite, then what difference is there between us and Sri Krishna ? Why are we not also incarnations of God ? What difference is there between an incarnation and ordinary creatures of the world ? There is this difference. Brahman is infinite, and as such He can have no motion ; for, that which is infinite cannot move from one place to another. But He has been able to combine Himself in such a way with matter as to appear finite. So He is both infinite and finite. He is both *Saguna* and *Nirguna*. Brahman is *Nirguna*, but *Iswara* is both.

Brahman does not act, He does not create the world ; but His presence is essential to creation. He is passive ; He does not actively create. Yet although He does not really create, His presence is absolutely necessary, just as I must be here in my body to make it possible for the hair on my head to grow ; I do not grow the hair ; I have consciously nothing to do with its growth ; yet if I were not here, it would not grow—as we see in the case of a dead man. The head is still there and the hair, but because he has left the body, all growth has ceased. Now just as man's presence in the body is absolutely necessary to the growth of his hair, so God's presence is necessary to the creation of the universe. Just like hair, the creation is growing, as it were, on Parabrahman ; without Him creation is not possible and for that reason it is said, the universe comes out of Brahman, lives in Him and will merge in Him again.

“ जन्माद्यस्य सतः

Of this created world which lives in space, God is the first Being. He is time, He is space, He is causation. That is what we call God, but Brahman is beyond time, space and causation. Yet He says,—“when religion declines and irreligion prevails, I come.” In commenting on this passage,

* Adapted from a class lecture of the late Swami Ramakrishnananda.

Sri Sankaracharya, the greatest monist, says : It is always possible for man to identify himself with Parabrahma ; but it is never possible for man to identify himself with God. He can never become one with God the Creator, God the Preserver, God the Destroyer. *Jivan-muktas*, he declares, can have all powers save that of creation. Therefore, we see that God's position is unique. He leads two sorts of lives,—a life of absolute inactivity, and a life of constant activity. Hence He is called “ निष्कल सकलः प्रभुः ” As you can never imagine creation without a creator so a creator presupposes a creation, just as the father presupposes a son, and the son a father.

Now this God must incarnate for the sake of His children. They are like little boys and need to be corrected ; so He must come and rectify the ways of His children. He comes therefore and leaves them an example. When God comes and lives as we live, only then can we know what God is like. We may imagine many things, but these imaginations must necessarily be imperfect, because they come out of the imperfect brain of an imperfect man. God has to come to show us really what God is like. Only so can we know truly what He is. And because the ordinary man can never make out God, He always comes with some one who will be able to understand His life and make it known to the world. Thus with Rama came Valmiki, with Sri Krishna, Vyasa. He first created Vyasa, then He came. So there must always be a precursor—as before Christ there was John the Baptist. Such a precursor must come to write out the life of the Incarnation and make it known to us, the harbinger of the Most High.

When we study the lives of these Incarnations, the first thing that strikes us is the extraordinary character of their birth. It is said that Buddha entered into the womb of His mother—so was it told of Christ. And we see why this should be ; for out of lust this body is born. But God is absolutely devoid of lust, so how can He be begotten ? In the case of Sri Krishna, it is said that He entered first into Vasudeva and thence went to Devaki, and at that moment, although Devaki was a little advanced in age, it is said that her face shone like that of the most beautiful maiden. His birth too was miraculous. Indeed He was not really born, for just before His birth He assumed the form of a teacher and advised His father not to keep Him there, but to take Him to the house of Nanda. Also when He was born, although the gates were all locked, yet they opened before Him and Vasudeva carried Him out of the prison without the least difficulty. This points out that nothing can take place without the will of the Lord. Vasudeva and Devaki had

everything to contend against. They were in the hands of Kamsa who had already killed six of their children, and put them in shackles under special guards. But in spite of all these adverse circumstances, they were able to baffle all the evil will of Kamsa.

Sri Krishna began as a teacher, by teaching his father, and he ended His life also in teaching. He taught by life and precepts, through love and counsel, at play-ground, society and battle-field. His whole life was a life of teaching and it assumed multifarious phases the like of which is not found in human life.

According to the followers of Lord Gouranga, the pastoral life of Sri Krishna is the most wonderful of all lives. In it are shown the babyhood and childhood of God. But some feel the latter part of his life, Krishna of the Gita, as more appealing. But for a full comprehension of the incarnation, His life should be taken as a whole and not in parts. The first portion of Sri Krishna's life represents the *anandam* side of life. The second portion the *sat* side. In the pastoral life we see the *anandam* side preeminently expressed. Every one takes care of him. His mother, His friends all look after Him; His ministers look after His kingdom and He merely enjoys. The Creator, Preserver and Destroyer have become His servants. When He killed Kamsa, He Himself took up the reins of his kingdom and assumed the form of the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer as it were.

That is the reason why this pastoral life of Sri Krishna is regarded by all yogis and sannyasins as the highest life. If *anandam* is the highest ideal, then this life must be the only one to satisfy them. When Arjuna, terrified by His universal form, put the question to him: "Who art thou?" He replied: "I have come to destroy the wicked. I am the old Destroyer." So Sri Krishna of public life represents the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer, while His pastoral life represents *anandam*—not that we find Him worn out with cares and anxieties in His public life, for He never was so. But His Vrindaban life was absolutely free from all earthly cares. It was the life of a boy or of a *Paramahansa*. "When a man attains the highest realisation, he becomes like a mad man or a little boy," and this is what all *Paramahansas* aim at. Hence in that simple unconventional innocence and blessed display of exuberant joy the *Paramahansa* finds his ideal amply realised.

In the infinite weakness of a baby, He manifested infinite power. As a little baby He had to destroy demons and perform many other feats of strength. The pastoral life of Sri Krishna is a curious combination of infinite strength and infinite weakness.

When He grew up, he manifested one unbroken display of wisdom and power only.

But in His pastoral life it is all wonderful. No one could suppose that a baby could destroy a great demon. It was all a miraculous manifestation of infinite power. It is for this reason that few can understand this portion of His life, while every one can understand His public life.

I have said that He was always a teacher. When He was only eleven years old, there was to be a great festival in honour of Indra given by the shepherds of Brindaban, but Sri Krishna went to His father and asked why such a festival should be held. He argued that it was much better to give it in honour of the hill Gobhardana, which provided food for their cattle, and so convincing were His arguments that all the people gave up their time-honoured custom and followed His advice. Then Indra became angry and caused a terrible downpour of rain, but Sri Krishna lifted up the hill Gobardhana and for seven days held it on His little finger while the shepherds took refuge under it.

So you see how extreme weakness is married to extreme strength in the pastoral life of Sri Krishna. In the Gita later He shows the same thing. "Many births of mine and thine have elapsed. I know them all, but thou knowest them not."

This is the difference between *Jiva* and *Siva*, between man and God. God's infinite nature can never be overpowered, while the *Jiva* is almost eternally unconscious of his infinite nature.

In Gita Sri Krishna was continually teaching through the medium of Arjuna, "You must worship God and Him only." "The worshippers of the gods go to the gods."

"All lokas, even the very highest, are transitory. But those who come to Me will never have to suffer in the fleeting life. The whole creation is non-eternal, full of miseries, even the *Brahma-loka*, so worship Me." Even if a man is very immoral, even if he is very bad, yet if he worships Me, he should be regarded as a *Sadhu*. And why should he be regarded as a *Sadhu*? Because "in a few days, he will leave all his evil ways and become righteous."

Thus throughout the Gita, He is preaching this one thing,—the worship of the one God. "Those who, giving up all other desires, worship Me, I look after them, I earn for them, I care for them." But how can we offer anything to God? Everything already belongs to him, our egotism, our body, the whole world. ; So what can we give to God? We need not build a great

temple—He Himself has built the greatest temple, which is lighted by the sun by day and by the moon by night. Then what can we offer Him? Fruit, flowers, water, all these belong to Him. One thing, however, does not belong to Him—a man's mind does not belong to Him. If we can offer that, then God will say: "To-day I have got a new thing,—I have got this man's mind—It was given to lust and greed and to all kinds of pleasures, now he has taken it back from these and laid it at My feet."

When a man does that, what does God do? He becomes the slave, the servant of that man. He will care for him as an infinitely loving mother. That is the reason why God does not give bhakti easily. He says: "Easily I give mukti, but seldom do I give bhakti, because by that I become a captive of My Bhakta."

Every one is a devotee in a sense, but most people are devoted to the things of this world. Blessed is he who is devoted to God, for his is the infinite joy of the immortal life. So Bhakti is its own reward. Thus we find the young boy of five years of age teaching the same thing as the grown up man on the battle-field of Kurukshetra. He was the same teacher throughout his life.

He was perfect. He did not come to get something. He came to give us something. So He did not care to be a king. He only made kings. He won kingdoms for others, but He never desired them for Himself, because He is the only king, Who was and is and ever will be.

Throughout the life of Sri Krishna we learn one grand lesson, that we must always have *Dharma* on our side; for God and *Dharma* are synonymous—because God was on Arjuna's side in the battle of Kurukshetra he was found to be the victor.

He was the first teacher in this Kali yuga Who taught that one God must be worshipped. He was the first teacher who saw that the *karma marga* was too difficult for people. He Himself was the author of the Vedas, yet He knew it would not be possible for the degenerated men of this materialistic age to go through all the difficult ceremonies given in the Vedas; So He taught that it was better to give up the Vedas. The people of the Kali yuga are like boys in the primary department and cannot learn such difficult lessons; while the people of the Vedic period were adults, hence all those innumerable usages were enjoined by them. But because men of this age had become like babies, religion was entirely simplified for them. "Worship the one God, Do not try to satisfy all these gods. Do not try to repeat all these scriptures. One mantram is enough. Only repeat one mantram." Not because

He did not believe in the Vedas, but because He saw that the people of this age could not follow them. So He told them: "Give up the Vedas. Worship the one God, and that God am I." "Whoever worships other gods, worships Me alone, only unconsciously. Therefore worship Me alone."

The more you have egotism, the less you will have love and faith towards God. The less you have egotism the more you will have love and faith towards God. Therefore, He teaches "Resigning every thing in Me follow Me in every way." Further He declares "Ordinary fellows like Duryodhana and others, insult Me by regarding Me merely as a man, but I am not really a man," and that was shown in the eleventh chapter of the Gita, when He made known His universal form to Arjuna. So, although He was appearing as a man, He was not a man. This is apparent in no other incarnation to such an extent. At all times God moved side by side with Him. He was not perfectly saintly only to satisfy saints. He did not simply preach, "If a man strikes you on the one cheek, turn to him the other." He did preach this, but only to a few. He said to others. "You are not fit to become Sannyasins, so your duty is to fight" He came here to satisfy all humanity, while others have come to satisfy a few only. There is no man in the world who can find fault with Sri Krishna. He has given out the teaching which must satisfy all.

THE GOPIS' LOVE FOR SRI KRISHNA

OR

LOVE FOR LOVE'S SAKE.

BY

Prabhulal.

Swami Vivekananda once said :—"Kama or lust is impure, and leads one under its influence to hell, while *prema* or ecstatic love is pure and nectar-like, leading one professing it to immortality or heavenly Bliss. When the state of abstraction in love is reached, lust dies and there is only love."

Where there is real love, there lust cannot find place; and when the height of love is reached, it is utterly extinguished. Such was the case with the blessed, but much misunderstood Gopis who were, no doubt, in the first instance, when they beheld the lovely face of the Divine Boy, Sri Krishna, influenced by *kama* or the ever-present sexual instinct in all living beings, the said instinct

being incessantly excited by the ever-alluring sight of the masculine beauty of Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna at once perceived that they were possessed by what is called carnal love, a love which springs up in the breast of a woman on beholding a man, roused of course by the influence of the ever-present sexual instinct in every living being. He, therefore, resolved to drift the current of the Gopis' earthly love for Himself into the channel of the pure heavenly or divine love—a love that knows no bound, a love that is not appeased by the appeasing of any sensual or carnal desire, a love that exists eternally for the sake of love only, and not for any return or for any worldly consideration, a love wherein there is not the least taint of any sensual desire on the part of the lover. Accordingly He in the beginning responded to the love of the Gopis, welcoming their love to Himself, and sported with them in a manner whereby He succeeded in gradually elevating their love for Himself to higher and higher spheres, until they breathed of pure Heavenly Love. They thus completely forgot themselves into the love of Sri Krishna, merging their personalities into His Divine Personality. This climax of love was reached after the *Rasalila* was over, when observing that the Gopis had become highly conceited for obtaining His love which they mistook for ordinary human love on His part, He made Himself invisible to them. Then they came to their senses, and recollected that Sri Krishna's love for them was not an ordinary human love, but the real Divine Love which they ever possessed; and consequently, they began to identify themselves thoroughly with the Divine personality of Sri Krishna—in fact they became "filled with Krishna" (कृष्णमयी). Then they saw their own Beloved Krishna everywhere, and themselves too as Krishna. In such a state of ecstatic love when the lover and the Beloved become one, it was impossible for *Kama* or Cupid to torment their minds with his flowery shafts, he being himself already completely overwhelmed or enchanted by the beauty of the Divine Boy (hence called *Madana Mohana*), all his power over his victims ceasing to act at the same time. Instead of there being any sign of carnal desires, there was a constant flow of divine love in their hearts. Such is the lofty ideal of love of the Gopis to Sri Krishna, which has been so wrongly understood by many people and so wrongly interpreted by most men.

Of all the Gopis, Sri Radha's love alone was pure from the very beginning. She represents the purified human soul, ever seeking absorption in the love of Her Beloved, the Divine Sri Krishna, or in other words, she is the *Jivatman*, ever holding

communion with the *Paramatman*. Swami Vivekananda says :— "There is no idea of any sensual desire in the love of Krishna and Radha. Even now when you get love, you see Radha. Become Radha and be saved."*

When the Gopis hesitated to appear before Sri Krishna, then a mere Boy, on account of their being devoid of all garment, it was clear that they had not at that time realised their one-ness with Him, still seeing Him as separate from themselves, or in other words, they had not as yet completely forgotten themselves into the love for Sri Krishna, the body idea still clinging, and therefore, they were still awake to the sense of their nakedness, which sense could not exist, had they lost themselves completely into His love. So there was a necessity for Sri Krishna illumining them on this point in order to remove the illusion of regarding themselves as still separate from Him.

THE GLORY OF VEDANTA

BY

A. Panchapakesha Iyer, M. A. L. T.

The study of Aryan antiquity has proved beyond all possibility of doubt that the Aryans were, from the most ancient days, the most gifted and enterprising of all the peoples of the earth. They were in a way, the leaders of the human race and made wonderful achievements in Religion, Literature, Arts and Sciences, by which means they were able to take the most distinguished position in the vanguard of human progress. Though thousands of years have elapsed since they began to play their part in the history of human evolution, the quantity of their contribution to human knowledge and human progress is even now increasing in astonishing proportions, and the day probably is not very far off when man may happily see the fruition of their labours in which all other branches of the human race, whether Mongolian, Semetic, Turanian or Negro, may get Aryanised in spirit, though not in physical vestment. According to the Bible, the Israelites were the chosen children of God; but perhaps with more appropriateness we may call the Aryans as God's chosen children for the many virtues that adorn them, and for their performing with unique success God's Mission on earth. If Christian Europe is what She is to day, it is not on account of Christianity as many would have us believe, but on account of the noble Aryan blood coursing through

* According to the school of Sri Gouranga, God has three Saktis viz., *Hladini Sandhini* and *Sambit* resembling His *Ananda*, *Sat* and *Chit* aspects. Radha is the personification of the *Hladini Sakti* which ever manifests the inexplicable joy of God-union. So *Prema* or God-love is the grace of Radha.—Ed.

the veins of her children ; for the the non-Aryan Christians have not been able to achieve even a tenth of the success attained by the Aryan Christians.

Such being the admirable merits of the Aryan race we shall do well to see whether the different branches of this vast family have been doing all over the world the same or similar kind of work for the evolution of humanity, or, if not same or similar, what differences there were in their strivings and aims, and which of them fulfilled the Mission of God the most.

We have to dismiss only with a passing reference the lines of progress and the aims and objects of the branches of the Aryan family other than the Indic, as the purpose of the present article is one that concerns only the latter. To begin with, it is well to bear in mind that though the different branches served different destinies yet all aimed at the common object—the progress of man. Man as we ordinarily understand him, is composed of matter and spirit, and so long as he continues to be in the world and of the world, it is indispensable that there must be a well-balanced progress of both the aspects of his nature. If his physical instincts and passions be more developed, than the spiritual, assuredly he will degrade himself by that to the plane of brutes and fail to occupy the highest pedestal assigned to him by mother Nature.

On the other hand, if he attempt to be highly spiritual to the total neglect of the physical part of his being, not only will he defeat his own end,—for the true spirituality or the extinction of matter can never be gained unless through matter itself—but by breaking the harmony of life will also run counter to the Divine Will. For as Parnell puts it :—

“The maker justly claims that world he made :
In this the right of Providence is laid.
Its sacred Majesty through all depends.
On using second means to work His ends.”

Man is the instrument, rather the middle agent, through whom the all-immanent God has to work, and if from a misconception of the Divine Law, any one kills the body for the spirit before discharging the debt he owes to the world, he cuts himself away prematurely from it and defeats the main object of his creation. The Western Aryans worked for matter more than the spirit, whereas the Eastern Aryans, at least the more ancient of them, worked for the spirit, but without neglecting matter, giving predominance to the former as the more important of the two—a process in which the Physical life was cleared of its dross, the senses were refined and the passions sublimed and exalted.

Comparative Philology, Comparative Mythology, Archaeology, Ethnology and similar sciences have established beyond doubt a common origin to the different branches of the Aryan Race. No

educated man can doubt the over-whelming evidence which these sciences furnish. The only fact that has not yet been clearly established is as regards the common home of the earliest Aryans. Wherever their original home was, no one can doubt that the different groups of the migrating people should have carried with them the manners and customs, the physical and mental characteristics and the civilization of the parent stock. But owing to the differences in the climatic conditions, the productiveness or otherwise of the soil, the natural aspects and so forth of the countries colonised by the separated clans and the relations that obtained between them and the aboriginal tribes in and around the newly colonised countries, the lines of progress of the different branches took different directions with the result that the different collateral branches are at the widely separated ends of the different radii, destined, as seems most probable, to converge again at the common centre of a new circle formed by external contact, for mutual help with the knowledge and experience gained in the weary travel of many a long century that has gone by.

It is needless to narrate here the history of the Greek or the Roman Aryans or of the Iranians who are the more important of the Aryan tribes except the Indians. By the nature of the countries colonised by them and by the peculiar circumstances in which they were placed, the development of the Greeks and the Romans was more or less material and their achievements mostly political and intellectual. In matters spiritual they were practically groping in the dark, though occasionally we find one here and one there catching only a feeble glimpse of the Divinity. They failed to arrive at a definite conception of Monotheism, not to speak of the immanence of God or of subtler conceptions of matter and spirit. They indeed laid the foundation to the modern systems of European Philosophy which have yet many things to learn from the Indian systems. But though in the world of spirituality their explorations were not much to their credit, it is on the strong basis of the early European Aryan conceptions that the modern political Europe has been built. The spirit of enterprise, the development of the nerve-power, the passion for conquest and domination, the pluck and push which carry them through every opposition, the intense passion for discoveries, all these have been the natural consequences of the old Greek and Roman conceptions.

The history of the Iranian Aryans is briefly told. Separating from their brethren who were to be the Indo-Aryans owing to difference of opinion on Religious conceptions, they settled in Iran, the modern Persia and exercised a profound influence on the religion and morality of the people amidst whom they settled but finally being persecuted by the new professors of Mahomedanism they found a safe retreat and asylum on the Bombay frontier where their children are at the present time a prosperous, enterprising and

flourishing community. They stick on to the practices of their ancient ancestors and faithfully follow the teachings of Zoroaster, the founder of their religion. Their history has not been marked by any new discoveries either in the world of spirit or matter, but surrounded by a thick wall of conservatism they lead a life of happy quiescence in the devoted worship of Ahuramazda and faithful to the traditions come down to them from their revered ancestors.

Such has been the history of the non-Indian Aryans. What then has been the fortune of the Indian Aryans? Have they proved worthy of the glorious ancient stock of which they are descendants? How have they fared in the various fields of human thought and progress? Has their history been one of credit to themselves and of the great men whose children they are? To answer these questions will be to narrate the whole history of this distinguished, not at any rate an unworthy branch of the great Aryan family, but this does not come within the purview of this article. It is enough to confine our attention here to the spiritual aspect of the Indian Aryan development.

It is however necessary to remark that the Indian Aryans were not wholly unmindful of mundane matters, which is a charge laid at their door by men not well informed in Indian History. Only think for a moment of their decimal system, of their Beejaganitam, Kshetraganitam, Angaganitam, of their Astronomy of their Vastusastra, of their Silpasastra of their Vaidyaka, of their Poetry and Rhetoric and many other branches of knowledge and it will be enough to convince the most Sceptic minds that they were by no means as unworldly as they are taken to have been. In their halcyon days of glory their discoveries in material science were such that they out-stripped their European brethren in the very fields in which the modern Europeans have out-stripped them. The present decline of the Indian Aryans is due to many complicated causes with which we need not concern ourselves here.

In treating of the spiritual progress of the early Indian Aryans which must necessarily be brief, we have to begin with the first occupation by them of the valley of the Indus at the dawn of human history. The rich fertility of the land they occupied, the glory of the oriental sun, the lavish abundance of Nature's gifts and the combined grandeur of heaven and earth elevated their minds to sublime heights of spirituality and they saw behind all these grand phenomena the worshipful hand of a mighty Spirit ordering them out for the immense benefit of man and beast. The hymns of the Rig Veda though they seem to be addressed to different deities are Monotheistic in spirit, each deity being worshipped for the time being as the one Universal Lord. For the Srutis say "Thou art the only Lord, though worshipped under different names." This sublimity of conception pervades the vast literature of the Vedas and

reaches its astonishing loftiness in the closing chapters of the grand revelations. The spark of spirituality that was put into the minds of the earliest Indian Sages excited in their worthy descendants a passion for more discoveries. The voyage that they made in the sublime regions was long and beset with storms of scepticism, agnosticism, and materialism but they never rested their oars until they found a safe and secure haven.

The path of Karma was tried and tried too much till people became wearied of its complicated and taxing rituals. The path of wisdom for the spiritual aspirant to walk on, benefited by the discipline of wholesome and soul-purifying Karma was in the end discovered as the only solution of the most difficult of human problems—the spiritual problem. Meanwhile vast were the arrays of the opposing forces that made spiritual progress no easy matter; there were the Charvakas, the Buddhists, the Niriswara Sankhyins and the professors of similar cults to oppose the growth of spirituality of the healthy type. Mighty efforts were made for getting a clear insight into the nature of matter and spirit and for forming a correct conception of the duties of man. Vigorous were the researches that were set on foot and as the result of these there flowered forth the different systems of Philosophy as systematised by Kanada, Gautama, Patanjali and Jaimini. But these failed to satisfy the spiritual longings of the Indians by reason of their glaring defects. The Vaiseshikas and the Naiyayikas made no provision for Bhakti and Karma, a knowledge of the Padarthas alone being thought sufficient for the attainment of Moksha. Iswara according to them is only the generating cause of the universe and can do nothing to save His creatures. The Yoga system looked askance on Karma and attached supreme value to contemplation. It failed to rise to the loftier conceptions of God and of the duty of man to Him in the manner it is taught in the Vedanta. The Purva-Mimamsa ignored Iswara and taught man to seek absolution by Karma and Karma alone. But all these would have become spiritualised and shed around them a new lustre had they possessed a stronger spiritual vitality for want of which they have continued to occupy an inferior position in the Indian-Sastric lore.

Not only those mentioned above but many others were the systems and creeds that arose in India and agitated the lower regions of the spiritual atmosphere. These gales and storms while clashing and beating against one another in wild concussions tossed to and fro the wild expanse of thick lowering clouds of materialism and atheism which overhung the regions of these warring forces.

"They closed, in clouds of smoke and dust
With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust,
And such a yell was there
Of sudden and portentous birth
As if men fought upon the earth,

And fiends in upper air ;
O life and death were in the shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair."

But long before the commencement of these agitations there had risen from out of the horizon of the intellect of the earliest Indian sages inspired by the God of all gods the genial and warm sun of the Vedantic teachings as embodied in the last portions of the Vedas, and generations of sages and saints had sought salvation through them. For untold centuries these teachings were blessing the Bharata land from end to end, but it is unfortunate that the sun of wisdom was clouded for a time by storms sweeping far below the region of this solar orb. But this was not long to be, for how long could cloud and mist, gathered thick though they might be, hold before the burning heat of the sovereign light of wisdom. They met their doom, the inevitable doom of ignorance, fanaticism and obstinacy ; they broke up and dispersed and no one knows where they are except in moth-eaten books of academic interest. Vedanta gained its rightful supremacy and has blessed this land of sages for centuries and continues to inspire the motives and actions of all classes of the Indian population from the lowest to the highest.

What is there in the Vedanta that has made it the soul-inspiring teaching of all classes of Hindus and of others who have been drawn to it by its beauty ? This question is not difficult to answer. It teaches man that as he sows so will he reap. It teaches him that every action of his, whether good or bad, is weighed in the balance and the man responsible rises or falls by the merit or demerit of his actions. It makes no provision for vicarious expiation, for according to it, the sower of the seed and the reaper thereof cannot be two different persons. No sin can be expiated for by mere repentance or by seeking salvation through any body. It places before man an all-immanent God who is the pure Spirit quickening every vein, vitalising every atom and warming and propelling every orb. He is all-wise, all-auspicious, all-beneficent, all-powerful and all-merciful. He can be worshipped in any form through any faith. Tolerance is the *sine qua non* of Vedantisim. It teaches that our neighbour's right must be respected for whosoever aggresses shall be aggressed. Personal discipline, purity of thought and deed, love and charity, forgiveness, dutifulness and devotion, all these inspired by truth and sincerity are the rungs of the spiritual ladder by which one has to climb. It is not Pantheism as some misinformed critics speak of it, nor is it a teaching for self-abnegation. It puts forth sufficient motive for action—action along right and humane lines. Vitalised by it, Yoga has gained a loftier aim, Mimamsa has made Karma a path for gaining the grace of Iswara, and Sankhya, Vaisheshika and Nyaya have learned to direct

themselves to the highest good which had been long before hidden from them. The Darsanas have now become the helpful handmaids to Vedanta instead of each standing by itself and presuming to offer a solution to the highest spiritual problem. Blessed are those who have known and appreciated its teachings and been profited by them. But unhappily such are few, but those are many who walk astray from a misconception of its details and aim.

As India wears the spiritual diadem to-day even in her-fallen condition, so may each country gain immensely by it, provided each is prepared to rub off its prejudices to see and get at the truth. Christianity, Muhammadanism, Bhuddhism and Jainism may each be Vedantised and become the nobler for it. Vedanta does not attempt to replace any faith but to vivify and strengthen each by its genial warmth. It is to teach this grand truth that Swami Vivekananda went to the West and poured forth his eloquence before crowded audiences. It is the holy mission of the followers of Vedanta to go forth as pioneers to all parts of the world with the torch-light of Vedantic wisdom and dispel darkness and selfishness wherever they may be. If the world hear the voice of Vedanta and translate its teachings into action, intolerance, selfishness, ambition and avarice will cease to exist. Unjust domination and sanguinary wars will become things of the past. Universal peace will reign supreme, and the kingdom of God will be firmly established on earth.

SISTER NIVEDITA'S EDUCATIONAL WORK.

One important branch of the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission with which the public are not very familiar is the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda women's work which includes in itself the Sister Nivedita's Girls School and the Purda women's work founded in 1901 and 1904 by the late Sister Nivedita and the Sister Christina, respectively. From the very beginning of her work in India, the late Sister Nivedita devoted most of her time and attention to the cause of Education of our women, recognising that in any national re-generation, the women have a great and a glorious part to play as throughout the world women have always been the guardians of humanity's ethical and religious ideals. With her characteristic sympathy and insight into the history and genius of our race, she realised that our women had the true education which befitted them to discharge their duties in their respective stations in life, for education is not merely the mechanical process of reading and writing, but a preparation for life itself. At the same time she felt the need for bringing the old system of education in line with the altered conditions of our society which required the absorption and assimilation of new and fresh ideals for its healthy progress and development.

The general lines along which this work should be conducted, the sister Nivedita has indicated with remarkable insight and wisdom.

"It is clear that as the objective of the old education of Indian women lay in character, the new cannot aim lower. The distinctive element, therefore, in their future training cannot be reading and writing—though these will undoubtedly grow more common—but the power to grasp clearly and with enthusiasm the ideas of nationality, national interests, and the responsibility of the individual to race and country."

"When the women see themselves in their true place, as related to the soil on which they live, as related to the past out of which they have sprung; when they become aware of the need of their own people, * * * then shall a worthy education be realised; * * *"

"Such a change, however, is only possible as a direct growth out of old conceptions. The national idea cannot be imposed from without—it must develop from within. And this will be in full congruity with the national religions."

"There is no question here of educating an intellect hitherto left in barbarous ignorance. Only those can do vital service to Indian women who, in a spirit of entire respect for her existing conventions and her past, recognise that they are but offering new modes of expression to qualities already developed and expressed in other ways under the old training."

(The Web of Indian Life—pages 91, 92 & 98.)

An attempt made with this noble object in view cannot but grow and expand in course of time, and as a result thereof the Nivedita's girl school is increasing in popularity at Calcutta and already a branch school has been opened at Bally.

The school aims at educating the girls in such a way that they should get within a period of five years,—the maximum period of stay in the school,—up-to-date ideas on every subject considered necessary to learn in the modern scientific system of education besides forming the habit of independent thinking in regard to them as far as possible. Oral training is therefore greatly resorted to in the school.

There are altogether five classes in the school each having two or sometimes three sections and the number of girls on the roll exceeds 150. The Kindergarten method is made use of in the Infant class. Lessons on card-sewing, brush-work, etc., are begun in this class and continued in the higher classes. Sanskrit and English are taught from the third year and by the time, the girls leave the school, they have an elementary knowledge of Arithmetic, Algebra and Geometry, Indian History and Geography.

As an adjunct to the school, a Purdah-Ladies' Department has been formed and the Purdah-Ladies' Department of the work can be divided into two main divisions, namely, the one in which the students are given a sound education on all subjects generally considered necessary for girls now-a-days, and the other in which they are educated and equipped to become teachers in the end. Thus in the latter division they acquire not only a sound knowledge in Bengali, Sanskrit, English, History, Geography, Mathematics, Needle-work and Painting—but learn at the same time the modern scientific method of teaching on every Saturday. They have to spend, moreover, two or more hours each, daily, in gaining practical experiences along the line by teaching the children's classes in the school.

The most interesting feature of this Educational Movement is the founding of an unique institution known as the matri

mandir.—The Temple of the Mother—the objects of which may be defined as follows :—

(a) It should be a Home for the Hindu girls who would devote their lives exclusively to the cause of education and service.

(b) It should be a place for such girls to hold to and live up to their ideals in life, and should grant facilities to them to learn and practise the best method of training.

(c) It should help select-students who are eager to avail of the opportunity of educating themselves in the school conducted by Sister Christina, but cannot do so on account of having no place to live near by—by housing them on payment of moderate fees.

(d) It should offer facilities to those who would devote themselves to the cause of service, to learn nursing, etc. according to the modern improved methods under qualified teachers, as well as a place to live in from where they would be able to shape their lives by living up to their ideals.

(e) It should offer opportunities to poor Purdah-women to help themselves by earning as much as they can by sewing, weaving stockings, making condiments and by other works of art, as well as by finding tuition for them in private families.

Thus the Home aspires to become everything to everybody according to their demands and to cultivate the spirit of self-help among its inmates to the best of its ability. It is however a sad feature that such a noble institution has not secured sufficient financial help from outside and in consequence it is working in the midst of great disadvantages. It is needless to point out that any contribution towards this Educational Movement is a charity towards a noble cause and it is hoped that ample funds would be forthcoming so that the institutions may grow more and more popular and useful to our womenfolk. Contributions may be sent either to Swami Sharvananda, Ramakrishna Matt, Mylapore, Madras, or to Swami Saradananda, Udbhodan Office, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

IN MEMORIAM.

Bertha E. Petersen was born in St. Louis and arrived in San Francisco in 1874. She was the devoted wife of Mr. C. F. Petersen. Shortly after her arrival in San Francisco, she joined the 'Home of Truth' society. In 1900 when Swami Vivekananda visited San Francisco, a society called the Vedanta Society of San Francisco was formed and shortly after its formation Mrs. Petersen joined it. From that time on she devoted her life entirely to the tenets of this philosophy and threw her home open to the Swamis. In August 1900 Swami Turiyananda came to San Francisco from New York via Los Angeles, and went at once to Mrs. Peterson's home on Street Buchanan where he lived during his stay in this city. Five days after he arrived Swami Turiyananda went to the Shanti Ashrama which is situated in the mountains 50 miles from San Jose; twelve disciples accompanied, Dhirananda (Mrs. Petersen) being one of them. They stayed at the Ashrama six months and then Swami went to Dhirananda's home and stayed there until his return to India. In January 1903, Swami Trigunatita arrived in San Francisco from India and was received at the wharf by Dhirananda and other friends who escorted him to Dr. Logan's house on Oak Street. Shortly after his arrival, he moved to Dhirananda's home and from this time on, her whole life was a steady undivided devotion and service to the swamis and the cause. On the morning of 24th December 1916, this beautiful soul passed away suddenly, leaving all those that loved her so dearly, heavily stricken with grief. Absolutely self-sacrificing and true, her loss to the society can never be replaced and the love, respect and devotion of all those who knew her are so strong still that only time which draws his veil as he goes on, will assuage their grief. Swami Prakashananda, the present spiritual head of the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, conducted the funeral service and spoke very feelingly about her devotion and steadfastness and how she had been the mother to all the Swamis. A noble soul has left our midst, but the shining example of such an exemplary life will always cheer us on to do our duty and help us to live our lives as they should be lived. Om ! Om ! Om !—An American Disciple.

GENERAL NEWS.

The Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Society Rangoon was celebrated on the 27th May 1917, at the Bengal Academy. Along with this was also observed the Paramahansa's 82nd birthday Anniversary. As usual Bhajana and the feeding of about 200 poor formed the morning programme. In the evening there was a lecture in Tamil on Avathara Mahima by Mr. S. T. Moorthy Mudaliar. The lecture was very impressive, and is likely to be printed in a leaflet form and circulated. After the reading of the Annual Report the President Dr. P. J. Mehta, M.D., Bar.-at-Law addressed the audience on the importance of the study of Sanskrit, Tamil and other vernacular literature. A business meeting of the members then followed. A few resolutions that were brought forward were passed and a new election of office-bearers for the year took place. The proceedings of the day were on the whole very successful.

Relief Report of the last six months of the Ramakrishna Mission :—

(a) For the last Flood of October 1916, in the District of Cachhar, from the Provident Relief Fund a sum of Rs. 670 was sent to Hon. Babu Kaminikumar Chanda, President, Ramakrishna Home of Service, Silchar. The work ended successfully by the second week of July last.

(b) In the month of May last a small sum of Rs. 25 was sent to the village Latabdi, in the District of Dacca, for the distressed people there.

(c) In the same month, fire broke out in the village of Bhavanipur in the District of Murshidabad, five miles off from Kandi. One Hundred and six houses of 36 families out of sixty were destroyed. The Mission was invited by the Anjuman Islamia Society, Kandi, to help the distressed people. Accordingly a worker with Rs. 160 was sent there immediately. Twenty-five huts of fourteen families were erected, which cost Rs. 149-15-9.

Purusha.—He is called Purusha because he is filled with limiting adjuncts.

He is established ... Supreme Atman.—The Jivatman stands to the Paramatman, according to the Advaita Vedanta, as a portion of the sky enclosed by the four walls of a room stands to the whole sky, or, as Sankara tells here in his commentary, as the myriads of sun-images reflected on different waters stand to the real sun. The relation and division are only verbal and apparent, and not real.

The Dwaitins and Vishtadwaitins might take this Sruti as an authority for their theory of Dualism, i.e., the Jivatman and Paramatman are two different entities, the former being dependent upon the latter. But then the subsequent Brahmanas would appear hard to be reconciled to that view. Hence this Brahmana ought to be taken as having Advaitic force.]

परमेवाक्षरं प्रतिपद्यते स यो ह वै तदच्छायमक्षरीरमलोहितं
शुभ्रमक्षरं वेदयते यस्तु सोम्य ।

स सर्वज्ञः सर्वो भवति तदेष श्लोकः ॥ १० ॥

यः who ह वै assuredly तत् that अच्छायं the shadowless, अक्षरीरं bodiless, अलोहितं colourless (lit. not of red colour), शुभ्रम् pure अक्षरं indestructible वेदयते knows, सः he परं the supreme अक्षरं the indestructible एव verily प्रतिपद्यते attains. सोम्य my young friend यः तु and who again (एवं विद्वान् has known thus), सः he सर्वज्ञः the omniscient सर्वः the All भवति becomes. तद् about that एषः the following श्लोकः verse भवति is.

The Supreme undecaying One, my young friend, he verily attains who knows the Indestructible, the pure, without shadow, colour or body. He becomes all and omniscient. There is the following verse about it.

[Without shadow—i.e., unshrouded by Ignorance.

Without colour—i.e., devoid of all attributes.]

विज्ञानात्मा सह देवैश्च सर्वैः प्राणा भूतानि संप्रतिष्ठन्ति यत्र ।
तदक्षरं वेदयते यस्तु सोम्य स सर्वज्ञः सर्वमेवाविवेशेति

॥ ११ ॥

विज्ञानात्मा the self of intellect (Buddhi) सर्वैः all देवैः gods (senses) सह with प्राणाः Pranas, भूतानि the elements यत्र in which

सम्प्रविष्टन्ति rest, सौम्य my friend, यः who तु again तत् that अक्षरं the imperishable वेद्यते knows सः he सर्वज्ञः omniscient सर्वं all एव verily आविवेश enters.

My young friend, he who knows that Imperishable in Which rest the mind, the senses and the Pranas, verily becomes omniscient and enters into all.

[The senses and the Pranas—Sankaracharya explains 'Devas of the text as gods like Agni, Indra, etc., who preside over the functions of the senses, and 'Pranas' as the senses.

Enters into all—i.e., realising himself as the Atman, feels himself as existing in all.]

The End of the Fourth Question.

॥ पञ्चमः प्रश्नः ॥

FIFTH QUESTION.

अथ हिनं श्रेष्ठः सत्यकामः पप्रच्छ । स यो ह वै तद्भगवन्मनु-
प्येषु प्रायणान्तर्मांकारमभिध्यायोत । कतमं वाच स तेन लोकं जयतीति
तस्मै स होवाच ॥ १ ॥

अथ then श्रेष्ठः सत्यकाम Satyakama, the son of Sibi एनं him (Pippalada) पप्रच्छ asked, भगवन् venerable sir, मनुष्येषु among men, सः यः he who प्रायणान्तं until death तत् that मांकारं the Om अभिध्यायीत having meditated, सः he तेन by that कतमं which लोकं world जयति conquers (attains). इति thus. तस्मै to him सः he (Pippalada) उवाच said.

Then Satyakama, the son of Sibi, asked him, "Venerable Sir, one who meditates upon Om until death, what world does he attain by that?" To him he replied :

एतद्वै सत्यकाम परं चा परं च ब्रह्म यदोकारः ।

तस्माद्विद्वानेतेनैवायतनेनैकतरमन्वेति ॥ २ ॥

सत्यकाम O Satyakama, एतत् this वै verily परं च superior अपरं च and inferior ब्रह्म Brahman चत् what ओकारः Om. तस्मात् therefore, एतेन by this आयतनेन means एकतरं one of the two अन्वेति attains.

What is Om, O Satyakama, is verily the higher and lower Brahman. Therefore the knower attains either of the two by its means.

[Higher and lower Brahman—i.e., the supreme, unmanifested, absolute Brahman, and the manifested Hiranyagarbha.

Om being the all-comprehensive sound symbol of Brahman, it represents the manifested state of Brahman by its audible sound, and the unmanifested by its inaudible, unexpressed form known as the अर्धमात्रा or कलातीति ।]

स यद्येकमात्रमभिध्यायीत स तेनैव संवेदितस्तर्णमेव जगत्याम-
भिसंपद्यते । तद्युचो मनुष्यलोकमुपनयन्ते स तत्र तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण
श्रद्धया संपन्नो महिमानमनुभवति ॥ ३ ॥

सः he यदि if एकमात्रां the one syllable (i. e., A) अभिध्यायीत
meditates upon, सः he तेन by that एव alone संवेदितः being en-
lightened तूर्ण very quickly एव verily जगत्या into this world
अभिसम्पद्यते comes back (is reborn). श्रद्धाः the Rik (i. e. the first
matra A) तं him मनुष्यलोकं the world of man उपनयन्ते take. सः he
तत्र there तपसा with Tapas (austerity) ब्रह्मचर्येण with continence,
श्रद्धया with faith सम्पन्नः being endowed महिमानं greatness अनुभवति
gets.

If he meditates upon the one syllable, he comes back
to this world very soon (after his death) being enlightened
by that. The Riks take him to the world of man, where
he attains the greatness (in life) being endowed with
austerity, continence and faith.

अथ यदि द्विमात्रेण मनसि संपद्यते सोऽन्तरिक्षं यजुभिरुच्यते
सोमलोकम् । स सोमलोके विभूतिमनुभूय पुनरावर्तते ॥ ४ ॥

अथ again, यदि if द्विमात्रेण by two syllables (A + U) (अभिध्यायीत
meditated तदा then) मनसि in mind सम्पद्यते attains (becomes united).
सः he यजुभिः by the yajus अन्तरिक्षं in the sky सोमलोकं the world of
the moon उच्यते is taken up. सः he सोमलोके in that world of the
moon विभूति grandeur (objects of enjoyment) अनुभूय having en-
joyed पुनः again आवर्तते returns.

If, again, one meditates upon the two syllables, one
is united with the mind (after death). He is taken to the
world of the moon in the sky, and there, in that world
of the moon, having enjoyed its grandeur comes back
again (into this world).

[United with the mind.—i.e., remains in his *sukshma Sarira*, the
mental body.]

यः पुनरेतं त्रिमात्रेणोमित्येतेनैवाक्षरेण परं पुरुषमभिध्यायीत स
तेजसि सूर्ये संपन्नः । यथा पादोदरस्त्वचा विनिर्मुच्यत एवं ह वै स

पाप्मना विनिर्मुक्तः स सामभिरुच्यते ब्रह्मलोकं स एतस्माज्जी-
वघनात्परात्परं पुरिश्चयं पुरुषमोक्षते तदेतौ श्लोकौ भवतः ॥ ५ ॥

यः who पुनः again एतं this (Om) त्रिमात्रेण with the three sylla-
bles (A + U + M) एव verily ओम् Om इति thus एतेन by this अक्षरेण
letter परं the supreme पुरुषं Purusha (Being) अभिध्यायीत meditates
सः he तेजसि in the light सूर्ये in the sun सम्पन्नः becomes united with.
यथा as पादोदरः serpent त्वचा from the skin (slough) विनिर्मुच्यते is
freed from एवं like that ह वै verily सः he पाप्मना from sins विनिर्मुक्त
becomes free. सः he सामभिः by the sama hymns उच्यते is elevated to
ब्रह्मलोकं the world of Brahma. सः he एतस्मात् from this जीवघनात्
the Macrocosmic Soul (Hiranyagarbha) परं the supreme पुरिश्चयं
existing in the heart, पुरुषं the Purusha ईक्षते beholds. तद् about that
एतौ these श्लोकौ two verses भवतः are.

Again, he who meditates upon the supreme Purusha
by Om as constituted of three syllables, becomes united
with the effulgent Sun. He is freed from all sins, even as
a snake is freed from its slough. He is taken up to the
world of Brahma by the Sama Hymns. From that macro-
cosmic self he beholds the supreme Purusha residing in
the heart. There are the two following verses about it :

[Becomes united, etc.—i.e., he attains the path of *Krama Mukti*.]

तिस्रो मात्रा मृत्युमत्यः प्रयुक्ता अन्योन्यसक्ता अनविप्रयुक्ताः ।

क्रियासु बाह्याभ्यन्तरमध्यमासु सम्यक्प्रयुक्तासु न कम्पते ज्ञः

॥ ६ ॥

तिस्रः the three मात्राः Matra (syllables) (एकैकश separately)
प्रयुक्ताः employed (चेद if) मृत्युमत्यः are mortal. अन्योन्य सक्ताः (when)
attached to one another अनविप्रयुक्ताः not unrightly employed (भवति
becomes). बाह्याभ्यन्तर मध्यमासु in the external, internal and the
middle क्रियासु in functions. सम्यक् properly प्रयुक्तासु when employed
ज्ञः the knower न कम्पते does not tremble.

The Three Matras when employed separately are
mortal ; but (when they are) connected with one another,

they are not unrightly employed. (When they are) properly employed, in all the internal, external and middle functions, the knower trembles not.

[When employed separately, etc.—when each of the three *matras*, A U M, is taken separately and meditated upon, the meditator has to be born again and again into this world as explained in the V. 3, 4.

When they are connected with one another etc.—i. e., when all the three *matras* are blended together in significance and sound, they represent truly the universal Brahman, and when thus meditated upon, it bears the proper fruit as described in the previous Brahmana.

Properly employed—i. e., properly meditated upon.

The internal, external and middle functions—i. e., in the deep sleep, awakened and dreaming states.

Trembles not—i. e., does not waver from the Atma-Consciousness, or from the meditation.]

ऋग्भिरेतं यजुर्भिरन्तरिक्षं सामभिर्यत्तत्कवयो वेदयन्ते । तमोकारेणैवायतनेनान्वेति विद्वान्यत्तच्छान्तमजरममृतमभयं परं चेति ॥ ७ ॥

ऋग्भिः by the Riks (i. e., by the first *matra*) एतं this (i. e., the world of man) यजुर्भिः by the yajus (i. e., by the second *matra*) अन्तरिक्षं the sky (i. e., the world of the Moon situated in the sky) सामभिः by the Samas (i. e., by the third *matra* along with the first two) यत् what कवयो the wise वेदयन्ते know (तत् that ब्रह्मलोकं the world of Brahma आप्नोति attains.) यत् what शान्तं peaceful अजरं undecaying अमरं immortal अभयं free from all fear परं supreme तम् that (Brahman) विद्वान् the sage ओंकारेण by Om आयतनेन means अन्वेति gets united with.

By the Rik hymns this world is attained, by yajus the sky (the world of the Moon) and by the Samas that which is known to the wise only. What is peaceful, undecaying, immortal, free from all fear, and supreme, the sage also attains by means of this Om.

[Note.—The sound OM is produced by the conjunction of the three sounds A, U, and M. These are the three *matras* of Om ;

further there is the *Ardha Matra* or the inaudible sound that lingers still even when the audible sound dies away and which can be detected only by fine perception and concentration.

It is held that Om is the sound symbol of Brahman and so the first sound produced at the beginning of the creation. From the three *matras* of Om came out the 'feet' of Gayatri, and from the three 'feet' came out the three Vedas and the three worlds or *Vyahritis* : From अ came out 'तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यं' and which expanded into the Rig Veda, from उ, 'भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि' and which expanded into Yajur Veda, and from म, 'धीयो यो नः प्रचोदयात्' and which expanded into Sama Veda. The first is स्तुतिपरा (hymnal), the second is क्रियापरा (devoted to work), and the third is ज्ञानपरा (devoted to knowledge).

So by the meditation upon the different *matras* different ends are attained according to the significations of the *matras*. But when the mind is concentrated upon the *Ardhamatra*, the Supreme Brahman is realised. This has been indicated by the latter half of the Brahmana. For further information vide Swami Vivekananda's *Bhakti Yoga*.]

The End of the Fifth Question.

॥ षष्ठः प्रश्नः ॥
SIXTH QUESTION.

अथहैनं सुकेश भारद्वाजः पप्रच्छ । भगवन् हिरण्यनाभः कौसल्यो
राजपुत्रो मामुपेत्यैतं प्रश्नमपृच्छत । षोडशकलं भारद्वाज पुरुषं वेत्थ
तमहं कुमारमब्रुवं नाहमिदं वेद यद्यहमिममवेदिषं कथंते नावक्ष्यमिति
समूलो वा एष परिशुष्यति योऽनृतमभिवादति तस्मात्तार्हाम्यनृतं वक्तुं
स तुष्णीं रथमारुह्य प्रवव्राज । तं त्वा पृच्छामि कासौ पुरुष इति ॥ १ ॥

अथ next भारद्वाज सुकेशा Sukesha of the Bharadwaja Gotra एवं
him (Pippalada) पप्रच्छ asked भगवन् holy sir, कौसल्य of Kosala
हिरण्यनाभः Hiranyanabha राजपुत्रः the prince मां me उपेत्य having
approached एतं this प्रश्नं question पप्रच्छ asked, भारद्वाज O of Bharad-
waja Gotra, षोडशकलं of sixteen parts पुरुषं Purusha वेत्थ do (you)
know ? अहं I तं that कुमारं prince अभुवन् said, अहम् I इमं this न वेद
do not know. अहम् I यदि if इमम् this अवेदि had known (तर्हि then)
ते to thee कथं why न not अवक्ष्यम् have told ? वः who अनृतं falsehood
वदति tells एषः this वै verily समूलः with the whole root परिशुष्यति is
dried up (is destroyed) तस्मात् therefore अनृतं falsehood वक्तुं न अर्हामि
cannot tell. सः he (the prince) तुष्णीं silently रथं the chariot आरुह्य
having ascended प्रवव्राज went away. त्वा to thee तं that पृच्छामि (I)
ask असौ this पुरुष Purusha क where.

Next, Bharadwaja Sukesha asked him: "Venerable Sir,
Hiranyanabha, the prince of Kosala came to me and put
me the question, 'well Bharadwaja, do you know the
Purusha who is of sixteen parts?' I replied to the Prince,
'I do not know him; had I known him, why should I not
tell it to thee. He who tells lies, perishes, root and all; so
it behoves me not to tell lies'. He got into his chariot
and went away. So I ask thee where is that Purusha?"

तस्मै स होवाच । इहैवान्तःशरीरे सोम्य स पुरुषो यस्मिन्नेताः
षोडशकलाः प्रभवन्तीति ॥ २ ॥

तस्मै to him सः he उवाच said, सोम्य my young friend सः that
पुरुषः the Purusha इह here अन्तः शरीरे within this body (वर्तते exists

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. IV.]

AUGUST, 1917.

[No. 4.]

THE HINDU SCRIPTURES AND RATIONALISM

BY

Prof. T. Rajagopalachariar, M.A., B.L.

Of all the holy books of India, the Bhagavad Gītā is the one
most revered by every class of Hindus. Diverse as are the religions
and castes of this continental country, various and irreconcilable the
habits and prejudices of each portion in it, innumerable as are the
modes of worship and religious practices throughout the land, the
one text-book which the thoughtful regard with respect, and the
ignorant with veneration is this Gospel of all Hindu India, the
precious Word of our saviour Sri Krishna. The Vedas have long
since ceased to be the practical basis of our religion. Even the
Upanishads, the real bases of our religious philosophies, are no
longer of much weight with the mass of Hindus. The Ramayana
and the Mahabharata, though of importance practically as the
source of various moral lessons, are of no great utility on the re-
ligious side of mass instruction. Neither Dasaratha nor Janaka,
neither Yudhishthira, nor Arjuna, nor Droupadi, is an object of
religious worship except among stray sections of the people, if at
all so. Rama's sufferings, and Sita's woes are not usually treated
by the people as vicarious for the sake of humanity, though they
are so regarded by the philosophical; the masses rather take for
granted that they suffered as other human beings by the cruelty of
mischievous people, and are satisfied to draw the lessons of
patience, heroism, filial duty, brotherly affection and so forth,
which the story obviously inculcates. The Puranas have now

ceased to be read as eagerly as they were, perhaps, in past centuries. They are not, except the Bhagavata, part of the life of the people. We hear of no reading of the *Pavanaprokta* Purāṇa as in Bana's time, and there is no respected Suta family which though of Sudra caste, was given the place of honour by the greatest sages of the land, for their chantings of the Purāṇas, as of old. The Brāhma, the Agni, the Skānda, and a score of others are now mere names, though certainly in past centuries they were recited again and again, to supply a genuine demand. To the middle class Hindu, the religious side is represented by the Sraddhas and Tarpanas which he remembers to perform as the occasions come round, and the visits to the temple of Sivā, or Vishnu, which he makes on occasions. The educated Hindu, speaking generally, conforms to the former in name, out of social considerations, but has practically dropped the latter, as a useless trouble for which he has no time. If the Hindu acts the religious man in the present day, it is more the result of his ingrained nature, the *Vasana* of his past beliefs, than the outcome of an active religious fervour based on study or reflection. In these circumstances it may be a matter for wonder that religion has still a place in our thoughts and actions, if the answer were not found in the aforesaid ingrained *Vasana* of former habits, and more especially in the saving grace of the doctrines which the Bhagavad Gita has preached to us and continues to inculcate for all time. The Hindu believes that Sri Krishna is the Deity Himself in person, the infinite Supreme descended to us as a *purna-avatara*. *Krishnastu Bhagavan swayam*. He believes that the words or at least the ideas in the 18 chapters of this book were those given out actually by Sri Krishna to his favourite pupil as a thesis on the theory and practice of Hindu life. He believes that though delivered in the first instance to Arjuna, the preaching of the Lord was meant for all humanity and that Arjuna was but the *nimitta* here also, as in the destructive war that the speeches interrupted for a time. He believes further that the last word has been said on all points of religion and morality, both in theory and practice, by the gracious utterance of Sri Krishna in this Sacred work. If the learned of the land, in the persons of Sankaracharya or Ramanujacharya or Madhwacharya have drawn variant meanings as to the scope and effect of the teachings of this divine-song, this does not affect the lay Hindu to whom there is no wavering, no inconsistency, and no doubt as to the teachings of the Gita. In his veneration he is content, if incompetent to follow its meanings, to use it for *parayana* day by day, so that the meaning sinks by degrees into his mind in a soil prepared by centuries of deep religious faith and practice. The broad features of this

great work, its depreciation of mundane things, its insistence on the law of karma, its exhortation to do duty for duties' sake, its extolment of the knowledge of God, and its doctrine of Bhakti are all so well-known and appreciated, and are so fully grasped by the ordinary Hindu that he suffers little by want of culture in Sanskrit or absence of a critical knowledge of that language. The Gita teaching is his natural food, and his faith in it needs not the aid of any analysis to assure him of its wholesomeness.

It is necessary however for the educated Hindu to study somewhat more deeply the teachings of the Gita, and to consider how far he can rely upon it as an authority in the solution of practical difficulties affecting his life and faith. As one whose faculty of reasoning has been specially cultivated by contact with western thought and culture, he is prone to test all assertions of a dogmatic nature by the touch-stone of rationality, and to doubt the value of statements that do not stand this test. While owing to a secondary regard for what is hallowed by tradition and time, he still does not feel quite at ease till his reason assures him that what he is asked to believe is worthy of his reasoned approval. The simple belief of the orthodox un-English-educated Hindu that what the Lord has pronounced must be absolutely true is no longer his. He does not believe, as does his orthodox-brother, that the Vedas are eternal, as no author can be remembered, and as its utterances are of unexceptionable merit. He, rather thinks, practically following the Mimamsaka *purvapakshin* that if authors are not remembered, that is due to lapse of time; and as to the merits of the Vedas, he either does not care to know them, or puts his faith in the available translations by western scholars, which disclose no treasures in the obvious prayers for health, and wealth, cattle and progeny, which a primitive race sought after at the hands of imaginary deities, mere personifications of natural phenomena. The Upanishads, instead of being sacred and unquestionable revelations on the problems of Life, Godhead, and the Universe, are to him, as to the western *savant*, merely diverse attempts at the solutions of these problems, no more reconcilable with one another than are the systems of European philosophies constructed by Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Mill or Hamilton. As for the Purāṇas, they are either neglected entirely or looked upon with great disregard. Their stories are considered puerile, their history puzzling and mostly valueless, their geography execrable, their science superstitious, and their religious philosophy a mass of contradictions and sectarian vituperation. This attitude of the educated Hindu towards his sacred literature is the outcome of his English education, and study of the exact sciences and modern rational

teachings. It is an attitude which has come to stay, which there is no hope of altering to any great extent, and which it behoves all orthodox men to take note of, and study, for the purpose of discovering the means of modification if they exist to any extent. It is the object of this paper to set out how far a reconstruction of the modern attitude of thinking in religious matters is possible, on the authority of the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, which, among sacred books, still retains its title to respectful regard at the hands of the Educated Hindu.

Our Hindu Scholars are fond of saying that *modes of proof* must be settled before *facts* can be ascertained. *Minidhceeni Meyasiddhih*. They have accordingly held that modes of proof are three in number, direct experience, inference, and authority or words of reliable persons. The first is obviously fundamental, and is accepted by all thinkers. The second is really a development of the first, and is equally accepted by all. It is about the third, the value of authority, that Hindu philosophers hotly dispute. The Hindu Dissenters, the Charvaka, the Boudha, the Jain decline to admit for the Veda the eternal, infallible, and independent authority which the orthodox Darsanas claim for it. Among the latter, it is the Jaimini system which first uncompromisingly declared that the Veda was *Apourusheya*. It was not of personal origin, not even the word of God, it was the eternal sound, coeval with Brahman, and devoid of any grounds of blemish. This extreme position was obviously taken to shut the mouths of all inconvenient questioners, and the believers were pinned to an absolute trust in the truth and infallibility of the eternally heard *sruti*. The Purva Mimamsa, the system of Jaimini, however, intends this to be a reasoned trust, and not a matter of blind faith, as it sets out the *pros* and *cons* of the question in an early *adhikarana* of its First Chapter. A modern reader cannot resist the impression that the opponent's position is much more convincingly put than the orthodox Siddhanta, as the chief arguments of the latter are (1) that all speech is eternal, (2) that import is absolutely connected with language, (3) that no author has been remembered for the Veda, and (4) that the mode of instruction, by word of mouth, has been without a beginning. What is meant, in plain language, is that as large numbers of people from time immemorial have practised the rites and duties prescribed by the Veda, and as they are hardly likely to do so, if they remembered a human author of them, the fact of such non-remembrance of author and continued trust in its teachings is sufficient to constitute the Veda as *apourusheya*—non-originated, and hence devoid of all faults incident to anything merely originated by an intelligent being, God or man. The

opponent had strongly argued that the mention of names of parts of the Veda, as *Kāthaka*, *Kālāpaka*, *Vaiswāmītra*, etc., implies authorship, and a beginning, *anityasamyoga*; the Siddhantin meets these objections by various explanations which it is unnecessary to specify here: The *Apourusheya* being determined by non-remembrance of the author when the importance of the matter makes such remembrance very probable if one existed, the objections are easily met by quotations from the Veda itself, of texts that state that Brahman created the world in accordance with the ideas preserved in the eternal Veda. This view of the beginninglessness of the Veda is specifically affirmed by the author of the Vedānta Sūtras, and is of course followed by all later writers like Sankara, Ramanuja, and others. The textual authority of the Veda being thus demonstrated, all that the subtlety of the intellects ranged on the orthodox side could do was to exert to the full the right of interpretation inseparable from authoritative texts; and within the range of such interpretation it has been possible to develop divergent systems, all admitting the infallibility of the Veda but construing texts practically as they please, but professedly according to the canons of construction laid down in Jaimini's system.

It will thus be seen that the modern educated Hindu has to choose between the orthodox view of the eternity and infallibility of the Vedas including in this term the Samhitas, the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas, and the Upanishads of all the Vedas, as well as the stray and unattached Upanishads which form a large number, and the view of the critical western scholar to whom the eternity and infallibility of the Vedas are out of the question, and their usefulness depends entirely on the intrinsic merit of the ideas expressed. Modern research has not yet succeeded in fixing the exact upper limit to the period of the Vedas, or the more archaic portions of them, though there is consensus of opinion that they cannot very well be later than about 1500 B.C. When the comparatively complex state of society depicted in the Rig-Veda, and the high development of the Sacrificial system even at that period, are considered, even the Western Scholar must agree that it is safe to suppose that a period measured by centuries must have elapsed before the Rig-Vedic conditions were reached. The sciences of grammar, philology (*Nirukta*), Dramaturgy, Medicine, and Astronomy (*Jyotishanga*), now represented by typical Sūtras, or condensed texts necessarily pre-suppose centuries of discussion, and thought before they took their present forms. Hence the most reasonable view is to date the commencement of Aryan civilisation one or two millenniums before the lower limit mentioned above,

and hence the educated Hindu can rationally take 'the eternity' of the orthodox view to mean for him, considerable antiquity estimable in thousands of years, and not merely a number of centuries. Again the educated Hindu may not believe in the efficacy of rituals like Sacrifices and Samskaras. He has however to note that they are but the outward symbols of spiritual ideas of a lofty kind, and human nature does require some formalism to give point and persistency to institutions founded on great ideas. It is admitted in all religions that the ideas of unselfishness and sacrifice are the key-note of high moral character. To foster this ideal, and preserve modern minds from the pervasion of merely materialistic ideas, it has become the duty of the cultivated Hindu to keep up the formalism of centuries in some modified form, so that mental and moral discipline may not be lost sight of. From this point of view the study of sacred works embodying Hindu ideals is desirable even for the non-believing Hindu.

A rational basis for the insistence on the study and appreciation of the Hindu scriptures may also be found in the fact that the sages of India were men of mighty intellect and keen insight into human nature, and that they have recorded their experiences in the sacred writings. It is unnecessary in these days to insist on the possibility of high psychical development and cultivation of what may be termed new spheres of experience by courses of mental and physical discipline to which the key is furnished in our ancient texts. Leaving aside obvious cases of imposture, there are various trustworthy records of unexplained phenomena, which have to be unravelled by the human intellect. It is claimed therefore by many that in supersensuous matters as the nature of the Absolute and its relations to the finite, our scriptures would furnish valuable information based on experience of ancient seers, and their authority in this respect is not disputable by the mere prejudiced sceptic.

Such are in general the grounds on which a study of our Vedic literature may be recommended to the educated class of our day who have little belief in its divine origin and less in its practical usefulness. It may also be pointed out that the author of the Bhagavad Gita whose importance we have dwelt upon already takes a rational position in the treatment of this question of the authority of the Vedas. No doubt the Gita is clear in its denunciation of those who cast aside the ordinances of the scripture and follow the promptings of their desire. "They do not reach perfection, nor happiness, nor the highest goal." (XVI—23). Again, "let the scriptures be thy authority in determining what ought to be done

or what ought not to be done ; knowing what has been declared by the ordinances of the scriptures, thou oughtest to work in this world (XVI—24)." These two verses are therefore positive in enjoining on all Hindus the duty of determining what is right solely by reference to the *Sastra*, i.e., the scriptures, and seem to give little room for that independent thought which a rational mind may expect to be a better guide in such matters. Those who perform austerities not enjoined by the Sastras are pronounced to be 'demoniacal in their resolves' '*Asura nischayas*.' "Such persons, cast into demon's wombs, sink, birth after birth, into the lowest depths (XVI—20)." This scathing denunciation of the unbeliever in the *Sastra* may be considered inconsistent in a discourse which extols knowledge in various places, e.g., in the IV Chapter, where we read : '(the fire of wisdom reduces all actions to ashes' : and again, there is no purifier in the world like wisdom,) and "Better than the sacrifice of material is the sacrifice of wisdom" (IV, 37, 38, 33).

It will be seen that these are two apparently contradictory positions maintained in these extracts, one claiming that the textual authority of the Veda is unimpeachable and that in consequence the karmas of the Veda are compulsory on all, and the other seeking to emphasise the futility of karma and the exaltedness of knowledge over it, in its power of dispelling the fruits of past karma. It is this seeming contradiction, substantially the conflict between the old Sankhya and Yoga Schools that upset Arjuna and made him ask "Which one is better decisively? Tell me that." (V. 1). Sri Krishna's reconciliation of this conflict is at once rational and in consonance with the prevailing Upanishadic thought. He explains that by Sannyasa or abandonment of karma he does not mean actual abandonment of enjoined acts, but only the *abandonment of fruits* of those acts which however are to be performed in the prescribed ways. *Yuktah karmaphalam Tyaktwa ; Sangam Tyaktwa*. It is this abandonment of fruits, attachment, and the idea of ones being independent actor that is repeatedly enjoined by Sri Krishna as both necessary and sufficient for attaining the highest end. 'With the pronounciation of *That*, and without aiming at fruit, are performed the various acts of sacrifice, by those desiring liberation." (XVII, 25). Again, "he who performs a prescribed action, saying, 'It ought to be done,' relinquishing attachment, and fruit, that relinquishment is pure." (XVIII, 9). In other words, and as fully explained by commentators, the Gita contemplates an irreducible minimum of karma to be performed by the least worldly and even then without attachment or desire of fruits. These are acts enjoined as *nitya* and

whose neglect is productive of sin. It also permits the performance of various other acts which one actively disposed may desire to perform, either because he wants to follow the world or because the bent of his nature prompts him to do them. In such cases he is again enjoined to perform them disinterestedly, without attachment, to do them merely as duties for duties' sake. Thus there are two sorts of activities contemplated, the minimum activity generally styled *Ajna Kainkarya* (enjoined service), and the other, *Anujna Kainkarya* (permitted service), in Vaishnava religious works.

It is with reference to this distinction between acts done with desire for fruit, and acts done without such desire that the Gita speaks depreciatingly of Vedic injunctions: "Flowery speech is uttered by the foolish, rejoicing in mere Vedic disquisitions" (II. 42), and "The Vedas deal with the three attributes: be thou, O Arjuna, above these attributes." (II. 45); Also the simile of a public tank overflowing with water, where each one can only drink what he needs to quench his thirst (II. 46): In all the Vedic acts enjoined, the wise man should select those which he must perform, being peremptorily enjoined and not for particular fruits, and do those actions also without attachment, either as the commands of a beloved Supreme Being, or as acts which will purify his frame, and prepare the soul to reach its perfect state.

Thus the Bhagavat Gita though primarily intended as a text book of religion and philosophy, contains a clear enunciation of the principles that should guide us in estimating the relative value of our sacred books. Those parts of the Vedas which aim directly at the teaching of religious truths, are of more value than the Karmakanda which enjoins acts fitted to produce particular fruits and are thus Kamyas. At the same time active natures that might be inclined to engage in elaborate rituals out of vanity are told that they may engage in such acts if they can so far discipline themselves as not to seek any selfish gains. The recluse who is ready to retire from all activity is told that he must do some necessary acts and that inaction is as bad as excessive action for profit. With this caution against excessive and hurtful action, the Gita distinctly favours an active life of duty for duty's sake, and advocates such life by preference even in the case of those who may feel inclined by wisdom to forego all action. For we are told (III. 26): 'no wise man should unsettle the mind of ignorant people attached to action; but he should make all actions attractive (to them) by performing them intently.' This advice, if interpreted, as is done usually, to mean that even the wise man must do actions desiring their prescribed fruits, so that the ignorant

may be induced to do the same, will be mischievous and purposeless, as the ignorant are already engaged in such selfish activity, and the wise man is not to lose his salvation by following them. The meaning rather, as Ramanuja puts it, and as I have translated is, that Karmayoga or action without attachment, being a proper means of salvation, the wise man, capable of Gnana-yoga is still to do Karmayoga as an example to the rest of the world. Thus there is considerable room for selection and discrimination in the acts enjoined by the Vedas, and the general rule that all scripture is authoritative is modified by these considerations as to what acts are necessarily enjoined and what are omissible by Hindus that act without attachment.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA—THE FULFILMENT OF HINDUISM.*

BY

Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji, M.A., PH.D., P.R.S.

Once more the revolution of the heavens has brought us our national commemorative sacrament. Nature is cyclical, wheeling on in endless procession. The sun and stars dance in their eternal round, the seasons bring back the hour of glory in the grass, and of freshness in the flower. Nature is cyclical, nature is sempiternal. Her sun-set splendours and moon-light glories, her blue sky and star-lit heavens, are all phenomena same in their recurrence and recurrent in their sameness. Her agents, too, are "Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting," the deep silence of immortality and eternity, rebuking the sounding hollowness of mortal man. Yes, man is but an alien, an uninvited guest at the banquet of nature, at which he sounds a jarring note, presents a sorry spectacle with the doom of mortality written on his brow.

But though mortal in the body, his thoughts stray, wander through eternity. The two great wonders of God's creation are, as Kant pointed out, the starry heavens above and the mind of man within. Each has its own immensity, immortality and eternity. And so the mind of man has evolved a system by which he, a mortal, can enter into a partnership and fellowship with Nature. The sempiternity of nature, her renovations and resurrections, are shared by her associate, Man. Humanity and its festivals become cyclical with the cycles of the heavens, processional with the process

* An anniversary address delivered in Benares City in February 1917.

of the suns. Man thus partakes of Nature's immortality by imitating her ways and celebrating, with the regularity of the seasons and the tides, the ceremonies in commemoration of the sanctities, and pieties, heroisms and martyrdoms, the ecstasies and agonies, which are memorable in his history.*

One of such ceremonies, brings us together here this afternoon. In celebrating the anniversary of the birth of Sri Ramkrishna we are indeed partaking of a great national sacrament. We are but performing the task bequeathed to us by the generations that have preceded us and when we too shall pass off the stage of life, when we ourselves shall be laid to grave and dust returns to dust we too shall be transmitting this task of ours to the generations that succeed us and generations yet unborn. We are but continuing the work of our ancestors and shall leave it to our posterity in our turn.

We are assisting to-day at a national festival which is no innovation of ours but has a history much longer than an individual's life and will continue far beyond its limits into the future. It is thus that the continuity of our national life, the spirituality of the race, are kept up perpetually like the perennial flow of the Ganges. Historic eternity has thus evolved its own appropriate ceremonies and symbols through which the historic personality of the race realises and preserves itself.

I have said that these ceremonies are *national* sacraments. For these invariably centre round great men, super-men, heroes, the most *national* of men. But, what is meant by '*national men*'? Of how many of us can it be truly and safely asserted that we are national in the genuine sense of the term? We are mostly representing some of the superficial aspects and features of our nationality, the mere accidents and externals as distinguished from the fundamentals and essentials of that nationality. We are national in some of the outer forms of life; for example, in respect of diet, dress, and other external habits of life, though even in these matters there is a fast falling off in some quarters, a process of denationalisation deplorably at work. For national peculiarities, and even prejudices, if you like, have a value of their own to which all living nations cling with a sacred feeling *because* they are the nation's peculiarities and prejudices, of which the nation need not be ashamed or be anxious to get rid. And so, even in regard to the accidents, superficialities and externalities of life the majority of us are hardly national in the desirable degree. Yet the truly national men represent the nation

* Adapted from the writings of Dr. Brajendranath Seal, M.A., Ph.D.

not merely in regard to the externals but also the very essence of its life. In them is indeed embodied what may be called the very soul of the people. For we may speak of the soul of a people, as we can speak of the soul of an individual. The soul of an individual is not to be identified with any single part of him. It is something different from the individual members of his bodily organism, nor is it to be identified with his mind, or any of its organs, functions, or activities. It is neither his body nor his mind nor any particular organ thereof, but it is something which is in them all, which pervades his entire life and governs all its activities. Similarly the soul of a people is to be looked for in no one class or institution manifesting its life. As in the case of the individual, it is but part of the Infinite in the Finite, of the Absolute in the Conditioned, of the Universal in the Particular, the Individual in the Aggregate, the Simple in the Composite, the One in the Many. Universal humanity, under divine dispensation, is realising itself through the various peoples, races and nations into which it has been divided up. Each nation represents a particular phase of the Absolute which it is its sacred duty and mission to unfold. Each people has its special genius, its own particular formative principle that regulates its evolution along distinct lines of its growth. That genius, that soul, is sometimes seen to be embodied in some rarely gifted men, representative men, men who most faithfully and completely represent the fundamental and distinguishing features which mark out their nation from the rest of mankind, men who are not individuals, so to speak, though possessed of a well-defined and singularly developed individuality,—men who are not *individuals* but *types*. It is thus that we find that their individual impulse moves a mass of mankind. They all always know how to strike the fundamental chords which vibrate in all hearts. And who can doubt the potency of an individual mind who sees the shock given to torpid races—torpid for ages—such as that given by Mahomet for example—a vibration propagated over Asia and Africa? What of Shakespeare the voice of England, of Newton, of Franklin and, in our own country, what of Buddha, or of Manu or Chaitanya? Similarly Sri Ramakrishna embodied the soul of Hinduism. Verily the history of the world is but the biography of such great men. "Never did the king sigh but with a general groan." The lives of such great men also affect, more deeply than those of sovereigns, the lives of their contemporaries.

It will also appear that these ceremonies or sacraments also centre round "immortal" men, in association with whom they themselves become immortal and have a long history. The history

of our country, and of other countries as well, records many instances of such national festivals which, after living a short but brilliant life, become afterwards extinct and fall into disuse, simply because they are connected with lesser men, men whose memories do not long persist in the minds of their posterity, men who do not live long after their death in the grateful heart of their nation. It is the abiding and permanent value of a man's life to his country that determines the period during which the national homage continues to be paid to his memory. The value of his life indeed determines also the value, vitality and the very life of the sacraments or institutions which gather round his name and immortalise his memory.

But, how can mortals become immortal? How is it possible that there are men who, in spite of the extinction of the physical body, continue to exercise an eternal, undying influence on posterity scarcely less potent than that they exercised when they were alive in the flesh. The secret of this mystery or paradox is that those only become immortal who devote themselves in their lives to the interests of the immortal in man, to the cultivation of the eternal and imperishable elements underlying human life. It is hardly necessary for me, to argue what has been the very fundamental assumption of Hindu thoughts, namely, the existence of soul as a factor of human life in conjunction with the two other factors of body and mind, or the reality of immortality. Devotion to the interests of the immortal in man means therefore devotion to the interests of the soul, the cultivation of the spiritual interests of human life as distinguished from those relating to body and mind. Of how few of us can it be said that we are duly mindful of our spiritual interests, of the superior needs and claims of spiritual development to which the needs, claims and interests pertaining to the other two factors of human life should be properly subordinated? On the contrary, the lives of most of us, if closely and critically scrutinised, will be seen to be regulated by the very contrary principles. We are first mindful of the interests of the body, then, of the mind and lastly, if at all, of the soul. The interests of the body, the cravings of the flesh, the mere requirements of physical existence assert their predominance and absorb all the energies and activities of life. To these are subordinated the interests of the life that is higher than the mere material life. Just analyse the life that we live from day to day, the governing impulses and motives of our actions. What do we find? We find that we are all engaged upon activities or actions which have for their main aim and end the earning of livelihood, the acquisition of the material means of supporting life. In a word, money-making

is the be-all and end-all of our existence, the pivot round which turns all human activity in this world. And what is this money-making for? Why, it is for the satisfaction in the majority of cases of the physical wants of life, the wants created by the body. The body requires to be properly and sometimes luxuriously fed. That explains the activities of many in the pursuit of wealth. The body requires to be sumptuously clothed and therefore we want money. The body requires to be superbly housed and therefore no ordinary means of shelter will suffice for us or lay to sleep the inner cravings on that score. Whatever may be the height and capacity of our intellectual attainments and endowments, we all stand on a common platform,—on one common low plane of meanly-motivated action. We are all animated by same low common ideals, the ideals which permit, to use a strong language, the prostitution of the higher gifts of the mind and intellect for the purposes of the mere body. It is the body that dictates our actions, the body is our real governor and has made slaves of us all. We live under the thralldom of the flesh. The aim of each of us is, any how to get rich so as to give scope to the never-ending series of our bodily wants of various kinds and degrees of which each succeeds to another and takes its place as soon as it disappears in satisfaction. Phoenix-like, each physical want rises on the ashes of a preceding satisfaction. And even when some of us eventually succeed in attaining this end of getting rich under the stimulus of the desire for a comfortable physical existence, there is no escape from this tyranny of the body. For, with the wants of the body come other more numerous and urgent demands of those who are of this body. The rich man's aim in life is to create a richer posterity and so when we once allow ourselves to be caught up in the snares of the cravings of the flesh, if we once allow the body to gain the upper hand and shape and control our life, we shall bind ourselves eternally to a never-ending chain of desires from which there can be no escape, as there can be none from the eternal chain of births and deaths to which we are all subject owing to our own *Karma*.

Thus it may be said of but few human beings that they are not ultimately governed by the body and are duly mindful of the interests of mental or spiritual culture. Most of us even go in for intellectual or mental culture only as a means of livelihood, of a life of pleasures and luxuries, as a means, *i.e.*, of subserving the dominant interests of the body, the grosser but compelling wants of a life on the mere physical plane. Thus the mind itself is enslaved to serve the body, the intellect is placed at its service and ultimately the soul itself, to use Milton's strong, though unphilosophical

words, (for the soul is inherently incapable of corruption) "imbodies and imbrutes." Indeed, a life lived on such principles tends towards an ultimate brutalisation of human life.

It should also be noted that, like individuals, nations or peoples are also to be graded according to the aforesaid standard. The growth of civilisation means the growth of the higher wants of life than the merely physical, the reduction of the power of the body over life's activities, the gradual emancipation from the bonds of flesh. The hunter stage of mankind implies a complete pre-occupation with the pursuit of the mere means of physical existence and there is no time or capacity to recognise the mind as a separate factor of life and perceive its distinct needs, for the mind itself is made to think out only the means of nourishing the body. The nomadic stage of civilisation accordingly can leave little leisure for the cultivation of the mind and arranging for its proper nourishment and growth. A taste for intellectual culture belongs to the higher stages of civilisation. But even modern civilisation is markedly materialistic with all its development of the means of mental culture. For mental culture is generally made to subserve the ends of material life. Knowledge is prized as a power for winning the pleasures of life and not valued as a good in itself. There still thus persists in modern culture the underlying primitive characteristic of permitting the life physical overpowering the life mental or spiritual.

Every civilisation, eastern or western, old or new, medieval or modern, is to be judged by the tests I have been indicating. The degree of its progress is determined, by the degree in which it can exhibit the subordination of the material to the moral, of the physical to the spiritual—the degree in which it can demonstrate the triumph of mind over body, of spirit over matter, of soul over sense.

Of all cultures, or civilisations of the world that of the Hindu, we believe, satisfies best the above test. Hinduism, of all systems of thought, best promotes the primacy of the soul in the ordering of life on earth. For Hinduism presents an outlook upon life which is singularly favourable to the cultivation of the interests of the soul in preference to the cultivation of the lower interests of the body. Hindu thought is most conducive to true spiritual development. For what is the special outlook upon life presented by Hindu thought? What are the distinguishing ideals or principles of thought and life inculcated by Hinduism? I shall try to indicate this to you as briefly as possible.

There are two cardinal facts standing prominently in God's creation—the Fact of Life and the Fact of Death. Of these

the Fact of Death has impressed the mind of the Hindu as the more fundamental and mysterious fact and until he can thoroughly investigate, grasp, master and explain same, he refuses to investigate the Fact of Life and pay attention to the infinite developments connected with and consequent upon same. Death becomes to him the central point of interest, and importance in his Life and Death just claims his scientific study as a phenomenon. He stands at the dawn of life and refuses to be distracted by the dazzling splendours opening out before him. His mind does not like to trace the procession of life with its infinite distractions across the firmament of Time. It rather turns to the night, impenetrable and mysterious, which lies behind the dawn of life, the source whence it sprang. For unless that source and origin of life is just realised, life itself will not be a substantial reality which can be relished with composure and confidence but will be a meaningless shadow always eluding our grasp and devoid of any interest because it may disappear any moment. Death destroys to the Hindu the interest that Life may have. Death has accordingly more interest for him than Life. To understand Life he accordingly tries to understand the primal Fact of Life or Creation, viz., Death.

And, how does the Hindu proceed about this business? How does he try to solve the problem of Death? What methods of investigation does he employ to penetrate that mystery? Well, his methods are the accredited methods of science, the methods of experiment, if I may say so. He observes the phenomenon of death and understands from same the truth that death is a process of separation between the perishable and imperishable parts of life, between body and soul; that, since the two do separate at death, their separation is *physically possible* and is a phenomenon controlled by the laws of nature. The next step in his argument is that what is at all *possible* must be inherently *practicable*. Death only means a *compulsory* separation of body and soul under the operation of conditions and forces outside human control. Well, the business of life is to try to make that separation *optional* and *voluntary*, to *command* that separation. *Life must control and command Death*. And so all the diverse systems of Hindu thought agree in one common fundamental feature, viz., the discovery and evolution of methods by which the grasp of the body upon the soul is loosened until the latter is completely emancipated, until the soul can treat the Body as man treats his outward dress *to be put off and on at pleasure*, until the soul is realised as something distinct from its outward sheath, the Body, 'that muddy vesture of decay? All *Sādhana* thus means

and aims at the reduction of the control of the body or passions, and elaborate regulations and restrictions are prescribed in our Shâstras as contributory towards that end, the end, in Tennyson's words, of "moving upward, working out the beast." The influence of the body is to be gradually eliminated and the passions controlled by the scientific process of *Vaidha-bhoga* or regulated satisfactions and conformity to the different disciplines of the four âshramas or orders of life based on a gradually developing spirituality and diminishing sensuality.

This Sâdhanâ fulfils itself in that state of ecstasy known as Samâdhi in which is attained the complete emancipation of spirit from the bondage of the body or flesh, in which one is "laid asleep in the body and becomes a living soul."

Thus the Hindu starts in his investigation of truth with the Fact of Death as the central fact of creation, as the western mind concerns itself with the Fact of Life. The Hindu always accepts the very highest end of life, namely, unlimited self-development and bases his life upon the very highest truth which he does not merely contemplate but also lives, the truth, namely, that the spiritual is the only real. He refuses to be diverted from the pursuit of that end or truth by the multitudinous distractions of external creation, to be entangled in that cob-web of Mâyâ woven by the Creator. He prefers to follow the inward flowing current towards God and not the out-going current ending in His external creation in which He outshapes Himself. In this way the Hindu's treatment of the phenomena of external or physical nature is something different from the treatment of the westerner. He has always a tendency to argue from nature up to Nature's God and neglects to think out the manifold ways in which nature can be harnessed to the service of man. The sun will impress him as a most striking symbol of God which only promotes a greater subjectivity and prayerfulness in him and he has no inclination to study how the sun can be rendered a more serviceable help-mate of humanity. Similarly in water he will find a most remarkable manifestation of divine Providence. But it is not for him to discover what remarkable forms it may be made to assume in steam and ice to minister to human wants and thus Hinduism is apt to miss a Galileo and a Newton, a James Watt or a Lord Kelvin but produces a Kapila or a Gautama Buddha and a Chaitanya or a Ramakrishna.

(To be continued.)

"THE GOSPELS AND ACTS."

(Continued from page 50.)

MARK.

It is not so difficult to get at the kernel of this book as it is in the case of Matthew. It treats of but one subject—the Mission of Jesus of Nazareth. As already observed, the book begins with the announcement of Jesus's Mission, which is introduced thus : "The beginning of the god-story (gospel) of Jesus Christ, son of God." *Jesus Christ* here is the mystical term representing the latest phase of the Son, the Jesus of Bethlehem, doctrine. It expresses the idea of the Redeemed, the Perfected man, the man risen from the "dead", who has attained to "All authority in Heaven and Earth" (Mat : 28, 18) and all Powers (Mark 16, 15-18). The theme of the messenger Jesus of Nazareth is, necessarily, the god-story, the theme of every messenger and of every writing claiming to be scripture ; and every god-story is, necessarily, the story of "Jesus Christ." The messenger comes to "prepare the way" in the hearts and minds of men for the incoming into them of the Christ, the realisation of Spirit.

Following the introduction come two incidents connected with the preparation for his mission—the "baptism", during which the Holy spirit "descends" on him, and the further initiatory tests known as "The Temptation in the Wilderness."

The Mission of Jesus was no simple one of merely exhorting people to do good and to avoid evil, which any ordinary preacher could do. His was a different task altogether, a far higher mission. In his teaching we may discover the true scriptural essence, which is, as already observed, the elevation of the whole man, intellectual as well as emotional and moral, the raising of the man above the common plane.

An indication of what the nature of Jesus's higher teaching was is to be found in the Greek word used in the formulated statement given in the text, the signification of which is altogether obscured in the English translations : "The Kingdom of God is at hand : repent ye." (Mark I, 15). The word in the original translated "Repent ye" is *metanoete*. The components of this word, viz., *meta nous*, would suggest a great deal more in the sense of the word than mere moral reform. They suggest a *rising above the intellect*, transcending it—evidently some development of the

higher intellectual consciousness. This again would suggest a high order of self-culture, founded on a knowledge of the higher laws of the human constitution—a science. That this higher teaching came within the scope of Jesus's system of instruction we cannot doubt.

But this high teaching could only be imparted to those prepared for it already. This idea is supported by Mark IV, 10, 11 : 'When he was alone.....he said unto them, unto you is given the mystery of the Kingdom of God, but unto them that are without, all things are done in parables,' *all things*, for want of the inner light which enables men to perceive. People in the East know that this description of teaching is the special function of the qualified religious teacher ; and thus the Evangelist's statement is fully borne out.

With reference to the imparting of the "mysteries" to a few, Oriental students will understand that that does not mean that they are reserved for them and others are shut out. The secret teachings are open to all who have the capacity for receiving them. It is a matter of preparedness.

It is noteworthy that little is said in the gospel directly on this subject. But something is left to inference. The Apostles are not credited with extraordinary knowledge, on the contrary, we find in the Acts that the chief of them and the most intimate disciples of Jesus, Peter and John are described as *unlearned and ignorant men* (Acts IV, 13). And yet it is related that they had "authority over unclean spirits" (Mark VI, 7), "And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them" (VI, 13). We are also told that Peter and John worked "miracles." Can it be that men who had lived in intimate communion with Jesus for three years, to whom it was *given* to know the mysteries, to whom was manifested the "Transfiguration" could, after all that, be unlearned and ignorant ? It would appear that the subject has been studiously avoided, the custodians of the scriptures probably deeming it unadvisable to give prominence to it.

The *metanótic* consciousness, if we may so term it, assures the entrance into the *Kingdom of God*, which is thus a condition of consciousness, not a locality.

The remainder of the book contains the sayings and doings, and the parables spoken in public.

Mark proper would seem to end with either Chapter XII or XIII. There is however an addition to Chapter XVI (from v. 9) which tells of Jesus's reappearance to his disciples after his death.

With regard to this portion of the text, there is a marginal note in the American Revised Version which says : "The two oldest Greek manuscripts, and some other authorities omit from ver. 9 to the end. Some other authorities have a different ending to the Gospel." It is a pity, seeing that these latter are allowed to be *authorities*, that their versions are not given.

We need not consider it a matter for surprise that we are not given particulars in this gospel of the personality of Jesus or of his personal life. We are not told anything of his country, his parentage, his birth, or his death. We are able to gather a few details on some of these points only from incidental references. It was not the object of the writer of the gospel to write a narrative of the life of Jesus. His sacred mission altogether overshadowed his personality, and this feeling is reflected in the popular mind of later times by its entirely overlooking the human side of his life ; the messenger at last begins to reflect in his own self the Christ of whom he taught, as some one protests, in the collection of controversial passages known as "1st Corinthians" (I, 23), "but we preach a crucified Messiah.....whereas the Christ signifies the Power and Wisdom of God." ¶ Mark is distinctly the book of the Mission of Jesus, rather than a narrative of his life.

The cases of healing and casting out of evil spirits recorded in the narrative would seem to have had connection with the higher teachings given to the disciples (see chapter XVI, 17).

These acts of Jesus were probably illustrations or demonstrations of those teachings. Some of the cases are simply and circumstantially related and are quite understandable in the light of present knowledge. The first of these cases is that of Peter's mother-in-law who was relieved of fever. Jesus "took her by the hand and raised her up and the fever left her." The story of the Jewish leper (I, 40) is not so convincing. Firstly, we notice that the leper does not do as Jesus had directed him, that is, to show himself to the priest and make the prescribed offerings. This is a serious inconsistency in the story. We cannot suppose that he would have dared to disobey. Secondly, leprosy is not a temporary complaint, it is a deep-seated disease, and it is, therefore, to be considered whether such a disease, which would represent a deep-seated moral cause, could be placed on the same level as simpler ones, which can be readily relieved. There seems to be a desire here, as in the verses following, to represent Jesus as performing these cures in order to puzzle and mystify, "they were all amazed, &c." The case of the withered hand : it is hardly possible that after such an exhibition of more than ordinary healing power the

pharisees would have thought of nothing more than plotting to destroy him, particularly as his influence among the people could hardly have been great at this time. His own friends took him to be "beside himself" (v. 21), that is, they were not sufficiently impressed to recognise anything very special about him.

The story of "Legion" and the swine is doubtful, as it is not at all likely that Jesus would have taken such liberties with the property of other people.

The story of the humble woman who touched the hem of his garment and was healed is touching and no doubt reliable.

The case of Jairus's daughter is circumstantial. Jesus takes his principal disciples alone inside, together with the father of the child. He tells them, the child is *not* dead but asleep. Then, as in the case of Peter's mother-in-law, he takes the girl by the hand and calls out to her to arise, and she arose. He directs that food should be given to her; possibly she had fallen into a state of *coma* or *stupor* for want of proper nourishment.

By this time Jesus had no doubt produced some impression on the minds of people, but we read that others were "offended in him," meaning perhaps that their jealousy was roused and they could not reconcile themselves to thinking something of him. This opposition and distrust on the part of the people of his own country seems to have re-acted on him as a serious check, "And he could there do us mighty work."

This admission of a degree of weakness seems to have stirred up a series of extra marvels, which appear now in the narrative (VI, 30 to end), though the story of the "miracle of the loaves" is sometimes regarded as allegorical.

The other cases are those of a deaf and dumb man, a blind man, and one afflicted with a dumb spirit. The latter was first brought to his disciples, who were unable to deal with it, and Jesus pronounced it a peculiar case which required a special method, or special capacity in the healer, for its treatment.

With reference to these accounts it would appear that the healing of bodily diseases was incidental only in connection with the special teachings given to the disciples, and that the cases were few and casual. For we may perceive that Jesus worked in a quiet manner, he always took the person aside, allowing only a few disciples to accompany him, and always enjoined on the person healed not to go about spreading reports of the healing. The stories of roofs torn away, of sick people being brought from the whole country round and laid out in the market places, the quieting

of a storm by addressing the wind, and others of like quality, need not detain us.

It is plain that the Life of Jesus was very quietly passed among his own people, and quite unknown to the great world outside. That he roused the ill-feeling of the priesthood can be easily understood when we consider the utterly unorthodox character of his teachings.

The notion that he was regarded as a political deliverer of his nation and a King, is not supported by anything in this book; * his aim was simply to teach and to enlighten men, "to this end came I forth."

LUKE.

The writer of Luke, in his introduction, states that he has "closely traced from the beginning all things accurately," viz., "the facts which have been fully confirmed among us according as the eye-witnesses and attendants of the word delivered them to us." He does not say whether he consulted documents or traced traditions only. But he speaks of "many" who have re-arranged "for themselves a narrative concerning the facts, &c." This looks like a reference to some *revision* or re-writing of the text. "Many took in hand to re-arrange" is Tregelles's text, according to Rotherham. Luke makes no mention of Matthew or Mark. The writer either could not have seen those books, or being aware of them may have considered them incomplete or not quite satisfactory as narratives. Anyone reading Luke after Matthew and Mark may recognise that the legendary interpretation already begun in these gospels is more strongly developed in Luke. In fact it would seem as if the legendary emphasis in this book is of set purpose.

The writer certainly intended his book as a complete text perhaps a substitute for Matthew and Mark, "that thou mightest gain full-knowledge concerning the certainty of those matters, &c." The address to Theophilus is no doubt a literary device to justify the introduction of a new gospel after Matthew and Mark. These writings, viz., the gospels, must have passed through the hands of responsible hieratic custodians, and it is quite possible that under changing intellectual conditions the custodians may have wished to supply a text-book better suited to the times than those already in existence, and withal one in which the scriptural germs could quite safely be enshrined.

The appeal in Luke is plainly human, the scriptural legends are on a purely human basis. Probably Matthew was considered

* Chap. VI, 9, 10, the expressions are plainly religious, not political.

too formal and hieratic and Mark too rational to suit the age. Scripture certainly cannot be written by any one and every one, but it may be presented in forms to suit varying ideas, capacities, and natures. This would explain the existence of Luke side by side with Matthew and Mark. Scripture must come down to men when men cannot rise up to it, for it is made for men. And all men have not the same powers of comprehension or understanding. "Eyes have they and see not" is the description of one class by Jesus himself. Their understanding of scripture cannot be the same as the understanding of the more intellectual, who, again, are described as those who "search the Scriptures for in them they think they have everlasting life." Hence the forms of Scripture may change according to the capacities of the times. Matthew, by itself, was, perhaps, not understandable at a certain time, it was too ideal, too abstract. So Mark had to be added to it to give it some quality of tangibility. Later still this combination, perhaps, was not felt to contain enough of the human element, and hence "many took in hand to re-arrange for themselves a narrative concerning the facts, &c."

JOHN.

The Gospel of John, according to scholars, is the latest of the gospels. It is written on the lines of the compound Matthew—Mark (Matthew). It opens with the doctrine of the Logos or Christ, the Word becomes flesh, and this introduction dovetails into the story of Jesus of Nazareth just as in Matthew.

Unlike the simple account of Jesus by Mark, in John, Jesus becomes at once, that is at the very commencement of the narrative, the "Lamb of God, &c," the "Messiah" of popular Jewish belief, "him of whom Moses wrote in the Law, &c," "King of Israel," expressions of ideas entertained in regard to Jesus in later times and in popular teaching.

John figures more largely in this gospel than in the others. Possibly that may have given the name to the gospel. He recognises Jesus as one that should come, and makes him known to his disciples.

Differently from Mark, Jesus is often at Jerusalem and in the temple, and Judea is represented as his native country (IV, 44), although he is also alluded to as of Nazareth, and a Galilean, even a Samaritan.

The teachings of Jesus in this gospel are of an altogether different character from those in Mark, they are symbolical and mystical. But they all turn on the nature of the spirit in man, and

the dependence of the spirit on God, the gist being that unless a man realises that he is a Son of God, he cannot know the Father.

In this gospel we note references to the Jewish belief in re-birth or re-incarnation (Chap. IX): "His disciples asked him who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?"

In chapter VII we have some personal touches. Jesus's brothers taunt him on account of an unwillingness he had shown to go down to Judea, where he would have had an opportunity of displaying the powers he claimed to have, "for even his brothers did not believe in him." Then we have the opinions held by the people in regard to him, "He is a good man; others said, not so, but he leadeth the multitude astray." We read also how his teachings impressed the people, the Jews marvelled saying, "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" The people are surprised at his outspokenness (v. 26). And we make out from the text that, at times, Jesus's unorthodox attitude and teachings perplexed the minds of the Jews; they could not understand him, they said he had a devil, he was mad, and on several occasions they took up stones to stone him. At other times, they recognised that he was no ordinary teacher, "Never man spoke like this man." And through all this he was still a man only to his contemporaries. The idea that he could be the Christ, as some believed, is answered by objections supposed to be conclusive: "We know this man whence he is: but when the Christ cometh, no one knoweth whence he is" (v. 27); again, "doth the Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said that the Christ cometh of the seed of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"

The two miracles of Cana have a special signification, as they are described as "signs," that is, allegories. The first would signify that for the spiritual marriage the plentiful supply of the lower teachings (water) must be replaced later by the good wine of the higher teachings. The second indicates in what the proof of the higher teachings consists, *viz.*, in the rising to higher levels, higher powers of consciousness and activity, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe," and Jesus gives the noble man a sign to convince. Men naturally look for proofs, so the ideal before all real followers of Jesus of Nazareth would be that they should be able to show such proofs. Vessels though brimful of watery words (doctrines) are not sufficient to satisfy the higher intellect. "For Jews ask for proofs and Greeks look for philosophy" (see "First Corinthians"). The expressions *Jews* and *Greeks*

represent the standards of culture, religious and intellectual, among men. The spiritual Jew knows that spiritual truths are their own proofs, and the intellectual Greek that intellectual truth can justify itself.

Some of the miracles would seem to be suggested by the Sayings, as for instance, the lengthy story of the blind man (Chap. IX) which appears to be suggested by the saying, "I came into the world in order that those not seeing might see" (v. 39); and the miracle of Lazarus, by the declaration, "I am the resurrection and the life" and the statement in Chap. V, 25. But this miracle is referred to as a "sign" in Chap. XII, 18, and is most probably an allegory.

John following Luke would find its place as the book of the theological student, as Luke is that of the ordinary person, for both these probably had to be supplied with appropriate literature at this period. In any system of religion, the thinking faculty must be provided for as well as the emotional; the mind being the ultimate of the feelings always seeks to know about that which stirs it.

(To be continued).

A DETROIT WOMAN AND HER WORK IN INDIA.*

BY

Rev. William F. Hopp.

The other day I met Sister Christine. It was at a lecture on Lao-tse, given under the auspices of a society which meets for the study of the history and philosophy of religion. After I had conversed with her for a short time I realized how it is that all who know her speak of her in terms of affection. Her personality, her face, her voice are unusually sympathetic and spiritual. She can speak with a charm so touching that one can listen for hours to her impersonal tales of the people of India, their ideals and strivings, their hopes and aspirations.

It was noted by all those who heard Sir Rabindranath Tagore and Lala Lajpat Rai, the two noted Hindus who visited Detroit lately, that their voices were unusually sweet and melodious. Sister Christine's voice is also full of music and tenderness and one wonders whether this voice was always hers, or whether it is one of the gifts India has presented to this American woman who gave of her life to

* It may be remembered that in the previous issue of the Vedanta Kesari, a short account was given of Sri Ramakrishna—Vivekananda women Education work, started principally by the late Sister Nivedita and Sister Christine. After the death of the Sister Nivedita the entire work devolved upon the latter. The following is an appreciation of her work in India by the Rev. William F. Hopp, contributed to the Detroit Saturday Review, which will, we hope, be found interesting by our readers. (Ed.)

the people of India and made that country her own. Her conversation shows a rich intelligence. When she spoke of the philosophy underlying the religion of the Vedanta, she dwelt on the philosophy of Schopenhauer, Schlegel and Kant, who, she said, were influenced in their systems of thought by the philosophy of the Vedanta. She can speak intelligently on Hindu architecture, archaeology, history, the different languages of India and her political and economic conditions. Above all she delights in speaking of the philosophy and the religious life of India.

"India has lived its religion more truly than any other country," she says. "While the people speak little of their religious ideas, they always live them, sometimes unconsciously. It is the greatest thing I have ever seen."

Although Sister Christine speaks with great modesty of her work in India, her noble and compassionate heart cannot hide itself. It was her spirit of unselfishness and helpfulness that led her to give up, her home, her work and her friends to dedicate her life to the service of India.

I have gleaned this brief sketch from talks with friends who knew her long ago and who have kept in touch with her all these many years; from the books of Margaret E. Noble, who worked with Sister Christine in India, and lastly from the lips of Sister Christine herself.

The man whose influence altered in a short time the whole current and purpose of Sister Christine as she was known in Detroit, was Swami Vivekananda. He appeared unknown and unheralded before the Parliament of Religions which was held during the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. With American hospitality he was welcomed and given an opportunity of speaking. His theme was "The Religious Ideas of the Hindus," and he said that he had come to the west because he believed that the time had come when nations were to exchange their ideals as they were already exchanging their commodities of the market. The breadth of his religious culture, the great intellectual newness and interest of the thought he brought, attracted Sister Christine. He did not advocate any specialized form of religion, but preached the great truths which underlie all creeds. His concern was the realization in the individual of the Divine.

"What the world wants to-day," he said, "is twenty men and women who can dare to stand in the street yonder and say they possess nothing but God. If God is true, what else could matter? If He is not true, what do our lives matter?"

Sister Christine had believed for some time, unreservedly, that God is omnipotent; that He is omniscient; that He is omnipresent and that therefore, God having created all things, nothing could be bad or out of harmony with God. She believed that all forms of evil are unreal, although to human sense they appear to be very real. She had been trying to base her life upon these points. When Swami Vivekananda came to Detroit to deliver a course of lectures she was impressed by the fact that he, too, emphasised those points which had meant so much to her. He said that God is Knowledge Absolute, Existence Absolute and Bliss Absolute. Evil and all inharmony he called Maya, i. e., illusion, a nightmare, a bad dream. The more the Detroit teacher heard him, the more she was impressed with what he said.

In Detroit Vivekananda was a guest at the home of Senator Palmer and later at the home of Mrs. Bagley, the wife of Governor Bagley. At drawing room meetings held at the Bagley home Sister

Christine was a frequent visitor and gradually became a disciple of the Hindu sage. The following summer Vivekananda spent his summer at the Thousand Islands and it so happened that Sister Christine too, had decided to spend her vacation there, not knowing that again she would meet the Hindu teacher. Again she sat at his feet and drank from his lips the wisdom of Hindu philosophy.

Two years passed. Vivekananda had returned to India and Sister Christine had realized more and more the beauty and truth of the teachings of the Swami. Then one day came an invitation from Mrs. Ole Bull, the wife of the noted violinist, who at that time lived in Calcutta, that Sister Christine come to India for a visit. Something of the missionary spirit had always asserted itself in Sister Christine. She wanted to be of help and she knew that India in this respect offered great opportunities. There was also in her heart the desire to learn more of that philosophy which had won her heart. So she went. One year she lived at the home of Mrs. Bull. But when the time came for Mrs. Bull to return to America, Sister Christine remained in India. She had been admitted to the Order of the Ramakrishna Mission and now she wanted to enter more fully upon her work of service.

While she had been living in the European quarter of Calcutta until now, after the departure of her friend she took up her residence in the Hindu quarter and became known among the Hindus as Sister Christine. Together with Margaret E. Noble, known as Sister Nivedita for some 12 years to multitudes of people throughout India, and to America and England through her numerous books on India, Sister Christine took possession of a half-ruined cottage, built near the bank of the Ganges. It was here that she and her English colleague entered upon the special work marked out for them by Swami Vivekananda, who at that time was the head of the Order of Ramakrishna.

Vivekananda, while glorifying the Indian past and the ancient contribution of his people to the intellectual wealth of the world, was a man of modern outlook, incessantly planning for the social regeneration of India. His Order, which gave the greatest liberty of movement and thought to all its members, he designed not for contemplation alone, but for social service. He would, if he could, have commanded vast resources for educational enterprise, and he was resolved to initiate some definite agency for the education of Indian women. It was in this branch of the work of the Order that Sister Christine found her mission in life.

For reasons which every one who knows a little of the world of orthodox Hinduism will appreciate, the opening of a school for Hindu girls and women by Sister Christine was attended with much difficulty. But the American teacher and her English colleague entered upon their work with a strong purpose so that it was soon necessary to enlarge the scope of the school.

Sister Christine in her school in Bose Para Lane, Bagh Bazar, was now indeed a teacher, applying the principles which she had learned in America. It was her aim to make this school, held in an Indian home, one where the methods and ideals of the modern educator might be brought within the cloisteral domain of the eastern woman and girl.

The school, which had begun as a kindergarten, grew steadily until it had large attendance of little Hindu girls up to the marriageable age, and a still larger number of married women and of widows. As conducted by Sister Christine and Sister Nivedita, the school

involved no uprooting from familiar surroundings. Neither child nor woman was taken from her home into a foreign world. There was no attempt to convert her to any religious or social system alien from her own; but rather by means of her own customs and traditions, to develop her in harmony with Indian ideals, the teachers themselves following those ideals as far as they could be made practicable.

To the Indian woman the modern revolution has brought a narrowing of her lot and has wrought havoc with the traditional skill in handicraft. Today every Indian woman can cook, but she cannot sew and she has little wherewith to occupy her leisure. Hence Sister Christine found it necessary to teach the wives and widows needlework of various kinds. But the Sisters, as Sister Christine and Sister Nivedita were called, learned more of the irresistible movement of the modern spirit in the orthodox world of Hinduism, when they found themselves met by an insistent demand from the young wives to be taught English so that they might become in some real sense the companions of their husbands.

The School in Bagh Bazar was only prevented by the narrow means possessed by the Sisters from developing into a great institution. Its influences, however, could never have been measured by the number of its pupils or the amount of regular teaching done within the modest rooms and courts which are described by Sister Nivedita in the opening chapters of her book, *Studies from an Eastern Home*. Sister Christine with her gentle spirit conquered the spirit of aloofness in the quiet, proud and intensely self-respecting people of Bagh Bazar. She came to be accepted by the Hindus as their neighbor. The House of the Sisters was known to all, not as a school merely, but as a centre of unfailing friendliness and succor. During the plagues Sister Christine and Sister Nivedita joined with the brethren of the Order of Ramakrishna in a crusade of selfless helplessness.

It is Sister Christine's conviction that the woman of the west can work fruitfully in India only upon the basis of perfect co-operation with the children of the soil. So she made the great renunciation. The land to whose service she has devoted herself has made an overwhelming appeal to her. She understands its history and thought, its people and their life, its present state of subjection and social transition.

The House of the Sisters was a meeting place of the great men of India. As Jesus loved to spend hours of rest in the house of Mary and Martha in Bethania, so the masters in India delighted in the hospitality of the Sisters in Bose Para Lane, Bagh Bazar. There would come members of council and leaders in the public affairs of Bengal; Indian artists, men of letters, men of science, orators, teachers, journalists and students. Rabindranath Tagore, Lajpat Rai, Dr. J. C. Bose the scientist and other Hindus, well-known in America, were among the visitors.

So Sister Christine lived and worked in India, at first with her English colleague. After 1911, when Sister Nivedita died, she worked alone. She has temporarily relinquished her work that she might visit her friends in Detroit and take a needed rest. But as soon as possible she will go back to her school in Bagh Bazar, where Hindu girls and women are awaiting the return of their teacher and friend.

GENERAL NEWS.

The Ramakrishna Students' Home Building Fund.

In our May issue we published an appeal under the signature of our revered President His Holiness Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj inviting contributions towards the Ramakrishna Students' Home Building Fund from the public-spirited ladies and gentlemen of this Presidency. Since then, we are glad to announce, a number of our friends have promised to defray the cost of construction of one or two rooms each. M.R.Ry. M. C. T. Pettachi Chettiar Avargal, Zemindar of Audipatti, Trichinopoly District, who takes a very great interest in the spread of education among the poor boys of this Presidency, has undertaken to build the Prayer-Hall in the proposed new buildings. Our warmest thanks are due to this generous patron of learning for his munificent help. In addition to this Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, much interested in this cause ever since its beginning, has expressed his willingness to build two rooms in the names of his late revered father and his grand-father. We have also secured the sympathies of the following gentlemen and they have all promised to bear the cost of a room each of which will accommodate three students.

- (1) M.R.Ry. Rao Bahadur A. V. Ramalinga Aiyar, Superintending Engineer, Madras.
- (2) M.R.Ry. A. Krishnaswami Aiyar Avargal, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakil, Mylapore.
- (3) M.R.Ry. T. M. Krishnaswami Aiyar Avargal, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakil, Mylapore.
- (4) M.R.Ry. K. Balasubramania Aiyar Avargal, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakil, Mylapore.
- (5) M.R.Ry. C. V. Viswanatha Sastriyar, Sub-Judge, Kumbakonam.
- (6) M.R.Ry. A. Doraiswami Aiyar, B.A., B.L., High Court Vakil, Luz.

We take this opportunity of expressing our gratitude to the above gentlemen for their proffered assistance.

The cost of a single room is estimated at Rs. 2,000 and the entire buildings at a lakh of rupees and we are sure that the estimate is not too much when we consider the needs of the Home and the great help it has been rendering to many a poor student of this Presidency. Now nearly 15 districts are represented in this institution and we pray that our appeal will be liberally responded to by many in the mufassil and in this city.

कस्मिन् in which एताः these षोडशकलाः the sixteen parts प्रभवन्ति arise.

To him he said : " Here, within this body, my friend, exists that Purusha, from which arise the sixteen parts".

[Note—Here it is stated that the Purusha, the Atman, of which further will be spoken in the subsequent Brahmanas, is within this body ; but the statement should not be taken in a too strict sense. As the Atman is generally perceived first as our own very self that animates this body it is spoken of as existent within this body. In reality He is all pervading, unrestricted by space-limit.]

स इहांचक्रे । कस्मिन्महपुक्रान्त उक्रान्तो भविष्यामि कस्मिन् वा प्रतिष्ठिते प्रतिष्ठास्यामीति ॥ ३ ॥

सः he इहांचक्रे thought कस्मिन् in whose उक्रान्ते having gone out अहम् I (अपि also) उक्रान्तः gone out भविष्यामि shall become कस्मिन् by whose प्रतिष्ठिते having established प्रतिष्ठास्यामि shall be established (in this body).

He reflected : By whose going out, shall I go out, and by whose stay again, shall I stay (in this body).

स प्राणमसृजत प्राणाच्छ्रद्धां खं वायुज्योतिरापः पृथिवीन्द्रियं मनः । अन्नमन्नाद्वीर्यं तपो मन्त्राः कर्मलोका लोकेषु च नाम च ॥ ४ ॥

सः he (the Purusha) प्राणं the Prana (Hiranyagarbha) असृजत created. प्राणात् from the Prana अश्नां Faith खं ether, वायुः air, ज्योतिः fire, आपः water, पृथिवी earth, इन्द्रियं the senses, मनः the mind, अन्नं food, अन्नात् from food वीर्यं vigour (strength) तपः penance, मन्त्राः the Vedas, कर्म the yajnas, लोकाः the worlds, लोकेषु in the worlds च again नाम name.

He created the Prana ; from the Prana came out faith, ether, air, fire, water, earth, the senses, the mind, and food. From food came vigour, penance, the Vedas, the yajnas, the worlds. In the worlds again was created the name.

[Note.—The sixteen articles innumeraled here are the sixteen kalas or parts belonging to Purusha referred to in the previous Brahmanas. The cosmology is rather loosely described here.

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. IV.]

SEPTEMBER, 1917.

[No. 5.]

PRIVILEGE AND VEDANTA.

"Two forces seem to be working throughout nature. One of these is constantly differentiating and the other is as constantly unifying; the one making more and more for separate individuals, the other, as it were, bringing the individuals into a mass, bringing out sameness in the midst of all this differentiation." So spoke Swami Vivekananda in a lecture delivered by him at the Sesame Club, London. What did he mean thereby? The whole course of the evolution of a society is more or less the result of a series of hard and stubborn struggles between two classes of people, the privileged and the unprivileged. The idea of privilege has been the bane of human life. In primitive times, when order had not evolved out of chaos, privilege consisted in brute force and history records the countless attempts in which the strong wanted to crush down the weak, while the weak, in their turn, strove hard to assert their right for an independent existence. The privilege of wealth gives the moneyed man a decided superiority over the poor, while the subtler and more powerful privilege of the intellect has had the effect of differentiating mankind into two watertight compartments. At the present day, all these forms of privileges have been combined inextricably and go under new names such as race, nationality, civilisation, culture, etc. Every struggle or fight by whatever name it may be called, is always against the privilege of

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः ।

भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ॥

स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिः ।

व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥

स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्वदेवाः ।

स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्योऽरिष्टनेमिः । स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

॥ ॐ ॥

Faith—Shraddha is the word used in the text, and it has been explained as *Astikya Buddhi*, but it may very well be taken for *Buddhi* itself.

From food etc.—Food produces vigour and strength in man, which again leads him to do different works, and for the enjoyments of the results of those works different worlds were created. Hence in this sense, it has been said that 'from food came vigour etc.')

स यथेमा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रायणाः समुद्रं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति भिद्येते तासां नामरूपे समुद्र इत्येवं प्रोच्यते । एवमेवास्य परिदृष्टिमाः षोडश कलाः पुरुषायणाः पुरुषं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति भिद्येते तासां नामरूपे पुरुष इत्येवं प्रोच्यते स एषोऽकलोऽमृतो भवति तदेव श्लोकः ॥ ५ ॥

सः यथा as समुद्रायणाः flowing towards the ocean, स्यन्दमानाः flowing इमाः these नद्यः rivers समुद्रं the ocean प्राप्य having reached अस्तं गच्छन्ति disappear, तासां their नामरूपे the names and forms भिद्येते are obliterated, समुद्रः the ocean इति thus एवं alone प्रोच्यते is spoken of ; एवं so एवं verily अस्य of this परिदृष्टुः the seer of all things पुरुषस्य of the Purusha इमाः these पुरुषायणाः resting in the Purusha, षोडशकलाः the sixteen kalas पुरुषं the Purusha प्राप्य having reached अस्तं गच्छन्ति disappear. आसां of these नामरूपे the name and form भिद्येते are destroyed. पुरुषः the Purusha इति thus एवं alone प्रोच्यते is spoken of. सः that एषः this (person) अकलः devoid of kalas. अमृतः immortal भवति becomes. तत् about that एषः the following श्लोकः verse भवति is.

As the flowing rivers that tend towards the sea, having reached it, merge into the ocean, all their names and forms disappear and people speak only of the ocean, so the sixteen kalas of this seer, the Purusha, resting in Him alone, having reached Him disappear in Him, their names and forms are destroyed and people speak of the Purusha only. Then He becomes devoid of kalas, and immortal. There is the following verse about it.

[Note.—When all the sixteen kalas which are cognised in the ordinary, 'ignorant' state are merged in the Atman in Samadhi by the practice of yoga, then their existence is not perceived in the

consciousness and the conscious principle, the Atman, alone remains in its unalloyed glory.]

अरा इव रथनाभौ कला यस्मिन् प्रतिष्ठिताः ।

तं वेद्यं पुरुषं वेद यथा मा वो मृत्युः परिव्यथा इति ॥ ६ ॥

रथनाभौ in the nave of the chariot अराः spokes इव like कलाः the Kalas यस्मिन् in whom प्रतिष्ठिताः are established. तं that वेद्यं worth knowing पुरुषं the Purusha वेद know. यथा so that मृत्युः death यः ye मा परिव्यथाः may not hurt.

In whom rest the kalas like spokes in the nave, know Him, the Purusha, worthy to be known, that death might not hurt Ye.

[Note.—The simile given here is very significant. As the spokes only rest on the nave but do not form integral parts of the same, so these kalas are not parts of the Purusha in the real sense of the term ; they are mere erections of His Maya Sakti, 'and as such, are dependent on Him.]

तान् होवाचेतावदेवाहमेतत्परं ब्रह्म वेद । नातः परमस्तीति ॥ ७ ॥

तान् to them (सः he) उवाच said अहं I एतावत् up to this एतत् this परं supreme ब्रह्म the Brahman वेद know. अतः beyond this परं superior न अस्ति there is not.

To them he said, "So far I know of the Supreme Brahman ; there is nothing higher than that."

ते तमर्चयन्तस्त्वं हि नः पिता योऽस्माकमविद्यायाः परं पारं तारयसीति । नमः परमऋषिभ्यो नमः परमऋषिभ्यः ॥ ८ ॥

ते they (the six questioners) तं him अर्चयन्तः having worshipped (उवाच said) त्वं हि verily thou (art) नः ours पिता father ; यः who अस्माकं us अविद्यायाः of the Ignorance परं the supreme पारं the shore across तारयसि taken इति thus. नमः Obeisance परमऋषिभ्यः the highest Rishis.

Having worshipped him, they said, "thou art our father that thou hast taken us across the other shore of avidya (ignorance)".

Obeisance to the highest Rishis !

Obeisance to the highest Rishis !

End of the Sixth Question.

End of the Prasna Upanishad.

some kind or other which one class or community enjoys over another. The coloured man claims equality of treatment with his white brother. The capitalist who can 'corner' a commodity is the enemy of the retail trader. Democracy strives hard to pull down the one-man's power, while the movement for "women's franchise" is yet another phase of the struggle for privilege. Need we say that the Armageddon now going on in Europe is also a fight,—perhaps the greatest fight,—for freedom?

But this struggle for privilege has also another side. Not once, but hundreds of times, has it happened that the very class or people who deemed it their highest privilege to fight under the banner of freedom became in course of time, false to their ideals and denied the same privilege for which they fought so strenuously to their less fortunate brethren. To quote one instance, "America is a country which had lifted to the admiration of the world its ideals of absolutely free opportunity, where no man is supposed to be under any limitation except the limitations of his character and of his mind; where there is supposed to be no distinction of class, no distinction of blood, no distinction of social status, but where men win or lose on their merits. But what do we find there at present? American industry is not free, as once it was free; American enterprise is not free; the man with only a limited capital is finding it harder to get into the field, more and more impossible to compete with the Big fellow. Why? Because the laws of this country do not prevent the strong from crushing the weak. That is the reason, and because the strong have crushed the weak, the strong dominate the industry and the economic life of this country."* The brotherhood of man is one of the principles of Christianity, but the principle is honoured more in the breach than in its observance. Nearer home also, we are hearing faint echoes of this struggle; and he will be a bold prophet who could say when such struggles would end.

While we have nothing to do with the claims of any particular class or nation as such to lord it over others and the justification thereof, it might prove of some advantage to advert to some fundamental facts which lie at the bottom of the whole process. Our main interest is to enquire what light can Vedanta, the flower and fulfilment of Asiatic consciousness, throw upon the nature and solution of these ever-increasing and ever-recurring struggles. Vedanta explains this constant striving and universal dissatisfaction as springing from the depths of Personality, for though individual souls fail to realise it, it is verily Sat-Chit-Ananda and as

* Woodrow Wilson.—The New Freedom, p. 16.

such there can be no bondage for it. It is the failure to recognise this truth that is responsible for all the struggles and disappointments we meet with in this world. Because Vedanta recognises the very fact of existence as identical with one ultimate Personality, it cannot give room for any kind of superiority of one over the other, and it declares that the only way to secure lasting happiness is to recognise this oneness of all. What we are more immediately interested in is the practical consequences of this truth and what modifications in our daily conduct follow from its acceptance. The practical aspect of Vedanta is specially necessary at the present day for, as the Swami Vivekananda, the greatest exponent of Vedanta in modern times, puts it in his inimitable fashion "all this privilege claiming has become tremendously intensified with the extension of knowledge... Excess of knowledge and power, without holiness, makes human beings, devils. Tremendous power is being acquired by the manufacture of machines and other appliances, and privilege is claimed to-day, as it never has been claimed in the history of the world."

Modern Science is proving little by little, that all life is one, but this fact has been, with the Vedantin, one of his axioms. "To proud man it is told, you are the same as that little worm there; think not that you are something enormously different from it; you are the same. You have been that in a previous incarnation, and the worm has crawled up to this man state of which you are so proud. This grand preaching, the oneness of things, making us one with everything that exists, is the great lesson to learn, for most of us are very glad to be made one with higher beings, but no body wants to be made one with lower beings." So, according to the doctrine of Vedanta, there can be no manner of privilege, for even the most ignorant contains all knowledge, though as yet unmanifested, which will become manifest given the suitable environments and opportunity. That one man is superior to another, and that one nation is inferior to another are statements that have no meaning in Vedanta. Favourable circumstances help a man to become prominent, and the superiority of several persons has been traced to advantageous environments. To judge the relative merits of two individuals, we must place them in the same circumstances and then see whether the same intelligence comes out or not. Until this is done, we have no right to assert that one nation is superior to another. "And as to spirituality, no privilege should be claimed there. It is a privilege to serve mankind, for this is the worship of God. God is here, in all these human souls. He is the soul of man; what privilege can men ask?"

The Gita teaches that "he who looks upon the learned Brahmana, upon the cow, the elephant, the dog, or the outcast with the same eye, he indeed is the sage, and the wise man," and that "even in this life he has conquered heaven whose mind is firm, fixed on this sameness, for the Lord is one and the same to all, and the Lord is pure; therefore those who have this sameness for all, and are pure, are said to be living in God." Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa expresses a similar idea in one of his remarkable sayings: "When the water of this dirty ditch and that of the yonder holy Ganges will appear as one in thy sight, and when the sound of the flageolet and the noise of that crowd will have no distinction to your ear, then thou shalt reach the state of True knowledge."*

From what has been said above, it will be clear that Vedanta does not recognise any privilege, as in its eyes all are same. This teaching, if not understood properly, may lead us to some danger. Because a certain individual is enjoying some special privileges, those who are without the same are often tempted to quarrel with him and pull him down or otherwise injure him. This should never be. Vedanta teaches us that each individual soul is a part and parcel of that Universal Soul which is Infinite. Therefore in injuring his neighbour the individual actually injures himself, moreover, as the Swami explains elsewhere, "man is like an infinite spring, coiled up in a small box, and that spring is trying to unfold itself, and all the social phenomena that we see are the result of this trying to unfold; and all the competitions and struggles and evils that we see around us, are neither the causes of these unfoldments nor the effect." They are co-existent circumstances, and therefore can be remedied.

The fight against the privileges does not mean pulling them down altogether, for that is neither possible nor desirable. It is but natural that those who have an advantage want to keep it, and there is some truth in the statement that absolute sameness of thought and feeling would produce mental decay and degeneration. We know that variety is the very essence of life, but in perpetuating a difference we should be careful to remove its sting. Variety is as much essential as unity, and this unity must be sought in and through variety. Absolute equality in all respects is an impossibility. Some will be stronger than others, some more wealthy, some more intelligent, but because of these advantages they should not tyrannise over others who happen to be less fortunate. In this way we can realise unity without at the same time destroying

* Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna p. 169.

variety. Says Swami Vivekananda, "Let all these variations remain eternally; it is the very essence of life. We shall all play in this way, eternally. You will be wealthy, and I shall be poor; you will be strong and I shall be weak; you will be learned and I ignorant; you will be very spiritual, and I, less so. But what of that? Let us remain so, but because you are physically or intellectually stronger, you must not have more privilege than I, and that you have more wealth, is no reason why you should be considered greater than I, for that sameness is here, in spite of the different conditions."

We thus see that it is not possible to do away with inequalities for that would mean death and at the sametime it has been discovered that unity must be sought in and through variety. And this unity, so far as ethics is concerned, is based on love and co-operation. The western civilization based on competition and self-assertion has failed to solve the problem of life and thereby demonstrated its inherent moral and spiritual bankruptcy. The only way to salvation then lies in the direction taught to us in the Mahavakya "*Tat Tvam Asi*" thou art that.—Thou art one with this Universal Being and as such every soul that exists is your soul and everybody that exists is your body and in hurting any one you hurt yourself; in loving any one you love yourself.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA—THE FULFILMENT OF HINDUISM.

BY

Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji, M.A., PH.D., P.R.S.

(Continued from Page 112.)

It should not, however, be assumed that because the Hindu is more taken up by the natural bent of his genius with the problems of death and the other world he loses all interest in life and this world. The popular view that he is necessarily anti-social is really based on a misunderstanding. For his realisation of the highest truth and end as explained above means expansion and development of his finite self whereby he can naturally identify himself with every manifestation of life. His therefore cannot be a mere selfish enjoyment of supreme bliss in complete isolation from the rest of mankind emerged in hopeless suffering. On the contrary, by the very law of his being, the very principle of all spiritual development, he cannot partake of that bliss except in

participation with others, whom he must bring up to his level. He must come down from the heaven he has attained to the earth of his fellow human beings. He has to be true to the kindred points of Heaven and Home, because his Home is in every human heart. The greater the height of development he attains the greater is the tendency in him to realise it in width. The deeper the merging of the Finite in the Infinite, the greater is the fellow-feeling and sympathy for suffering. Infinite self-expansion means infinite tenderness and toleration for foibles and failings. Sometimes a saint's realisation of universal life leads him to realise and respect the sanctity even of insentient life and, consequently, to live on mere fruits that drop from trees of themselves without being plucked. I have known of a saint who could not bring himself to lay violent hands upon plants and trees. For he felt that "there is a spirit in the woods." He was seen to weep on a tree being felled down before him. The truth, therefore, is that the true Hindu is the most social. Spiritual development cannot result in aloofness and apathy. Our own Shastras bring to light many examples of the self-giving of the Perfect to fulfil the Imperfect, the tenderness of the Infinitely Great, stooping to be Infinitely Little, the wooing of the Finite by the Infinite. According to the Vaishnava stand-point, the individual turns away from the love of the Perfect, seeking to merge soul in sense, spirit in matter. But the Divine Lover woos the erring Individual back to himself.

Thus the fact is that our greatest men are the most social of men and are most anxious to live among them for their own good. All our great religious leaders have been the most successful teachers and preachers and are founders of schools of disciples who hand down the religion of their masters from generation to generation. To take but one example among the numerous examples in the history of our own country, we may instance the case of Gautama Buddha. You know how Gautama Buddha, like Jesus, was tried by the Devil to be turned away from the quest of truth. He triumphed over all the temptations and trials that Mara placed before him and attained supreme enlightenment or Nirvana. And yet Mara, the tempter, did not acknowledge defeat but determined to try his spiritual strength by what he regarded as the most efficacious of all temptations and the hardest of all tests. What was the nature of this last of Mara's temptations, though not in any way the least of them? It was to tempt Gautama Buddha into a passive attitude of selfish self-enjoyment of his newly attained supreme bliss and wisdom in lofty isolation from mankind. The story of the temptation is so

interesting in itself, so very pertinent to my argument that I must give it in the words of the Buddhist sacred books themselves. The Buddha is himself made in them to speak as follows :—

"Then came Mara, the wicked one, unto me. Coming up to me, he placed himself at my side. Standing at my side, Ananda, Mara, the wicked one, spake unto me, saying :—'Enter now into Nirvana, Exalted One, enter Nirvana, Perfect One : now is the time of Nirvana arrived for the Exalted One.' As he thus spake, I replied, Ananda, to Mara, the wicked one, saying : 'I shall not enter Nirvana, thou wicked one, until I shall have gained monks as my disciples, who are wise and instructed, intelligent hearers of the word, acquainted with the doctrine, experts in the doctrine and the second doctrine, versed in ordinances, walking in the Law, to propagate, teach, promulgate, explain, formulate, analyse, what they have heard from their master, to annihilate and exterminate by their knowledge any heresy which arises, and preach the doctrine with wonder-working. I shall not enter Nirvana, thou wicked one, until the life of holiness which I point out has been successful, grown in power and extended among all mankind, and is in vogue and thoroughly made known to all men.' It may be noted in this connection that Mahayanist Buddhism has for one of its essential doctrines the ideal of the Bodhisatwa who with specific determination dedicates himself to the salvation of humanity and is accordingly conceived to be firmly refusing to accept the final release or Nirvana. His ideal is thus stated : "Forasmuch as there is the will that all sentient beings should be altogether made free, I will not forsake my fellow creatures." (*Avatamsaka Sutra*). Thus according to the Mahayana the attainment of Buddhahood does not involve indifference to the sorrow of the world, for the work of salvation is perpetually carried on by the *Bodhisatwa emanations* of the Supreme Buddha who have become followers of the Buddha not for the sake of their own complete Nirvana but "out of compassion to the world, for the benefit, weal and happiness of the world at large, both gods and men, for the sake of the complete Nirvana of all beings." [*Saddharmapundarika Sutra*]. There is a vow ascribed to Avalokitesvara that He would not accept salvation until the least particle of dust shall have attained to Buddhahood before him.

Thus, we must not run away with the mistaken idea that Hinduism by laying too much emphasis on the life spiritual takes no thought of earthly life which is left to shift for itself, and that consequently it promotes anti-social tendencies which augur ill for mankind. We have, however, found on the contrary

that Hinduism seeks to provide the only sure foundation, the only rational, stable and, therefore, permanent basis, on which genuine social service can rest by insisting on the individual's realisation of the unity of all life, the interdependence and even the identity of all life.

But to return to the main point of my argument, I have been attempting to indicate to you some of the essential and fundamental features and principles of Hinduism which distinguish it from all other systems of thought and belief in the world. I have tried to explain to you how among us mortals there appear from time to time some who become immortal by dedicating themselves to the development of the God-in-man, of the immortal and eternal element in human life. We have also seen how Hindu-thought promotes this self-realisation by seizing on the Fact of Death as the central point of interest in Life and the discovery of scientific methods for investigation of same until the Truth is assimilated, reached and realised in the higher spiritual states of *Samadhi*. Finally we have seen that the seekers after the truth aforesaid have to choose the life of social isolation and detachment only as a temporary measure, as being necessary for complete concentration on the severe pursuit of truth, owing to the limits of the human mind which, as every scientific investigator knows, can only study and master a particular subject, a specific order of facts, by isolating and detaching the same from other subjects and facts, by a process, that is, of uncompromising specialisation. But when the investigation is completed and the truth attained, the Hindu Seer, by the very law of his being, turns to the spread of the truth he has attained by his individual exertions and sacrifices among his fellowmen with whom he discovers or establishes a complete identity and must therefore share all he has. His is a voyage of discovery not merely for himself but for all his fellow human beings with whom, as their representative, he must enjoy the new worlds he explores and conquers. Thus the Hindus' spiritual development only implies a realisation of the fundamental affinity between man and man and between man and every living object and a consequent universal overflowing Love which forms the best antidote against anti-social exclusiveness and best promotes the spirit of active, aggressive social service, of complete self-dedication to the salvation of others.

And, now, all these essentials and fundamentals of Hinduism which we have been discussing at length that must have already taxed your patience too much—all these were fully exemplified and embodied in Sri Ramakrishna. We all know from the story

of his life how from the very beginning he showed a marked aversion to the ordinary way of worldly life preferred by the majority of men. The promptings of his own inner nature shaped in him a determination to devote himself to the cultivation of the interest of the soul to the exclusion of other lower interests and ends, to the requirements of *Atmounati* as the primary end of life. As is usual and natural under God's providence in all cases of sincere longing, young Ramakrishna got thrust upon him a religious avocation, the priesthood of the temple of Dakshineswara which has become now one of the sacred places of India. There his daily work in life was to offer *pujas* to the Goddess "Kali" enshrined in that temple. An ardent and sincere soul as he was, it was not the mere mechanical worship offered by ordinary priests in the numerous temples of the land. He put into his work his whole soul, as is always the characteristic of all great men, for theirs is always what has been called the dedicated life, a life which calls out the best of a man to be applied to the work he chooses. And so Sri Ramakrishna performed his daily *pūja* as a means of his own self-development, as an absolute duty towards his own deity, uninfluenced by the conditions which placed him there as the official priest of the temple. He gave his life to the work and the work being directly religious and spiritual, it soon perfected that life. Thus an appropriate avocation presented itself to the man who longed for nothing in this world except spiritual life and development.

There is another aspect in the life of Sri Ramakrishna which also demands our due attention. It was the extreme naturalness of the process of his self-culture or *Sadhana* which is, indeed, singular in the annals of our religious history. We all know, and some of us through personal experience, how Ramakrishna lived and moved among the men of the world as one of them and flowered into perfection amid the ordinary surroundings of life. His was not necessary any violent process of self-simplification, and self-mortification, nor any deliberately designed and protected detachment from the conditions under which ordinary mortals lived their life. The plant was not too delicate for the normal heat or cold, storm or rain, so as to need an artificially prepared hot-house for its proper culture and nourishment. It had sufficient robustness and natural strength to feed and grow upon human nature's daily food. He even entered the married state, as we all know, and his example in all particulars is a source of permanent inspiration and encouragement to all despondent devotees and votaries of spiritual culture. There are hardly any extraordinary

events or features in his external life which may seem to place him out of touch and relation with ordinary mortals. His life does not even represent outwardly any violent wrench, any dramatic renunciation of the world as a drastic remedy against its ills which was resorted to even by saints like the Buddha and Chaitanya. His life shows him as the most human of men, for it was meant for them. It is meant to strengthen the spiritual impulses and confirm the pious resolutions of ordinary human beings with the natural failings and foibles of their race, for it has grown into perfection in the ordinary environment of life in which they live and move. I have already said that Sri Ramakrishna flowered into perfection not like the wild flower blooming on a remote, inaccessible out-of-the-way hill-side but he verily "grew beside in human door" and flowered into full bloom on the common soil on which live and move his fellow human beings. This means that the inner strength of his character did not necessitate any segregation from society as a measure of self-preservation against its contaminating influences to which less doughty spirits might have succumbed. His inner strength made him independent of his environment from which he did not need to get away. And when we contemplate this singular aspect of his life, when we recall the circumstances of his outer life which were hardly different from those surrounding our own lives, when we recognise how thoroughly human he was in all his ways, the remarkable naturalness of the process of his development, when we perceive how he respected even the bonds of family life and affection, are we not struck by the possibilities of spiritual progress that are thus seen to be open to the meanest mortals provided only they walk in *his* wake and follow in his footsteps?

Again, as in the case of all other Hindu saints and seers, Sri Ramakrishna did not also confine the Light he attained, the Wisdom he won, only to himself, but he sought to impart the benefits of same to others as well. The volume of his unique teachings to his disciples, a fraction of which only has seen the light, brings out the social aspect of his transcendental greatness. We see in them a supreme anxiety to make his individual attainment a matter of common possession of all mankind, and an infinite patience with human frailties. We see also his active life in association with society, his ungrudging and constant social service of the highest value. For we must guard against the error of supposing with foreign and western observers that the Hindu saints are the most inactive of men, that no ideas of active social service should be associated with them. This is a radical misconception of the fundamental principles and ideals governing Hindu culture,

When Gautama Buddha sat for days and weeks under the Bo-tree at Gaya with all his faculties dead to the external world of the eye and ear, he might be regarded as one of the idlest and most worthless men living under the sun by a foreigner strange to such sights or experiences in his native land, but every Hindu knows that that supposition would be unmitigated sacrilege. Yes, the Buddha sat idle and inactive under the Bo-tree that he might make millions of men active and worthy, that he might acquire that strength, win that spiritual lever by which he might move continents and worlds. There must be a radical change in our notions of activity. Quadrumanous activity is not activity of the highest type, form, quality or intensity. Truly did a poet lament that 'the world knows nothing of its greatest men.' It is most superficial, untrained and vulgar observation that attributes all the power of motion, activity and haulage to the two stupendous and gaudy boats on the river which hide between them the tiny little steamer, their real propeller. It may be similarly difficult for crude observers to detect in the small and obscurely placed boiler or dynamo the storage of that power which moves the big boat. Or sometimes the majestically revolving large wheels open to view on the outside may be mistaken for the prime propeller of the machine. Similarly in the society of men there are some who represent its spiritual dynamos and boilers, its storage and reservoir of moral powers, that vitalises and moves society, breathes into it life and strength, and, like the electrical power-house of a city, brings light to every heart. Sri Ramakrishna, too, was such a spiritual power-station of his nation to serve the needs of its true well-being. He did not put himself prominently before the public, was not very active in the ordinary sense of the term but he made others active, he created disciples like Vivekananda, one of the finest specimens of human activity and social service, to do his chosen work which he inspired from behind.

Then again we may notice in Sri Ramakrishna the other fruit of spiritual fulfilment, *viz.*, an abounding charity and sympathy for human suffering. The many institutions established in different parts of the country which seek to relieve human distress are all rightly associated with his hallowed name because they all owe their birth to the inspiration of his teachings. As I said the other day in speaking on the life of Vivekananda, the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna emphasise the need of a double life for spiritual progress,—*first*, the inner subjective life of introspection, abstraction, detachment and concentration, and *secondly*, the outer life of action, of "others-regarding" activities, of disinterested

social service. These two kinds of activity are necessary for *Chitta-suddhi*, for purification of the heart so that it may reflect the Divine. It is a mistake to suppose that the inner life of contemplation is a life of selfish enjoyment of pleasure. In reality it is too difficult to be lived for long hours, implying, as it does, a detachment from the external world of matter, from sensations, and excitements, to which very few are equal. And, so, as we cannot but awake to the objective life on the physical plane, it has been rightly recognised that it is best to have that life ordered and regulated by altruistic principles so that it may be the least harmful to moral and spiritual growth. Thus, like the two wings of a bird which are both necessary for its upward flight, the inner life of introspection and the outer life of unselfish work are both required for man's spiritual progress and the institutions like the *Sevashrama* are to be greatly appreciated as providing the necessary field and scope for a proper training in habits of disinterested social service which is in itself a training in religion, a most potent purifying agent of life.

I have spoken as a Hindu speaks to a Hindu, to his co-religionists. I have accordingly taken many things for granted, have made many assumptions on the ground of faith rather than on reason; and have taken up certain positions as articles of our religious belief without reasoning out their validity. I have supposed the existence of a creed in you which has united you all in a common reverence to His Holiness Sri Ramakrishna. Let me now conclude with a reflection that has suggested itself to my mind on the present occasion. If we survey the whole course of the history of our country we shall no doubt find that India is pre-eminently the land of great men. No other country in the world can probably match her in point of both quantity and quality of the greatness achieved by her sons. But pre-eminent as she is in respect of the height of individual greatness exhibited by her she lags behind other countries in point of collective greatness, her national efficiency, the average level of her people's culture. She boasts of the towering and unequalled height of her Himalayas but the Himalayas co-exist with low flat plains so that her average territorial height is not of much consequence. What India needs most now is not merely the existence of towering personalities, a supply of geniuses that can lead in the various realms of thought and action but also, in addition to this, an improvement in the level of the mental and moral culture of her vast population so that the entire country as a whole may be recognised as an efficient cultural unit, a puissant power for good in the world. It is then

only that she can recover and assert her rightful place in the history of humanity, a place which can only be secured and maintained, as I have said, by the high level of not merely individual but also collective culture. One of the best means of bringing about that end, of securing a higher level of intelligence, morals and spirituality in our people, is the spread of the cult of the hero-worship, a wider celebration of such ceremonies, like the one we are here performing as serve to quicken the life of the soul in us depressed by the habitual lower life of the body on the material plane towards which we are always drifting. It is through hero-worship that the high ideals reached and realised by the heroes can gradually filter down to the lower levels, can become more and more general among mankind and its common possession and property. It is thus alone that individual excellences become national characteristics, isolated ideals are assimilated to the common life and towering eminences help to raise the average height. In offering to-day our humble tribute of reverence to the spirit of His Holiness Sri Ramakrishna we must, recognise that the form of that tribute which will be most acceptable to him is our resolution that we shall try our best to be his worthy disciples, to reproduce him in our several lives, to keep up the stream of culture that emanated from him so that instead of being arrested or dried up it may continue to fertilise the spiritual soil of the country. Let our motherland prove by the moral vitality and efficiency of our own lives that the inexhaustible richness of her soil can produce more men like Sri Ramakrishna with whom does not end the never-ending lines of her great men.

A STUDY IN THE MANTRA SHĀSTRA

(Shakti—the Sacred Heart of the Shaktas)

BY

Arthur Avalon.

In my three previous articles I have referred to Shakti, Nāda, Bindu. In this and the two next I will deal in greater detail with each of these three concepts of Shakti. One of the clearest accounts known to me of the evolution of Shakti is that given in the authoritative Tāntrik Prakarana called Shāradā (also spelt Sārādā) Tilaka by Lakshmanāchāryya. This work was formerly of great authority in Bengal. Its value is greatly increased by the commentary of Rāghava Bhatta. As this work with its commentary is of prime importance—and is cited throughout these articles, I may here note the following account which Lakshmanāchāryya gives of himself at its close. Mahābāla a great sage was succeeded by his son Aryapandita, a Deshika (Tāntrik) Guru. His son Śrīkrishna Deshika had a son Lakshmana Deshika who wrote the Shāradā Tilaka. Rāghava in his commentary called Padārthadarsha says that Lakshmana was the disciple of Utpalāchāryya who was the disciple of Somānanda, who was the disciple of Vasumanta, who was the disciple of Shríkantha. This is the Gurupangkti of Lakshmana. His disciple was the great Kashmirian Abhināva Gupta, the author of Paramārthasāra. The latter's disciple was Kshimarāja the author of the Shiva Sutra Vimarshinī. The date generally assigned to Abhināva Gupta is the eleventh century. Therefore S. J. Akshaya Kumāra Maitra, Director of the Varendra Anusandhāna Samiti, who has supplied me with these details of the Gurus and Sishyas of the author concludes that the Shāradā was written at the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh century. Rāghava mentions 1510 as the age of his commentary. Taking this to be the Vikrama Samvat we get 1454 A. D. as its date. These details serve another purpose. There are persons who insist on a total disconnection between the Shaiva and Shākta Tantras. Lakshmanāchāryya was a member of the Kashmirian Shaiva School and his work was as I have stated of great authority among the Bengal Shāktas.

The Shāradā (Chapter I, verse 7) says: "From Shakala Parameshvara vested with the wealth of Sat, Chit, Ānanda issued Shakti, from Shakti came Nāda, and from Nāda issued

Bindu. (Sachchidānanda vibhavāt sakalāt Parameshvarāt āśch-
chhaktistato nādo nādād bindu samudbhavah). Parameshvara is here Shiva Tattva. He is Sakala, because, He is with the creative Kalā or Shakti. As already explained Shakti, when Vyashitirūpa, that is individualised, is called Kalā. Shiva is always with Shakti. But in the supreme state Shakti is unmanifest and exists in its own (Svarūpa) form as Being-consciousness-Bliss, (Sachchidānandamayī Chidrūpinī) undistinguishable from Shiva. Sakala Shiva is thus Saguna Brahman. He is said to be vested with the wealth of Sat, Chit, Ānanda or Being-consciousness and Bliss to show that His association with Avidyā does not deprive Him of or affect His own true nature (Svarūpa). Shiva has two aspects. In one of these He is the Supreme Changeless One who is Sachchidānanda and Sachchidānandamayī. This is Parāsamvit. In the other He changes as the Universe. Change being the experience of the Jīva so created. The cause of such change is Shiva Tattva inseparably associated with Shakti Tattva.

"There issued Shakti." This is a Shakti Tattva of the Thirty-six Tattvas. Shakti evolves Nāda and Nāda Bindu. These are aspects of Shakti preparing to create the Universe and are dealt with in future articles. Here I am concerned with Shakti Tattva only: that is, with that form of Shakti which is specifically so called since Nada, Bindu and the rest are all but names for different aspects of Shakti.

It may be asked how can Shakti be said to issue from that which was already with Shakti. Rāghava Bhatta explains that the author here follows the Sāngkhyan principle of the appearance of realities from realities (Sadutpattivāda) and speaks of the condition of readiness (Uchchhūnāvasthā) of Her who being without beginning or end existed in a subtle state identified with Chaitanya in dissolution (Yā anādi rūpā chaitanyādhyāsenā mahāpralaye sūkshma sthita). Adhyāsa is the attribution of the nature of one thing to another according to which something is considered to be what it is not. In other words during dissolution there is some potential principle in the Brahman which as manifest appears not to be consciousness (Chit) but which owing to the absence of operation during the dissolved (Laya) state is identified with Chit. The distinction is very subtly marked by the Sanskrit word Chit for Shiva and Chidrūpinī for Shakti. Chit is there in either case, for ultimately there is nothing but Consciousness. But that principle which in creation manifests as seeming Achit is in itself Chidrūpinī. One is consciousness and the other is a principle in the form of consciousness. I prefer to look at Shakti from the Consciousness

aspect which is Her own form (Svarūpa) and to say that Shakti in dissolution is what She really is, namely, Chit. In creation consciousness as Shakti has power to veil its own true nature and when subject to this power we attribute unconsciousness to it. The substance in either case is this :—In dissolution Consciousness and Bliss alone is. Then without derogation to the changelessness of consciousness there is an apparent dichotomy into subject and object, that is, consciousness and unconsciousness. Shakti is conceived as ready to create the Universe composed of Gunas as its effect (Kāryya). In other words, pure consciousness becomes the world-experience. The Prayogasāra says “She, who is eternal and all pervading, the Genetrix of the Universe issues from Him.” Vāyuvīya Samhitā says “By the will of Shiva, Parā Shakti is united with Shiva-tattva and at the beginning of creation appears from It just as oil from sesamum seeds when pressed.” The Pancharātra is also cited by Rāghava Bhatta as saying “The Parama Purusha at the beginning of creation seeing that She who is Sachchidānandarūpinī is the source (Adishthāna) of the manifestation of all Tattvas makes manifest eternal Prakriti.” These statements like all our accounts in such matters are pictorial thinking being necessarily imperfect attempts to explain the manifestation of activity of consciousness.

Cause and effect are really one but appear different. The first aspect of Shakti is its causal (Kāraṇa) aspect. But this again may be analysed into the various stages of its capacity and preparedness to create. These stages are marked by certain names which again are mere labels denoting states of Shakti. Thus Nāda and Bindu are names for those aspects of Shakti which are more and more prone to creation (Uchchhunāvastha). Nāda and Bindu are but two states of Her fit for creation (Srishtyupayogāvasthārūpau). Shakti Tattva is the first kinetic aspect of Brahman. Shakti then becomes more and more kinetic until as Bindu, Shakti is Ishvara Tattva. This Bindu differentiates into the Triangle of Divine Desire called the Kāmakaḷā upon which there is that Brahman Sound (Shabda-brahman) which bifurcating into Shabda and Artha are Shakti in its aspect as effect (Kāryya) or the manifested Universe of Mind and Matter. This Tantrik account gives firstly an apparent “development” in the causal body of Shakti being in the nature of a resolution of like to like ; and then a real development (Parināma) of the effects (Kāryya) produced from the causal body. The whole is necessarily described after the manner of a gradual process stated in terms of our own psychological experience. But such a process exists only in time which first appears with the Sun

and Moon. Bhāskaraṛāya in his commentary on the Lalitā Sahasranāma (Verse 66) cites Gorakshanātha as saying in his Mahārthamanjari “In a moment the world is created and in a moment it is destroyed.”

Shakti Tattva and Shiva Tattva are inseparable (Samtatā Samavāyinī) the former being only the negative aspect of the latter. Both exist even in dissolution, the first emanation proper being Sadākhyā which corresponds with Nāda in the above mentioned verse. Shiva Tattva is defined in the Tattva Sandohā as follows :— “That beyond which there is none other, moved of His own will in order to create the whole world. The first movement (Spandah prathamah) is called the Shiva Tattva by those who know.”

Yad ayam anuttaramūrtirniječchhayākḥilam idam jagat srashtum.

Paspande sa spandah prathamah Shivatattvam uchyate tajjnai.

As the Vimarshinī on the Pratyabhijnā says—It is the “I-experience not looking towards another” (Ananyonmukhah aham-pratyayah). It is the self-side of experience, Prakāsha or Jñanamātrā which is such because of the negation of all objectivity or not-self by Shakti Tattva. For this Jñanamātrā She as Vimarsha Shakti provides through gradual stages the objects of its experience. Her function is negation (nishedha vyāpāra-rūpāshaktih) of all objectivity so as to produce the mere subjective knowing (Prakāshamātrā) which is the Shūnyāti-Shūnya. She then evolves from Herself the objective world in order that it may be the content of the Shiva consciousness. She is pure Will ever associated with Shiva. She is the seed of the whole Universe of moving and unmoving things then absorbed in Herself.

Ichchhā saiva svachchhā santa'ā samavāyinī satī shaktih Sacharācharasya jagatobījam nikhilasya nijam tinasya Tattva Sandohā. V. 1.

She is thus called the Womb (Yoni), or Seed-state (Bījāvasthā) and by the Parāpraveshikā “Heart of the Supreme Lord” (Hridayam Parameshituh). The Yoginī-hridaya Tantra says that men speak of the Heart of Yoginī. She is Yoginī because She is connected with all things both as cause and effect. This Yoginī is knower of Herself (Yoginyah Svavidāh). She is called the Heart for from the Heart all issues. She is the Heart of the Universe : The pulsing movements of which are Herself as Shakti. What more can be said than the words of the Yoginī-hridaya “What man knows the heart of a woman, only Shiva knows the heart of Yoginī.”

In the Pratyabhijnā Hridaya it is said, "The auspicious supreme Shiva desiring to make shine forth the Universe existing as one with Himself displays Himself first in the form of the Very Void which is the self-existent Shiva in the form of the experience of the unity of consciousness (that is there is no objectivity) and of undifferentiated illumination (that is Prakasha or Jñāna). He then next appears in the form of diverse experiencers consisting of an infinite endless number of tattvas, worlds and beings which are in the nature of a blooming forth of consciousness and bliss." (Shrī-parama-shivah-svātmaikvena sthitam vishvam—avabibhāvayishuh pūrvam chid-aikyākhyātimayānāshrita-shiva-paryāya-shūnyātishūnyātmatayā prakāśhabhedena prakāśhamānatayā sphurati; tatah chid rasāshyānatārūpāshesha-tattva-bhuvana-bhāva tat tat-pramātradyātmatayāpi prathate).

The substance of the matter may be stated thus:—Whilst from the static transcendental aspect (Parashiva, Parāshakti) consciousness changelessly endures there is from the kinetic creative aspect (Shiva-Shakti) a polarisation in consciousness, the poles of which are Shiva and Shakti representing the Aham and Idham aspects of experience. Owing to this polarisation there is in lieu of the unitary experience a division into the knower, knowing and known—Māna Meya, Mātrī as it is called. Consciousness then indentifies itself with the products of its own kinetic Shakti, that is with mind as the subject of experience and with matter as its object. This polarisation is explained in the Shākta Tantras by the illustration of the grain of gram (Chanaka). Under the sheath of the grain of gram two seeds are found in such close union that they appear when held together as one. With, however, the tearing of the outer sheath the two halves of the seeds fall apart. These two seeds are said to be Shiva and Shakti and the encircling sheath is Māyā. Like all attempts to explain the unexplainable the illustration is, to some extent, defective for in the gram there are two separate seeds—but Shiva-Shakti are an undistinguishable unity. The commentator on the Shat-chakrah-nirūpana (Vol. II of my Tantrik Texts) cites the following:—(V. 49). "In the Satyaloka is the formless and lustrous One. She is like a grain of gram devoid of hands, feet or the like. She has surrounded Herself by Māyā. She is Sun, Moon and Fire. When casting off (Utsrijya) the covering, She divides in two (Dvidhabhitva) becomes intent on creation (Unmukhī) and then by differentiation of Shiva and Shakti arises creative ideation (Srishti-kalpanā). By "differentiation" is meant the polarisation of consciousness into subjective (Prakāsha) and objective (Vimarsha) aspects. The Self sees another. The same

commentator cites the Prapanchasāra Tantra as saying that the Parābindu divides into two parts of which the right is Bindu, the male Purusha or Hang and the left is Visargah, the female Prakriti or Sah. Hangsah is the union of Prakriti and Purusha and the Universe is Hangsa. In, however, the Mss. in which my edition of this Tantra is based (Vol. III Tāntrik Texts) it is said that Parābindu divided by Kāla becomes threefold—Bindu, Nāda, Bīja. The difference is of no moment for this Bindu (Kāryya) is Shiva and Bīja is Shakti, and Nāda is merely the relation (Mithah Samavāya) of the two. The combined Hangsah indicates the same relation as is expressed by Nāda. The Kulachudāmani Nigama (Chap. I VV 16-24, Vol. IV, Tantrik Texts) the Devī says of the first stage "I, though in the form of Prakriti be hidden in Being consciousness-bliss (Aham Prakritirūpā Sachchidānanda parāyanā). Then in the initial creative stage when Karma ripens the Devī in the words of the Nigama "becomes desirous of creation and covers Herself with Her own Māyā." This is the appearance of the kinetic Shakti. The same doctrine is stated with greater or less detail in various ways. Unitary experience without ceasing to be such is yet as Jīva polarised into the dual experience of the Mayik world. Consciousness as Chit Shakti projects from itself in a manner conformable with our own psychological experience the object of its experience. The Mayik experiencer (Māyāpramātrī) takes what is one to be dual or many. This is the division of Shiva and Shakti which are yet eternally one. All action implies duality. Duality is manifestation. Manifestation is nothing but an appearance to consciousness. As there is ultimately but one Self, the Self appears to itself, that is consciousness is polarised. These two poles are the continuity of the "I" (Aham) and its ever changing content which is "This" (Idam).

Just as there is absolute rest and a world movement so Shakti or creative consciousness is itself of twofold aspect, static and dynamic. Cosmic energy in its physical aspect is potential or kinetic the first being that state in which the equilibrated elements of Power hold each other in check. It is not possible to have one without the other. In any sphere of activity, according to these views, there must be a static back ground. If one spiritual reality be assumed it cannot be actually divided into two. It is possible, however, that there should be a polarisation in our experience whereby what is indivisibly one and the self appears as many and the not self. How? The answer is Māyā, that Power of Her whereby what is impossible to us becomes possible. Māyā is Shakti but Shakti is not to be identified only with this form of

It. In the thirty six Tattvas, Mâyâ is a particular and comparatively gross form of Shakti which appears after the evolution of the Sadvidyâ Tattva. It is defined as that Shakti which is the sense of difference (Bhedabuddhi) that is the power whereby the individual consciousness distinguishing itself from others considers itself separate from them. Shakti is understood differently in the Shâkta Tantra and in Shangkaras Mâyâvâda, a matter of primary importance from the point of view of Sâdhana and with which I will deal on some future occasion. Whatever be the description given all accounts must end in the inconceivable Shakti (Achintya Shakti). She the one, the primordial Shakti (Âdyashakti) appears as many and so the Shâkta Sâdhaka saying "Aham Devî nachânyosmi (I am the Devî and none other) thinks to himself "Sâham" (I am She).

CONCEPTION OF JUSTICE BY ANCIENT TAMIL KINGS.

BY

Sri Saila.

The nature of the law of a country and the methods of administering justice are, to a certain extent, the determining factors of the welfare of a people. In a society which is yet to enter the pale of what we call civilisation, the law of "an eye for an eye" may seem to be an equity and a necessity. The existence of an extremely severe Code of Laws, similar to Draco's Code, would be justified in a place where life is held very cheap, and where men's manners and morals are revolting. The drastic "Code of Kam-murabi" was suited to the times in which it was proclaimed. But, with the advancement of civilisation and development of morals, a nation's Code of Laws also changes and punishment is being made proportionate to the crime. Thus, no where among the civilised nations of the world do we now find the extreme penalty of law being imposed for a trifling offence, such as a theft or an assault.

The moral and Ethical Code of the Dravidians of South India give us a fairly good idea of their civilisation some eighteen or nineteen centuries ago. They had developed a very high degree of civilisation, before the Aryan immigration and quite independent of Aryan influence, and one can glean from the ancient Tamil classics several details of their unique culture. Their conception of civil justice was beyond cavil, and would do credit for an

enlightened modern jurist. A beautiful story is told, illustrating Karikala Chola's method of administering justice. Young as he was, he was old in wisdom and was capable of meeting out justice impartially. Once, the litigants before him in a civil suit doubted the capability of the king because of his youth, and expressed their desire that their case should be heard and decided by a Judge of maturer years. Karikala had to adjourn the case and informed the litigants that their prayer would be granted. On the appointed day of hearing the King took his seat on the bench in the disguise of an old man in grey hairs and decided the case on its merits. The story illustrates the fact that in those times experienced men of long service and reputation alone were appointed as Judges, and that young men lacking in experience and judicial frame of mind were rarely raised to a seat on the bench.

As regards criminal cases, trial by ordeal was freely resorted to, as in those times the prevailing idea was that divine interference in human affairs was considered probable. Punishment was suited to the times, and there could be no comparison between an ancient and modern systems of punishment for an offence. We do not assert that the punishments inflicted on offenders were always proportionate to the crimes. They were somewhat severe, but, when we remember that in these days of enlightenment a sentence of a long term of rigorous imprisonment could be awarded by an erratic judge for a theft of six annas worth of bamboos, we may pardon king Nannan if his conception of justice gave him a frame of mind which imposed capital punishment on a girl who had intruded into the royal grove and stole a mango-fruit therefrom. King Nannan has had his retribution and he enjoys the inglorious distinction of a tyrant. He has been branded down to posterity as "Pen-kolai purinda Nannan," i.e., Nannan who had assassinated a female.

Enormities, such as the above, were however, very rare, and the ancient Tamil Kings dispensed justice with an impartiality that is unique in the annals of any country, ancient or modern. The Penal Code of Tamil India was, however, a drastic piece of legislation, and it had provided the extreme penalty of law for thefts. Nannan's instance was given above. Death sentence was inflicted on Kovalan, the hero of Silappadikâram, for an alleged offence of theft of the Queen's jewels. When the king Pandya Nedum Cheliya, was accused by Kannaki, the wife of Kovalan, of an injustice in that respect, he replied that it was not an act of injustice to put a thief to death. Adultery was very severely punished. The culprit's arms and legs would be cut off, and the woman

for, and the king, in the presence of the whole assembly, had his right hand cut off. Needless to say that the people were bewildered, and when the king explained the reasons for his act they applauded his justice but expressed that the punishment was too severe for the alleged crime. The king's reply was ennobling as his mind. He said that there should be no two laws in his country, one for the rich and one for the poor, for a particular offence. Here again, the tragedy was followed by a miracle. As a result of the special Yagnas performed by the Brahmins of the land, the king's hand began to grow not in flesh and blood, but in gold ! *

We will quote, before closing this article, yet one instance in which a king scrupled not to punish his own sons when they were accused of serious crimes. King Kaganta was on the chola throne at Kaverippumpattanam. A report was made to him that his elder son attempted to violate the honour of a Brahman lady, at a lonely spot, on her way back from the river. The offence was proved and the culprit was ordered to be cut into two. Subsequently, a similar charge was levelled against the second and surviving son of the king, the victim in this case being a Vaisya lady. The king did not mind the extinction of his family and gave immediate orders that the offender should meet with a punishment similar to the one that was awarded to his brother.

Such examples could be multiplied, but enough has been said to show that the ancient Tamil Kings were quite impartial in administering justice and that they never tolerated an action which would tend to tarnish their reputation or bring discredit to their family. Their conception was that they derived their authority from God, and that they were answerable to Him for any acts of omission and commission. A wrong should be redressed by a king within seven days of its occurrence, after which time the jurisdiction of God steps in. "Deliberate well and lean not to either side: be impartial and consult with the men of law: that is the way to administer justice," so says the moralist and poet Tiruvalluvar, the Author of "Kural," and we may fitly close this article, with a translation of the wholesome advice given to Udayakumara by the goddess Manimekhalai, when he was devising ways and means to get at the beautiful heroine of the Epic, "Manimekhalai." "Oh I prince ! if justice fails, the stars would go astray. If stars go astray, rains will fail ; if rains fail, people cannot exist ; and a king should consider the lives of his subjects as his own."

* The city where the king's hand was cut off was known for this reason as "kol kai" and is still in existence as a straggling village in a corner of the Tinnevely District.

WANDERING THOUGHTS OF A RAMBLER.

MYLAPORE, what a sacred and beautiful spot is this suburb of Madras ! I have wandered over many places but I have not come across one like this. It at once presents the appearance of a modern civilised town with its broad well-paved roads, long rows of road side trees with their branches intertwined overhead so as to form a shady bower, its numerous bungalows in the midst of flower gardens, etc. Going into the heart of the place one comes upon a most picturesque scenery of medieval India with its fine broad streets surrounding a big tank overgrown with bright lotus flowers, its steps built of evenly laid granite slabs and having a grand central mantapam with a fine tower in the middle of the tank and several small mantapams about the middle of the steps to serve as a resting place to the devotees who go to the tank for ablution and for the performance of Sandhya. The tank has for its background the grand temple of Sri Kabaleswara with its magnificent principal tower and many other turrets. It is a place of many temples. There are several Saivite and Vaishnavite temples and in more than a dozen of them regular daily pujas are being conducted. Above all, it is a hoary place of antiquity which has been sanctified by being the birthplace of several saints and sages. The great sage Tiruvalluvar is said to have been a resident of this sacred spot about the first century, A. D. and a temple dedicated to his memory with a very old Bassia tree marks the place where he is said to have lived and plied his weaving trade and given out to the world his immortal work the famous *Thirukural*. There is also a temple dedicated to the great Vaishnava Acharya, the famous Vedanta Desigar, and it is also the birthplace of another Vaishnava saint named Peyalwar whose history is generally known to all Vaishnavites.

In this sacred place there lived a great Bhakta and Saivite saint whose life is little known to the general public and his name even, Saint Vayilar, is not likely to be familiar. I make no apology in giving to the readers of this magazine a short account of it as appeared in one of the old religious journals.

"Religions have their seasons as well as years have, and as in the spring time when the whole vegetable world rejoices, flowers shoot forth, not merely from trees and plants but even from the shrubs on the way side and fences in the garden, so in the great Saivite revival of Southern India in the days of the last of the

Pandyans, there arose saints in multitudes from every nook and corner of the Tamil land, not merely from the high and cultured classes of the community, but even the lowest classes succeeded in bringing forth *bhaktas* like Nanda, whose names a grateful posterity remembers with reverence and love. Saint Vayilar was one of the children of this great revival, and though he was not of the lowest caste, he was not of the first three. He belonged to an agricultural class known as the Vellala, and was born in Mylapore, the native place of many Saints and Bhaktas. His life was eventless except for the one occupation which though it might appear dull to some, engaged him both day and night. It was the *Worship of God*."

"His way of worshipping was however peculiar. He did not find much pleasure in going to the local temple, for the worship there did not come up to his ideal; therefore he built a very grand temple of his own, the grandest perhaps ever known, with numberless towers, all of gold, high and spacious halls, provided with walls of silver and pillars of gold and decorated with the costliest diamonds and rubies. The whole temple was built on a beautiful plan with five square walls one after another, made of different metals, the outermost being of iron and the innermost of gold. It was lit up not with ordinary lamps but with big diamonds as bright as the sun and of the size of the mangoes. Numberless mirrors disposed in an artistic fashion set forth the beauty of the temple in tenfold richness. In the centre of the temple was the *sanctum sanctorum* which rivalled the Kailas (abode of Siva) in grandeur and contained a beautiful Lingam, the image of God, adorned with the costliest jewels and the most fragrant flowers. On each side of the image stood a Kalpa tree whose flowers spread their divine fragrance all through the temple. It was a very grand temple, and my pen does poor justice to its unrivalled beauty and splendour.

"Here it may be asked 'how did he afford the money for building so magnificent a temple and where did he build it?' The answer is, he did not build it with money but with his lively imagination which of course, cost him nothing except the rarest of things, viz., *love of God*, and the splendid temple was all in his mind. He would constantly live with the God of that temple, make puja to it day and night, and forget even meals and sleep in that occupation. He would seldom talk to anybody for he was too busy, and he would go on making his puja without caring whether it rained or thundered whether it was night or day till he forgot even the temple, and God and himself alone remained,

"In course of time the image also disappeared and his own soul became God. Says his biographer "His mind was his temple, wisdom the lamp that shone in it, bliss the water which he poured over his God and love the offering he made to that Deity." Tradition adds that the glory of his silent worship gradually became known to the world, and when he died he was canonised on earth, and in heaven he became one with God."

"Such is the glory of mental worship. Ah! how cheap is Heaven and yet how dear?"

The above description of the glory of mental worship engaged in by saint Vayilar brings to my mind another story which may be briefly described.

A certain king had built a magnificent temple in honour of God Vishnu, and fixed a day for opening it in a grand regal style. He had set apart a fabulous amount of money for the celebration of the Kumbhabhishekam ceremony and was arranging to send invitations to all the people of the neighbouring kingdoms and their Rajahs, when God appeared to him in his dream and said "A poor potter has built for me a temple in his heart and is going to dedicate it to me on the very day which you have fixed for the opening of your temple. Do you therefore choose some other day, for I cannot disoblige my great bhakta." The king woke in the morning and reflecting upon his dream said to himself, "The poor potter's imaginary temple is much more sacred and dear to God than mine, of which I was so foolishly proud. Ah! how much greater is *bhakti* than wealth. So thinking, he went to the potter, and falling at his feet requested to be adopted as his disciple.

But what is the condition of the religious feelings of the present day inhabitants of this sacred place? The majority of its most highly educated and intellectual inhabitants rarely go near the temple or the tank. Perhaps they are so highly advanced as not to think it necessary to go to such temples and its stone idols for worship. Perhaps they have one and all like our saint Vayilar and the potter of the above story built a temple in their hearts and are engaged in offering mental prayers to God. Oh, that it were so! But the modern day educated Hindu considers all these as superstitious nonsense and spends his evenings in clubs and in light talk.

* * * * *

The contrast between the two tendencies is well illustrated in the scheme of old Mylapore and its modern western expansion.

Modern Mylapore at its best reflects the prevailing tendency of secularising religious life and justifying it by the teaching of the Gita and the practice of Janaka. Religion is not to be confined to the closet and the cave; it has to be lived and realised in the details of every day concrete life. It is true that religion has to enter the market place; but often its soul is crushed by the wheels of money and fame. It is in many cases a philosophy of drift, dissipation and despair. But the ancient ideal was rooted in a desire to spiritualise secular life as can be evidenced even now in the old institutions of Mylapore; in the nature of town plan and in the direction of its charities. The temple was the centre of its scheme and every activity was ennobled by their spiritual vision. The old atmosphere was therefore essentially favourable to the growth of saintly life. With religious fervour as the motive of life, industries prospered, wealth increased and people were happy. The present tendency of secularising religion instead of spiritualising it is therefore highly regrettable as it is a sure symptom of the deterioration of outlook and experience. Thanks, however, to the spread of reactionary forces on the one hand and the revivalistic forces on the other, the importance of the ancient outlook is increasingly recognised and we are sure that new Mylapore will not forget its centre and backgrounds; its lofty towers symbolising the divine regions of human life but march on in simplicity and spiritual sincerity to the realisation of its soul like its saints and devotees of old.

This universe is simply a gymnasium in which the soul is taking exercise; after exercises we become gods. So the value of everything is to be decided by how far it is a manifestation of god. Civilisation is the manifestation of that divinity in man.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE SPECIAL MESSAGE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA TO MODERN INDIA.

BY

N. R. Kedari Rao, B.A.

The teachings of every one of the Great Reformers of mankind may broadly be divided into two parts—that which is applicable to the whole world in general and that which is intended for the land of their birth in particular. In the two previous articles, we have dealt with the former and now propose to take up the latter.

Next to her spirituality, that with which Swami Vivekananda was most impressed in India was her Majestic scenery and her richness of natural gifts. The tenderness with which he describes many an ancient ruin or place of pilgrimage is almost touching. Indeed there is not a city, town or village in India—be it of the humblest—which he happened to know and which did not receive its meed of praise from his generous lips, Delhi and Benares, Amarnath and Pataliputra, Kanyakumari and Dakshineswar—these and many others he has described in his own lovely way and his pen-paintings are as a rule remarkable both for their truth to details and for their living charm. Fired with such intense patriotism for his land, he began to study the historic past of India and the part she had played in the evolution of the world. While he was himself fully satisfied that hers was an honoured place in the role of nations, he was shocked to find that the greatest personages in Indian history were grossly misrepresented by biased foreign historians. How much this pained him may be seen from the fact that whenever an opportunity presented itself, he used to speak of Sivaji the great Maharastra leader whom he almost regarded as an incarnation of God on Earth and whose birth was prophesied long ago. That the great leader of the Hindu Nation, after centuries of subjection under the Mahomedan yoke, that he the great devotee of the Lord, that he the friend and patron of such saints as Tukaram and Ramdas, Namdev and Eknath, that he the personification of all the kingly qualities desired in a monarch, that this inimitable Sivaji should have been misrepresented as a free booter and captain of a robber-band was too much for him to bear. And it was on this account that he denounced the foreign historians in no equivocal terms in his talks with his friends and disciples—both publicly and in private.

Nor was his opinion prepossessed in favour of Sivaji because of his Hinduism; for he was equally lavish in praising Sher Shah, the Mahomedan Emperor for his lasting works of public utility,

amongst his own followers—like Sister Nivedita, Dhira Māta and one that was called Jayā. And wherever there was an undertaking to establish a girl's school or otherwise improve the position of the Indian woman he was the first to encourage it. And in these schools he wanted the distinctly national type of education to be followed. 'Revive the old arts' said he "teach your girls fruit-modelling with condensed milk; give them artistic cooking and sewing; let them learn painting, photography, the cutting of designs in paper and gold and silver filigree and embroidery. See that every one knows something by which she can earn a living in case of need. And never forget HUMANITY."

"Children may well be worshipped" said he on another occasion, "for there is no period in our life to be compared with childhood in purity and innocence." "Sometimes you may worship your own pupils. What was it that Mātāji said to me? 'Swāmiji I have no help. But these blessed ones I worship and they will take me to salvation.'"

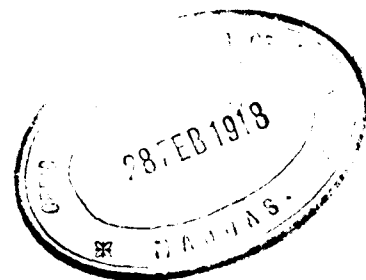
It was as part of this great problem of the Woman and the People that he viewed the other questions of the day—such as the industrial and political regeneration of the land and the improvement in physique of the masses by means of better food and sanitation. It was his perpetual cry, that 'manliness is the one virtue to be attained in life'; and this again led him at times to such warnings as those given below:—

'I would rather have a youth play with his heart and soul at foot-ball than get by heart the whole of the Bhagavad Gita.' Several of his *Obiter Dicta* have been preserved both in the long series of his published letters and in the grateful memory of his numerous friends, but there is none more forcible than those dealing with manliness.

'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 has thus taught us the glory of home, the pride of country and the high destiny of mankind. He has re-interpreted for us the greatness of nations and the special mission of each in moulding and fashioning the Human Race. With remarkable insight has he grasped the strong points in the Ideals of the East and the West and shown us how a harmonious commingling of the two can be had resulting in greater peace and good will, in a nobler race than either has yet shown. And it is this message of HOPE that he so benevolently holds out to all mankind without distinction of creed or colour. And the path of realising this Hope may best be described in his own words. 'Let visions cease' says he—

"Let visions cease
Or, if you cannot, dream then truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free,"



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. IV.]

OCTOBER, 1917.

[No. 6.]

MUMUKSHUTWAM, OR THE DESIRE FOR SALVATION.

Reflection on the true worth of life constrains us to the conclusion that it is a tragic waste 'weary, stale, flat and unprofitable,' wrought with sadness and the agony of despair. The mind that with frantic eagerness, runs after the pleasures stored up in the senses only drinks deeply of the cup of sweet poison and reeling with giddiness drops down in gloom. As Sankara says, the deer, the elephant, the fish and the bee come to grief in gratifying a single sense but man drawn irresistibly by the cumulative charm of the five senses finds only a gaping void and groans under disappointment. Life is ultimately rooted in struggle and cut-throat competition. The so-called music of the spheres is only a poetic rendering of the endless strife in the heavens. Nature is dressed in dread and death, and Her beauty and joy are only a figment of the imagination. 'Life everywhere lives on death' and its fair show only conceals the slaughter-house of mutual murder. The world is a veritable Rudra Bhumi where the god of death decked with skulls feasts for ever on flesh and blood. Our civilisation itself as James says is based on shambles and skulls. Behind the feast of life there is the vision of the sepulchre. The spectre of waste and death gnaws at the very root of being, and fills it with curdling gloom. Like a mushroom youth fades away, wealth vanishes in a moment; and power and fame tickle you for a second. The colour and the glow of life are only a dream and a delusion; it is really an all-enveloping chilliness. You lose all appetite for life. The mind is

choked with unutterable grief. The oppressing horror of death freezes the very springs of life and paralyses the soul. Is not life then a piteous tale of woe, melancholy, anguish and despair ?

The hideousness of the inner life is more appalling. Wickedness and sin bubble out of our being in torrential profusion. Goodness is only an outer covering veiling inner corruption and rottenness. The so called poetic justice of a belief in a moral order representing the triumph of virtue over vice is an ethical dream. The tragic waste of life where evil annihilates itself and the good that combats with it naturally brings on a mood of scepticism and callousness. Besides besetting sin and overpowering evil there is the pain of ignorance which envelops life in dreary darkness. Philosophy with its irrepressible thirst for knowledge only knocks in vain. "Veil after veil will lift—but there must be veil upon veil behind." Thus the mystery is only intensified by the search and thought thus oppressed by doubt burns with inextinguishable despair. In spite of all this gloom and despair man looks for honey in life like the traveller in the wilderness encompassed by fear and death, like the frog fondly seizing flies, itself slowly devoured by the snake.

We are therefore forced to cry out in agony that life, pleasure, virtue, and wisdom are only a delusion and a mirage that goads us on with false hope and show to sorrow and death. Man's life is the life of a lunatic which often simulates reason and virtue but is really "such stuff as dreams are made of." Every pleasure is wrought with pain : death lurks behind life and a painful mystery encompasses it. Sickmindedness is the only justifiable attitude of life. What is more tragic is the loss of the soul in the routine of life which under the sway of habit transforms thought into a machine and makes the prison-house a palace of pleasures. Men of a higher type make desperate attempts to escape the sickly pessimism that inevitably results from reflection.

The active man avoids the torment of thought by losing himself in work and service. A Mathew Arnold takes refuge in art and revels in fancy and fiction. An epicurian spurning higher happiness as a mere chimera realises the summum bonum in verse, wine and woman. The rejection of such actual pleasures in favour of a possible future heaven which may not be realised at all, lands you only in a veritable Thrisankuloka where the pain of suspense is heightened by regret and disappointment. We would fain go back to the pleasures of piggism but as the 'clod' is disturbed it is impossible to commit rational suicide and dwell in the stomach and the adjacent regions. Immersed in a cycle of births

and deaths, tormented by the pairs of opposites and bewildered by the mystery of life humanity pale, weary, and dejected looks up in inexpressible agony and utter helplessness.

It is in such moments that man weary of life, of art, science and philosophy turns to religion for solace and salvation. At first he runs headlong in his pursuit after pleasure but receiving severe blows from nature he turns away in disappointment and disgust. This is the first stage of Mumukshutwam, a species of sour-grape Sannyasa—pretending to be what it is not. Pessimism is only the reverse of optimism. As Swami Vivekananda says, "When nature gives us a gingerbread we laugh, and when at the next moment it gives us a kick we begin to weep." When this disgust is thus justified by thought and deepens into world-weariness it develops into the second stage which is essentially an attitude of sickmindedness. A higher stage is reached when the outer life is a drift and the inner life a void emptied of all value. The sickminded type with its life-weariness is therefore a negative state without any pronounced longing for release and redemption. The idea of Mumukshutwam is generated by a desire for freedom from the round of births and deaths each causing the other and both implicating the ego in endless misery. Freedom implies not only freedom from, but freedom in the direction of. In the final state of Mumukshutwam release presupposes a positive overbelief in a 'Not-ourselves that makes for righteousness,' 'a More that communes with us,' a Higher Self that ensouls all beings. The centre gradually shifts from the little noisy 'I' to the oversoul that envelops it. The trend of life is now from self-assertion to self-effacement in God.

Religious life then becomes identified with the love of God. The truth now dawns on us that separation and finitude is at the root of all sorrow. It takes the form of a feeling of incompleteness heightened by the consciousness of sin and ignorance driving you irresistibly towards a vague but none the less attainable end. It is as Starbuck observes a period of stress and storm, an intense struggle of our being to give birth to a new life-form, a new feeling of love to God. Love seeks what it has not and therefore requires to be filled. It delights in self-forgetfulness and comes to fruition and fulfilment in the unconditional surrender to God. The thirst for life is now transfigured into a spiritual yearning for life in God. The 'I' is swallowed up in the 'Thou'. There is a complete abandonment of self-responsibility. The devotee forsaking all earthly things pours out his love in the following experiences : "Not I, but Thou, Oh Lord. Thy will be done. Do with me a

Thou likest. I have nothing. I can do nothing. I am nothing." Very often it takes the form of remorse, humility, forgiveness and resignation. Love no doubt comes to fruition in joy but even sorrow is a 'redemptive impulse clinging to the object and finally restoring the joy'. By means of a new alchemy suffering is itself transfigured into joy. Love is in the Hegelian sense a joy that separates the devotee from God with a view to a deeper union and joy. In this exalted state the personality is entirely changed. The man is born anew and is sustained by divine love. There is a loss of all worry and weariness. In this feeling of other-worldliness, there is an influx of a larger life, an uprush of divinity from the very centre of being, an inundation of flowing love which fills the soul with immortal ecstasy.

Recognising the value of love in religion, Vishishtadvaita has constructed a system of disciplines and emotions starting with Karmayoga and culminating in Bhakti and Prapatti. Karanayoga is a mental training of non-attachment to the fruits of action based on the knowledge of the self as different from the body, unchanging and eternal. Meditation on the self results in the realisation of the individual soul in a state of bliss technically called by the name of Kaivalya. But the discriminating Mumukshu rejects Kaivalya as a godless state and realising that he is only a mode of the supreme Lord who is the life and soul of everything animate and inanimate, develops an attitude of Bhakti. At this stage the centre of reference and love shifts from the individual soul to the cosmic Self enshrined in the hearts of all beings, and the meditative repose that comes out of mere Jnanayoga is transformed into a loving devotion to God. Bhakti is the love which is "as intense and unremitting as the love which the non-discriminating have for the fleeting objects of the senses." At first, a vague desire and effort, it gradually swells in volume and finally becomes a restless longing for God. The heavily laden soul renounces all, surrenders himself in Prapatti and seeks refuge at His feet. The devotee unable to bear separation from God any longer pines away in grief like a bride feeling for the absence of her lord. The powerful feeling of sex lying buried in the depths of our being specially lends itself to this condition. When it is directed Godward as in the love of the Gopis and Alvars, it becomes an irresistible spiritual longing. At last the thrill of divine communion pulsates through him and he revels in that rapturous communion.

But the exuberant joy and the rapturous exaltation resulting from mere emotional demonstration of Bhakti, are generally followed by dejection and depression which leaves the system in a

state of exhaustion. Elation and exhaustion are the obverse and the reverse of the same thoughtless emotional excess. The Adwaitin, therefore, rejects this form of devotion as *Apara Bhakti*, an externally determined emotional affair. Higher than the worship of God in His Saguna aspect as the Lord of the Universe is the Nirguna meditation of Brahman as the Eternal Absolute Self beyond all names and forms. Sankara therefore defines Bhakti as the contemplation of our own real self in a sustained passionless state of peace. He elaborates a theory of Mumukshutwa from the stand-point of Jnana. Recognising the truth that the miseries of Samsara are due to Raga (attachment) and Dwesha (aversion) which inhere in every sense experience, he traces them to Abhimana which consists in the false identification of the Atman with the body. Abhimana is the result of Aviveka which again comes out of Avidya. Consequently Avidya or ignorance of the nature of Atman lies at the root of all misery. Action done without attachment to its fruits leads to a purification of the mind resulting in *Apara Bhakti* or the worship of the Personal God. Then arises the desire for the realisation of Nirguna Brahman in this very life. Sankara's scheme of Sadhanachatushtaya is designed to give birth to this desire. The self is to be heard, pondered over, and meditated upon. The first requisite is Viveka by means of which the self is discriminated from the non-self. The Atman whose nature is Sat, Chit and Ananda is beyond the three Sariras, the five Kosas, the three Avasthas and the three Gunas. The aspirant thus eliminates the non-self born of Avidya by a process of *neti, neti*. It is a process of affirmation by negation. But mere intellectual analysis is only the beginning of religion. The thought of God is not God. The dynamic force comes more from the feeling of renunciation than from thought. Hence the second condition is Vairagya which consists in the renunciation and rejection, as vomited food, of all pleasures in this world and in Swarga. This is followed by a discipline of the will beginning with Sama. Sama is the restraint of the external activity of the body; Dama, of the internal activity. Thithiksha is indifference to the pairs of opposites like heat and cold. Uparathi consists in not thinking of sense objects (Sannyasa). Sraddha is an abiding faith in Guru and the Sastras based on conviction and verifiability by experience. Samadhi is the incessant practice of peace based on the sacred texts pointing out the identity of Jiva and Iswara. Mumukshutwam the fourth condition of release may be regarded as the fruition of the first three functioning together. It is the cumulative effect of the joint action of discrimination (Viveka), dissociation (Vairagya) and discipline (Sama, etc.). Then comes the

irrepressible yearning for the bliss of liberation from the thralldom of Maya. Then the false self melts away in the limitless, spaceless effulgence of Chidakasa which lights the sun, the moon and the stars, and the individual is swallowed up in eternal, ineffable bliss.

Advaita then explains Mumukshutwam as a progressive realisation of intense feeling for release generated by Karma, Bhakti and Jnana, respectively. When the mind is purified by Karma, exalted by Bhakti and directed towards the One-without-a-second by discrimination, dissociation, and discipline, its natural dualistic longing is transfigured into a longing for the realisation by experience of the identity of the 'I' and the 'Thou.' But Ramanuja's scheme emphasising the dualistic devotional temper changes the order giving the highest place in Mumukshutwam to Bhakti and Prapatti. As mere Jnana Yoga leads to the self-sufficient joy of soul-cognition, it has to be elevated into the self-surrendering devotion which comes out of a living belief in a Personal God Who envelops and ensouls the individual ego. It is in the inner recesses of feeling that we realise the highest reaches of divinity. Bhakti and Jnana are therefore essentially different modes of approaching God. The scientific temperament with its passion for knowledge and truth traces the cause of bondage to the ignorance of the absolute identity between the Jiva and Iswara. Hence Jnana Yoga employs the methods of analysis and elimination in its search for the one impersonal, attributeless Brahman, knowing which everything else is known. But the religion of devotion rejects the soulless, passionless state of inertness and vacuity that results from analysis and negation, and sets free the pent up feeling of the jiva in the form of love and longing for the 'Other' that gives it birth and sustains its being. Bhakti Yoga is a religion of deliverance and redemption from sin; Jnana Yoga attempts at the removal of ignorance or Avidya. Bhakti is a positive longing for communion with the Supreme; Jnana is a negative method of eliminating the non-self by a process of Neti. Bhakti shifts the centre from the internal to the external, from the 'I' to the 'thou'; Jnana shifts the centre from the external to the internal, from the 'Thou' to the 'I'. Jnana is realised in the passionless peace of Samadhi, in sanity and serenity. Bhakti is rioting and revelling in love,—in the pangs of separation alternating with the elations of communion. The Jnani expands into the boundless light of Samadhi; the devotee is thrilled by the rapture of communion. The one seeks enlightenment; the other yearns for ecstasy.

One despairs of reconciling these two extremes and arriving at the true meaning of Mumukshutwam. Perhaps the psychological

study of their origin and worth may afford the clue to the solution in temperament and organisation. The desire for freedom is rooted in the feeling for deliverance from sin and separation in the one case, and the removal of ignorance in the other. Bhakti of the former may be the manifestation of the self-abasing instinct which, when spiritualised takes the form of the sense of sin and self-negation. There is another essential but opposite instinct in us, the instinct of self-expression directed in its religious aspect to the realisation of the Self as God by means of Jnana. With regard to their worth it must be stated that the Advaitin is likely to mistake the mere knowledge of the intellect with its thought-chopping soulless logic for the enlightenment coming from Samadhic inspiration. The artificial repose induced by quietism with its lapse into laya and void kills higher endeavour and aspiration. The repression of a passion defeats its purpose when the passion gathering force from within bursts the bounds and wrecks the ship of religion. But on the other hand devotion also has its shortcomings and pitfalls. The devotee often feels that his erratic and unguided emotions are the voice of God speaking to his soul and takes refuge in inspiration and immediate revelation. When passions are allowed to run riot in the name of mystic ecstasy, the result is often an inward chaos and emotional irresponsibility. The Prapatti state of Mahaviswasa at least in its institutional form may degenerate into a commercial concern with Guru and God, and the belief in Their saving grace assumes the form of vicarious atonement, kills individual effort and breeds a habit of ethical stagnation. When the two methods of Gnana and Bhakti are purged of all this dross, there remains a pure and residual element which is essential to their nature. The differences between the two arise from the differences in the perspective. Though the temperament and the starting point may vary, the reference ultimately is to the same religious endeavour. The sense of ignorance and sin with their positive expressions in knowledge and love are after all two different attributes of the same being, namely Chit and Ananda. The conception of God as Sat, Chit and Ananda solves many of the problems of comparative religion. The devotee emphasises the Ananda aspect which is concerned with feeling and loses himself in the love of a Personal God. But the intellect with its passion for unity demands an impersonal Absolute in the form of Chit.

Religion is more a life than a system of philosophy. It can be understood only in terms of personality as the search of the individual soul or Jiva for God. It longs for a new immediacy, a

direct perception of God in which in the inimitable words of Tagore we feel the throb of the soul-life in our own soul. As personality is not reason, nor feeling, nor will, religion cannot be interpreted in the language of these mental states which are only the imperfect attributes of the ego. The four yogas elaborated by the Vedanta for the attainment of release are mainly based on the recognition of these cardinal aspects of personality. Their inadequacy to meet the needs of religion may be stated as a case of negation by fulfilment: as long as the soul is not touched, their efficacy is only of doubtful worth. But Mumukshutvam is an intense, irrepressible thirst of the spirit for God. It is the craving of the individual soul for divine life. This thirst, this craving, may originate in thought feeling or will or in all. But whether it is produced by knowledge or devotion or action or by all, it is in effect the longing for release and salvation of the individual soul which is more than all these ; it is a living function and a unique experience. Any attempt at analysis kills the soul and leaves a number of dead, mechanical things like thought and feeling. Just as a man immersed in water pants for breath, just as a man struggles hard to throw down a piece of burning charcoal placed on his head, so does a Mumukshu yearn for release from the unutterable woes of Samsara and pant restlessly for divine communion. The period of stress and storm, of struggles, trials and backslidings, of intense agony and burning anguish which intervenes before the birth of God-consciousness, is the mightiest, the most terrible and the most bloody of all wars ever waged by humanity. But the prospect of the joy of fruition and fulfilment transfigures sorrow itself into joy. The struggle itself is worth having and the Mumukshu certainly prefers the strife of the soul to the little joys of worldliness. When the Ahankara-ridden ego gives up at last all its voluntary efforts, lets go the hold and looks up in absolute self-abnegation and negation, a flood of ecstasy pours over it, the little self is lost and swallowed up in the boundless expanse of ethereal light and lives forever in the "supreme state" of immortality from whence there is no return.

THE LADDER OF THE HIGHER LIFE

BY

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

It is a fact handsomely acknowledged by many Western students of Indian thought and Indian ideals that the Hindus have always striven to keep the light of the spirit undimmed in their hearts and to follow loyally the lead of the great sages and saints of the land, though of late the stress and complexity of modern life have been hindrances to the full expression of that passionate loyalty to the higher life. An intimate sense of the immanence and transcendence of God and a longing to purify the outer and the inner life to fit the soul to rise unto the raptures of the knowledge and love of God have always been the great and distinguishing traits of the Hindu genius. Max. Muller says: "A distant God like the Jewish Jehovah would be no God at all to the Vedantist, he cannot be too near to his God ; nay, to be without Him but for one moment would be death and annihilation to him."

While such has been the intense longing and passion of the Hindu race, we must remember that the Hindu character was not merely speculative,

"The native hew of resolution,
Sicklied over with the pale cast of thought."

Both in social and spiritual life it was well realised that the goal can never be attained unless the means are clear, graduated, and suited to the end in view. It was recognised also that it is quite erroneous to treat social life and spiritual life as two absolutely unconnected streams of human energy. What some critics regard as a sign of primitiveness from their study of a few types of social growth is regarded by us as a sign of advanced social refinement and development. In disproof of this theory of primitiveness we have only to remember that no one has as yet dared to question the splendours of our civilisation though it has co-existed all along with the immemorial inter-relatedness of social and spiritual life. Mr. Havell says in his recent work, *The Ancient and Mediæval Architecture of India : A study of Indo-Aryan Civilisation* : "In India, religion is never regarded as external to secular life, but as its consecration and illumination."

It is not my purpose here to point out how the Hindu mind has always been remarkable for its combination of practical and

outward with introspective and inward energies and for its co-ordination of social and secular, with individual and spiritual life. I desire to state here briefly what has been regarded by the masterminds of India as the true and only key to individual salvation and national good and solidarity. The course of higher life as laid down in India and as enjoined upon all though with variations suited to the conditions of birth and bringing up, is of peculiar value and beauty, and if only we realise this and practise the wise and fruitful method so given to us, we shall be fully able to overcome all stupid and suicidal social schemes, relate the present fully and properly to the past and the future, present a solid front to the world, ensure the permanence of that vitality which has till now enabled us to present the unique spectacle of a distinctive race and civilisation maintaining its place under the sun from time immemorial, and rise to still higher heights of national achievement through the grace of God.

Amidst the manifold, confused, unpurposive, ill-regulated, and downward dragging activities of mankind which while dowered by the light of reason with greater powers and possibilities than animals, has not got their blind and limited but well-defined range of instinct and can hence soar to angelic heights or sink below brute depths—comes the voice of the scripture grouping such activities clearly and purposively by stating what qualities of the mind and activities of the body and the senses lead to worldly and material success and prosperity or enjoyments in heaven. Scripture tells us also by negative injunctions what qualities and acts will bring about individual degradation, social disruption, and national decline and will result in the pains and tortures of hell. Besides these purposive activities the first element of duty for its own sake is introduced by the *Nitya karmas*. These give us our first lessons in the difficult but auspicious science of self-discipline. Such lessons if well learnt and practised will bring into manifestation in us that mastery of self which is the door—the only door—to salvation.

Some people think that Sri Krishna has preached a very easy path of salvation—the path of *Nishkama karma* or disinterested performance of duty. But in reality the path is full of difficulty and is meant to be a total reversal of all our former modes of activity. Indeed the most self-sacrificing man known to us will be a grovelling egoist when tested by such a test, though he may be far above those wallowing in the mire of selfishness and worldliness. It is only after we have gone through the discipline of *regulated* desire and activity and of *Nitya-karmas*, and studied the scriptures

for attaining discriminative power (*Viveka*) and sought his grace by devotion, praying for true *vairagya* being given to us as his boon, that the first step on the golden ladder of *Nishkama Karma* can be placed by us. While it is true that only true wisdom and true love lead to the final severance of the ties of desire and the attainment of the bliss of liberation (*Visreyasa*), they are necessary in some measure and in their initial forms for our achieving the really difficult feat of *Nishkama Karma*. The Lord says in chapter X of the Gita.

मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
 कथयतश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥
 तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकं ।
 ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥
 तेषामेवानुक्तं पार्थ महामज्ञानजं तमः ।
 नाशयाम्यामभावास्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥

Even our first feeble efforts at such disinterested performance of duty makes us realise by actual experience how it is the only entrance into a diviner life. It is our selfish attachment to things that is a source of bondage and we forge for ourselves the chains that bind us fast. There is a beautiful poem by Sir Rabindranath Tagore which says,

"I ask my destiny—what power is this
 That cruelly drives me onward without rest ?
 My destiny says, "look round" ! I turn back and see
 It is I myself that is ever pushing me from behind."

We find by actual experience that even our physical sheaths acquire new vitality and radiance by our doing Dharma in a spirit of detachment, disinterestedness, dispassion and love of God. The mind ceases to be tossed on the waves of desire and acquires steadiness and power and concentration. It has

"That content surpassing wealth
 The sage in meditation found
 And walked with inward glory crowned."

In the moral realm also we realise that disinterested performance of duty enables us to perpetually transcend ourselves. This would be hardly possible if such a course of endeavour was against our true nature, for nothing unnatural can be immortal or even persist for any length of time. It is felt to be possible and it becomes possible only because it leads to our attainment of our

own real nature, to our at-one-ment with God. The moral side of our life brings us into constant relations with other human beings, makes us realise how much—how very much—of all that we have we owe to others, and leads to the suppression and eventual extinction of all selfish and separatist tendencies in us. The consummation of our living a higher life physically, mentally and morally by the help of *Nishkama Karma* which is the mightiest lever of the higher life is the manifestation of our true spiritual nature more and more.

In the abundance of His grace and compassion Lord Sri Krishna emphasises this again and again throughout all the chapters of the Gita. Even in the chapters dealing with the higher rungs of this ladder of higher life, He again and again lays stress on *Nishkama Karma*. He has declared to us :

“ यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्म बन्धनः ।
माकर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मातेसंगोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥
संगस्यत्का फलानि च ॥

Nay, not content with these declarations and the lives of His chosen ones, He has by His own acts in His incarnations shown to us how this is as much of the very essence of His being as wisdom and love—nay, is the outer side of such Wisdom and Love.

“ न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किंचन ।
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥
यदिदमहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।
मम बन्धानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थसर्वशः ॥
बन्धीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।
संकरस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥

(Chapter III of the Gita.)

It is only after we attain to the fullness of *Nishkama Karma* that we find the full fruitfulness of Bhakti and Jnana. The little devotion that we have and the little wisdom that we get while being immersed in our selfish and worldly activities are only *Punyakarmas* i.e., meritorious acts which will through His grace enable us to step firmly up the ladder of *Nishkama Karma*. Those who imagine that by frequenting temples or doing a little puja at home or reading a few Puranas or Itihasas or Bhashyas or Prakarana Granthas they will be given a charter of eternal individual salvation are the most self-deluded men in the world. Let them ask their

hearts, Is there no love of results in me ? Do I not have the slightest selfish motive, even if it be mere love of fame ?

“ The spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights and live laborious days.”

If their hearts tell them that they have no such motives, all honour to them. Yet how few are there of this type !

This is the reason why the demand of *Sadhana Chathushtaya Sampathi*,

नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः इहामुत्रफलभोग
विरागः, शमदमादि षट्सम्पत्ति and मुमुक्षुत्वं ।

as the necessary prerequisite for *fruitful* vedantic study (as opposed to the acquisition of that science for purposes of display or disputation), seems to us to be a cruelly high demand. But if we have walked up the lower steps in the ladder of *Nishkama Karma* the loftiness of the above heights will cause no giddiness in us at all. As I have already pointed out we have not only not attained even *Nishkama Karma* but have not even reached the still lower stage of regulated activity and guarded purity. Purity of body, of mind and of surroundings is absolutely essential for the germination of the higher life. Without *ahara sudhi* (purity of what is taken in by the senses), *chitta sudhi* (purity of the mind), and *samsarga sudhi* (purity of our surroundings and our relations with them) nothing can be achieved in the realm of the higher life.

Our habits have to be made pure by observing the scriptural and traditional regulations as to our daily life. We must purify our minds by studying sacred books, by *japas*, by *satsanga*, etc. We must reform society—indeed the so-called conservative seeks a radical reformation of society. So that our surroundings may be pure. Who can live in a poisonous atmosphere ? We must purify our surroundings and enter into the purest relations with them. We are so poor even in these elements of the higher life and yet feel shocked at the demand for *Sadhana Chathushtaya Sampathi*.

It is not possible in this brief article to go into all the glories of Bhakti and Jnana. My object is merely to describe the ladder of the higher life generally. Even here our way is hampered by the so-called expounders of our scriptures who try to make out a real divergence between *Jnana* and *bhakti*. These are really not parallel lines but upward curves crossing and recrossing at several points, the ends being lost in radiance and rapture ineffable and

infinite. Who is the disputant that while wallowing in the mire of ignorance and selfishness dares to stand up and misguide us as to these divine paths and the signposts on the paths and the goals of these paths? Madhusudana Saraswathi points out that in the beautiful verse

आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥

(Chapter VII of the Gita.)

च refers to *Nishkama Prema Bhaktas*. He gives the following instances: तत्र निष्कामभक्तो ज्ञानी यथा सनकादिर्यथा नारदो यथा प्रह्लादो यथा पृथुः यथा वा शुकः निष्कामः शुद्धप्रेमभक्तो यथा गोपिकादिः यथा वाऽकूर युधिष्ठिरादिः ॥ I challenge anyone to make out a hierarchy among these liberated ones. The fact is that while incapable of even *Nishkama Karma* and therefore absolutely unfit even to afford even mental entry to Jnana or Bhakthi, we are presumptuous enough to talk about these and confuse and mislead others ourselves in wandering mazes lost. Sri Suka well says :

आत्मरामाश्च मुनयः निर्धन्या अप्युत्कमे ।
कुर्वन्मयहेतुर्को भक्तिं ह्यर्थंभूत गुणो हरिः ॥

(Bhagawatha.)

I desire to point out here only a few aspects of devotion and wisdom. Imageworship is regarded by us as a means of mental concentration upon God ; and further as God is everywhere, there is a special manifestation of His glory and His grace in scripture-stated forms sanctified by scripture-stated *mantras*. Just as, though air is everywhere, a fan sets it in motion specially for our sake. Such worship enables us to bring about the initial contact of our soul with God. It is only such contact that brings into us the freshes of divine radiance and energy and cleanses the impurities acquired in the course of innumerable lives dedicated to worldly enjoyments. Such worship is the most powerful of all uplifters, and hence it is that we have been advised to have it from the very commencement of our higher life up to the moment when in the fulness of union there is the utmost rapture and

"The mortal limits of the self is loosed
And past into the nameless, as a cloud
Melts into Heaven."

न कर्माणि त्यजेद्योगी कर्मभिस्त्वय्यतेह्यसौ ॥

Love and wisdom—or shall I say wisdom and love to pacify the disputatious man already referred to—are the highest rungs in

the ladder of the higher life. I have already stated that their extreme ends are lost in light. Let us ever seek that divine illumination for that is the true joy and glory of life.

नतत्रसूर्योभाति नचन्द्रतारकं
नेमाविद्युती भान्ति कुतोयमग्निः ।
तमेव भान्तमनुभातिसर्वं
तस्यभासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥

"THE GOSPELS AND ACTS."

(Continued from page 120).

ACTS.

From the introduction to Acts it would appear that the book was compiled or recompiled at the same time as the Gospel of Luke. Luke, John and Acts appear to be books of a certain period later than that of Matthew and Mark. Acts purports to give the history of the events immediately following those related in the Gospel. These events are chiefly connected with the acts of Peter, the most prominent of the immediate disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, and some others, and also of Paul a later leader in the cause.

At the time of Jesus's final departure there appears to have been some uncertainty among his disciples and followers as to what they were to look forward to as the outcome of his work. They rightly divined that something must result, some good must follow. But they did not exactly know what. There were those who believed that the Kingdom of Israel of their scriptures, as they understood them, was soon to become a matter of fact. These asked him, "Lord at this time, Dost thou, according to promise, establish the Kingdom unto Israel?" Jesus answered them that the establishment of this Kingdom was not a matter of times and seasons, that power (designated the Kingdom of Israel) was the power of the *Inner Spirit*, by this they would be able to bear testimony to his work among them, and carry that testimony wherever they may go, even if they went to the uttermost parts of the earth. Hence we find Peter emphasizing the same central teaching of these Scriptures. It was indeed the old teaching of the Jewish Scriptures. The spirit of God will be poured out and will indwell in all men (not poured out in any visible form, of course, for Spirit is not material); and there shall be significant signs, "your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, &c.;" "and it shall be that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord (shall realise the Spirit within) shall be

saved." For this Spirit, the Lord, is "always before my face.....I should not be moved.....my flesh also shall dwell in hope." For neither is the Christ left unto Hades nor did his flesh see corruption (II, 31). This is the substance of Peter's teachings.

Peter also, as did Jesus, exhorted all to rise above their intellectual selves (*metanocile*), "and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." The "baptism" enjoined is, of course, not water-baptism, which certainly cannot "wash away sin"; nor does it accord with the spiritual level of the teaching. It is that Spiritual purification to which when one attains he passes a stage when lower things (sin) have no power to draw him down.

"And with many other words he testified and exhorted them saying save yourselves from this crooked generation."

Then there is given the illustration of the man "lame from his mother's womb," who is healed by faith in the name of Christ, "Yea the faith which is through him (that is, realised through the Spirit or Christ in man) hath given him this perfect soundness." Without the right sort of *Faith* (something more than belief) there is no "soundness." Repent, that there may come seasons of refreshing from the *presence* of the Lord; and that He may send the Christ, the appointed or anointed one (III, 20). This is the true miracle of healing. "In the name of the Christ doth this man stand here before you whole. He (the Christ) is the stone, &c." We cannot be spiritually whole without the realisation of the spirit, the Christ within. "And in none other is there salvation for there is no other name (signifying nature or being) under heaven, given among men (that is, possessed by men) wherein we must be saved." That is, it is only by realising the Christ that men can attain to the fullness of their being.

In Chapter VII we have Stephen's symbolical interpretation of the religious legendary history of the Jews, showing that these contained the same "living oracles" (v. 38). "Our fathers had the tabernacle of the wilderness" which Moses made according to the model that he had seen. But their successors brought in with Joshua, for the tabernacle, a tent. David also wished to erect a material structure, and Solomon actually raised a temple. But this was not the meaning of these oracles, "the Most High dwelleth not in that which is made with hands," His is a spiritual temple to be raised in the hearts of men. This interpretation did not suit the formal and legal minds of his hearers and they stoned him to death, which was the legal punishment among the Jews for serious offences. This "speech" of Stephen's shows how large a part symbolism plays in these scriptures.

In Chapter VIII we read of Philip's doings. He went down into Samaria and there "proclaimed unto them the Christ" (v. 5), the same as the gospel teaching. His teaching and demonstrations are

said to have won over to him the great Simon Magus, "that power of God which is called great," who received initiation from Philip (v. 18). Later, we are told, Philip broke with Simon and denounced him (v. 18—24), but this could hardly be, for Philip would not have initiated him without satisfactory tests.

The incident of Saul in Chapter IX having no connection with the narratives of the Apostles Peter, Stephen and Philip, is clearly misplaced where it is, and so we shall omit any notice of it at present.

Chapter X gives the interesting account of the meeting of Peter with Cornelius, the pious Roman captain, establishing the truth (if it needed to be established), that "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him," a truth that Peter must have been aware of already. This ends the account regarding Peter. With the exception of this incident of Cornelius, the story of Peter really ends with Chapter V, for there is nothing after that relating to him beyond two "miracles" performed by him, these are in the style of similar ones related of Jesus. Soon after we read that he was siezed by Herod and imprisoned.

We should note here that this record of the Acts of the three Apostles named is mainly concerned with the nature of their teachings.

We cannot however leave the study of this part of the book without drawing attention to certain references by Peter relating to the personality and the manner of death of the Master, Jesus of Nazareth, which are of historical importance. In Chapter II, v. 22, Peter speaks of Jesus as "a man approved of God." This is a significant remark in view of the trend of later sentiment in regard to Jesus. The character and person of Jesus of Nazareth occupy so very large a part in the gospel narrative, indeed so completely fill the whole of its canvas, that we would expect to find the fullest particulars of his personality and his personal life in it. As a matter of fact, however, there are none at all. Hence the manner in which Peter refers to his master is significant. It shows that those who were most intimate with Jesus found nothing very extraordinary as regards his personality, he was a man says Peter. There is a further significance in the admission of these references into the narrative *viz.*, it shows that the hieratic custodians of these documents had a due sense of their responsibilities and allowed no data which might be of use to future enquirers to be lost.

The fact however remains, and it is notable, that we have practically no particulars of Jesus's personal life. None of where or when he was born, of his people, or parentage, and absolutely nothing whatever as to the manner of his death—that is, in Mark or John the

gospels that treat of his personal life. We may gather a few particulars from casual references in the course of the narrative. He was a Galilean. That Nazareth was his native village is sometimes doubted. It is said that he was a Nazirite, that is one devoted to a religious life, and that this circumstance has given rise to the connection of his name with Nazareth.

As to the date of Jesus's birth, the year B.C. 4 is popularly accepted as the date because of the statement in Matthew II, v. 1, "Jesus having been born in Bethlehem of Judea in days of Herod the King." Herod died in B.C. 4. But this birth is that of the mystical *Jesus of Bethlehem*, and the date therefore as applied to Jesus of Nazareth must be imaginary. Again, Luke, trying to be more precise, gives the birth at the time of the Census of Quirinius, and tries to show thereby how it happened that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. But this census took place in A.D. 6, that is ten years later or more than the date derived from Matthew. These popular dates have plainly no foundation. If we are to find the correct date any where it ought to be in the gospels, but here the failure is absolute. Secular history contains no record of the existence at the beginning of the present era of any such extraordinary and world-shaking personality as the Jesus of the gospel narrative is described to have been, although there were present at the time all the required conditions to ensure the perpetuation of the fact, if it was one, to all time.

We may here note what some European scholars have to say on the subject. Mr. Ralph Shirley, in one of his essays on *Early Christian Evidences*, referring to evidence from pagan writers of the first century, observes, "Of the existence of Jesus, to all appearance they know nothing." Again, he quotes the Revd. R. C. Anderson, D.D., as stating in an article in the *Hibbert Journal* that certain facts "compel the conclusion (1) that the simple Jesus of liberal (Protestant) theory did not then exist, and (2) that the creative sayings of the gospels had not then crystallised round a Jesus nucleus"—he is referring to the time of Paul. He refers to Philo a Jewish writer and contemporary of Jesus as significantly silent on the subject of Jesus. Again "another historian of the same date, Justus of Tiberias, who was presumably in Judea if not in Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion.....was equally silent," and, he adds, "the real historical evidence we have on the subject of the life of Jesus, outside the Gospel narrative, is.....of a negative character." The same author, however, tells us: "The existence of a Rabbi of the name of Jesus or Jeschu, who was born some 100 years before the alleged birth of Jesus Christ is fully established. He is the only Jesus of whom the Jewish Talmud records have any record. He appears to have been a Rabbi noted for his independence of mind and unorthodox views. At the time of the persecution of the Pharisees (104—78 B. C.).....

this Jesus appears to have fled to Egypt, and to have returned again to Palestine after the tyrant's (John Hyrcanus) death," and so on. So that if we go outside the gospels for information as to the period when Jesus lived, we get but the faintest reply, and that from the Talmud records only. And it is significant that we get a reply from where we would expect to get it if Jesus were not altogether a fictitious personality.

The above facts explain the absence from the gospels of definite information regarding the personal life of the Rabbi Jesus, *their* story would seem to be based on a tradition.

THE DEATH OF THE RABBI.

In regard to the manner of Rabbi Jesus's death—according to Tregelles's Text, Peter, in Chapter II, v. 23, alluding to Jesus's death states: "through hand of lawless ones suspending ye slew." In reference to this statement we may observe (1) that as the alleged crucifixion of Jesus was carried out under the authority of the Roman Government, after trial, it is a question, perhaps, whether it could be described as done "through hand of lawless ones."

(2) that in Tregelles's text, as well as in another, from the *Textus receptus*, both from ancient manuscripts, the word "crucified" does not occur.

Again, in chapter V, v. 30, Peter accusing the Jews says (A. V.) "Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree." In chapter X, 39, the same version, Peter speaking in the house of Cornelius, again repeats the charge, "whom they slew and hanged on a tree." These expressions are very significant. The testimony of the two latter statements is clearly to the effect that Jesus was first slain and *then* his body was suspended on a tree. We will understand this assertion if we turn to the book of Deuteronomy, the book of the Jewish Law. In chapters XIII, XVII and XXI (v. 21, 22 of the latter), we find that the legal punishment among the Jews for a capital offence was stoning and hanging on a tree. It would seem, therefore, that according to Peter's statements Jesus met his death at the hands of the Jews, and was stoned and his body hung on a tree. Moreover the gospel account itself of the trial of Jesus gives ground for believing that Jesus was not put to death by the Romans. For Pilate, it is stated, pronounced Jesus not guilty of any offence, that is, offence against Roman Law. He was accused of making himself King of the Jews, but Jesus's simple answer to this absurd charge was, if so, where are my soldiers? Roman Law was too just and too firm for us to accept the ingenuous statement that Pilate delivered Jesus over to please the Jews. Further, there are other statements in this case which go to show that Pilate could not have given his consent to the execution of Jesus—Have thou nothing to do with that righteous

man," and more. So it appears that Jesus was killed by the Jews, and suffered the Jewish punishment, that he was put to death by order of the Roman Government is out of the question.

The crucifixion story in the Gospel, as we saw, relates to the mystical crucifixion of *the Christ*, and has nothing to do with the end of Jesus of Nazareth. An undiscerning confusion of ideas has identified it with the latter.

It is popularly explained that "the accursed tree," a Jewish *Anathima*, a sort of technical expression in Theology, meant the cross. But it could not be so. Crucifixion was to the Jews a foreign mode of punishment, and it was, of course, possible that a good Jew might be subjected, through violence, to such a death. Even if so why should he be held *accursed*? It did not come within the terms of Jewish *legal* phraseology. The Jewish hanging on a tree was a *legal* punishment, and hence a person who suffered such punishment was *legally* "accursed." There could be no "curse," that is, moral stigma, in the Jewish sense, attached to death by the cross, which did not come within the terms of their legal penalties. Hence we may take the above expression, when applied to Jesus, as evidence in favour of the belief that he really suffered the penalty of the Jewish curse. The great master was stoned to death by his own people at last, as they several times threatened to do, and his body was suspended from a tree. Otherwise, there is no explanation for the statements of Peter as recorded in Acts. This book therefore gives us the melancholy satisfaction of knowing the unhappy end of Jesus. In any case we may say, "he died for the sins of the people."

Of John, the pure exponent of heavenly light and love, the Acts do not tell us more than that he worked with Peter.

The accounts of the early Apostles are naturally very meagre, nothing more than suggestions of the character of their teaching as perhaps traditionally handed down. But they have preserved for us, as we have seen, two interesting and important traditions, lost in the glamour of the Gospel story, thus rounding off the historical element in the latter. These traditions are the reference of Peter to the man Jesus, and that relating to the manner of his death.

PAUL.

When we come to the record of Paul, we meet with a few historical associations, so we will begin the study of the story of that Apostle by picking up a few of these trails to help us on our way,

I. There appears to have been an interval of time between Peter and Stephen. The followers of the Apostles had multiplied greatly and had organised themselves into a body, called the "Assembly of the Called-out" (translated "church"), under chosen

leaders of whom Stephen was the chief. This Apostolic body must have included members of varying degrees of inward fitness for spiritual instruction, but there must have been some kind of selection to justify the expression, "the Called-out." Stephen himself was "full of grace and power," and his opponents among the orthodox Jews "were not able to withstand the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke." He was soon put an end to by the Jews, having been stoned to death like the Master, and the disciples were scattered abroad through Judea and Samaria. This persecution we read did not affect the Apostles, a statement which would seem to mean that it did not occur in their time, hence the supposition that there was an interval between the times of Peter and Stephen.

II. In chapter XI (v. 20) we read that some members of the party "travelled as far as Phœnicea and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the Word to none save only to Jews."

III. Next, there appears another body on the scene. "There were some of them...who...spoke unto the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus."

It does not follow that this body was of the same party as that first mentioned, which was the Apostolic party, or even that it was established at the same time at Antioch. Further, the expressions used in connection with each will be found to differentiate between them. The Apostolic party *spoke the Word*. That is, they taught on the doctrine of *the Word* or *Logos* or *Christ*—the Divine in man; and they confined their activities to Jews. They were a cultured body, disseminating the spiritual philosophy of Judaism among their own cultured people.

The others were a mixed or popular body including all classes of people, and their system was a system of imparting instruction by word of mouth, they *preached* (spoke of) the Lord Jesus. They were most probably members of a *Cult* of "Jesus" transplanted from Alexandria.

Thus, the Apostolic party was a *Teaching* party, the other a *Preaching* one.

This accentuation of the distinction between the two bodies is essential, because from this point of the narrative, that is, beginning with the account of Paul, the leading personages and the doctrines of the two systems are so ingeniously blended together in the text, as to entirely obscure and altogether nullify the essential difference that exists between them, in the eyes of the ordinary student. The cultured student however will be able to pick his way through the tangle. The distinction between the systems then is, *the Apostolic teaching implied a high culture, leading to a development of the higher consciousness*. The other was an imparting of popular legends, as the basis of a religious belief.

SAUL

The episode of Saul is in reality an isolated one as regards the proper subject-matter of this book; but his personality is so persistently thrust forward into the narrative of Paul, that it must be taken in hand before we begin with that study.

At first Saul was a very pronounced orthodox Jew, bitterly antagonistic to the new sects springing up among his nation. He evidently had no sympathy or part with the stand-point of his compatriot the learned and honored Pharisee, Gamaliel,* a doctor of the Law, whose advice to the Jews in regard to one of these movements was, "Refrain from these men, and let them aloneif this work be of men it will be overthrown, etc." (Chapter V, v. 38). But Saul was for immediate suppression and total eradication by violence. Suddenly however there is a change in his attitude, owing, it is said, to a strange experience that had happened to him as he was journeying on one of his missions of destruction, and he forthwith became himself a member of one of the sects. He must have been a man of a very demonstrative nature, for he immediately turned upon the Jews, he "confounded the Jews at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ," he "preached boldly in the name of Jesus," "he spoke and disputed against the Grecian Jews." These statements show that he must have gone over to some sect of the Jesus cult. This is confirmed by chapter XI, v. 25, 26, where we read that he was brought by Barnabas, from Tarsus, which was his native place, to Antioch where a body of the same cult had established itself (v. 20) "preaching the Lord Jesus" (already referred to).

This ends the episode of Saul. Why he should come into a narrative of the doings of the apostolic party will be evident shortly. Meanwhile we may notice, in passing, a statement of much historical importance in reference to this sect of the cult of Jesus. We read in v. 26 that the members of the cult became known later as *Christianie*, that is, followers or worshippers of a *Christos* (good man). For the Jesus of the cult represented that ideal; he was the "good man," who subsequently, after many trials, became, a "Son of God." Popularly the term is rendered *Christianoi*, followers of *Christ*, which must be incorrect, for since the *Christ* belief is at the basis of all religious philosophy, it is impossible to imagine that people who expressed the spiritual idea under that term (that is, people of Greek culture) could specially designate any belief or any section of a belief by such a title. Dr. J. B. Mitchell,† *Christos*, 1880, p. 12, says: 'careful search through the Christian inscriptions, numbering 1287, in the fourth vol. of Boeckh's C. I. 1877, fails to discover a single instance of earlier date than the third century wherein the word is not written

* It would appear that he was *Paul's* teacher (Chapter XXII).

† Quoted in "*Antiqua Mater: A study of Christian origins.*"

Chr'ist or Chreist.' And the author of *Antique mater* writes: "The conclusion seems probable that.....the worshippers of Christos were themselves designated the 'Chreistoi,' and that the Romans corrupted the name.....into *Christianoi*." And in another place: "the latter form (*Chreistianoi*) survives in the French *Chrestiens*."

Lastly, we may ask, in view of the statement in the above extract from Dr. Mitchell, was Acts written or re-written later than A.D. 300?

In the story of Paul we tread on something like historic ground. The story begins at Chap. XIII. We find that he is a member of the "Assembly of the Called-out" or chosen, v. 1, 2, that is of the Apostolic party. He is specially delegated to *proclaim the Word of God* abroad (v. 5). He proceeds to Cyprus.

But now there is a curious transformation. Just before the departure from Cyprus *Saul* (under which name the incidents begin) suddenly merges into *Paul* (v. 9). There is no explanation as to how or why the one name is changed into the other. And, indeed, for such an important change, the introduction of it is strangely abrupt, a mere casual mention in the course of a tremendous miracle, such a miracle, moreover, as Paul never afterwards performed. Was the glamour of the miracle intended as a shroud to cloak the covert insertion of the insignificant parenthesis *O kai Paulos* (*also the Paul*)?

It is significant also of the puzzle here presented, that our translators stumble very much over this parenthesis. Here are renderings from five different versions of the New Testament:

A. V. : "Who also (is called) Paul"

Am : R. V. : "Who is also (called) Paul"

Weymouth : "Who is also called Paul"

Tregelles's Text, Rotherham (intended for Greek students):

"Who (became) Paul also."

Twentieth century N. T. : "Who is the same as Paul."

The first two insert the word "called," which shows that it is not to be found in the original.

Weymouth does not seem to care to enlighten, and tells us, what the text does not, that is, that Saul was called Paul.

Rotherham's "became" is not in the original and is inserted by him.

The Twentieth Century N. T.'s reading is to the effect that an identification of Saul with Paul is intended.

But how is such identification established by this parenthesis? There is no identification by *name*, for that is not the sense of the parenthesis as all the above versions show.

And no identification of person is possible. Because, as we know Paul is stated to be a member of the Apostolic body, while Saul belonged to the *Christianoi*. So Paul of Damascus is not to be identified with Saul of Tarsus. The attempted identification we can only believe to be the work of a member of the *Christianoi*, anxious to transfer the honours of Paul's name to an Elder or leader of his own body. The name of Paul was famous no doubt. Rotherham in the introduction to his translation of the N. T. explains very clearly the uses of the Greek Article *O (the)*, which it will be of use to us to note. He says: "The Greek Article is a sign of logical definiteness.....The Article stands for or represents a definiteness already known or assumed." The Italics are his. So *O Kai Pauls* points to a known Paul, and it was this great person whose identity it was attempted to merge into that of a leader of another party, into whose hands the documents had come. The original documents, such as they may have been, must have been connected with the doings of Paul among the Apostolic body. The *Christianoi* very evidently desired the honours of his name to go down to posterity linked with that of one of their own great men, thus leaving to after ages a complex character as well as doctrinal puzzles to be dealt with by commentator on the text and biographers of the great Apostle. How this complicates the text we shall see as we go on.

We must therefore eliminate the name of Saul from all connection with that of Paul. And, indeed, there would seem to be no reason why the account of the establishment of the *Christianoi* body at Antioch and the episode of Saul should have been introduced into the narrative at all, since they have no connection whatever with the doings of the Apostolic party. We can see no reason for the insertion except it be that it was with the object of bringing Saul upon the scene, in order to crown him with the honours of Paul. But we are able now to dissociate Saul from Paul and to follow the course of the latter as narrated in the rest of the book. We must be prepared however for a confusion of narratives and teachings owing to the substitution already effected of Saul's personality for Paul's.

(To be continued).

A CALL TO SUPPORT A NOBLE CAUSE.

Education on national lines is a subject engaging the attention of the best brains of the country. And by consensus of opinion it has been settled as an ultimate fact, that besides being the means of inculcating the highest ideals and principles of life and conduct education should be such as to enable boys and girls to meet successfully the various new social and economic problems which are likely to confront them on the practical field of their daily existence by bringing into expression the infinite power that is within every one of them. The Vedas enjoin that man is no less than the Deity Himself—the store-house of infinite knowledge and bliss, and whatsoever helps him to realise and live up to that ideal nature of his own, is education. Or in other words, it is the process to remove the barriers that hinder the flow of the infinite light and power which form the real nature of every man and woman alike. Thus the goal of educational systems all over the world remaining always the same, each nation will have to find out for itself the process that would suit best its past ideals and traditions to bring into fruition the objects stated above. It does not follow, however, that in order to remain true to its hallowed ideals of the past, there is no room for a nation to accept in its educational system anything that may prove useful to its growth and development from any other nation. Truths should be accepted wherever we may find them. And a nation which hesitates to include in its system the great discoveries of modern science and the new methods of imparting education which have been found out of late, will find itself always the looser for it. The essential principles which we shall have to observe in accepting them, as well as anything else, from other nations, are consistency and assimilation and not mere imitation. We must accept and assimilate them in such a way that they shall move in harmony with and not be antagonistic to our national aims and ideals of the past.

The Trust Committee of the Belur Math have, with the help first, of the late Sister Nivedita and then, of the Sister Christine been conducting an educational work for girls and purdah-ladies at 17, Bose Para Lane, Calcutta, on the lines and principles mentioned above. The success that has attended their efforts in this matter, has often been brought to the notice of the public through the reports issued of the work. The institution has been offering free education to children and purdah-women for about the last fifteen years. Counting roughly the number of unmarried and married girls entering the school annually to be fifty and twenty respectively, it will be found that the work has helped to educate more than 700 girls of the former and 800 of the latter class during the period. While the number of indigent purdah-women trained by it to earn their own livelihood by teaching, sewing, fine needle-work, etc., has been no less than 200 during the time. The Kindergarten system, we trust,

was introduced in its children's department long before the use of the same by any other school in Calcutta. A purdah-lady student of the school joined the Lady Dufferin Hospital in Calcutta on the recommendation of the late Vicerine Lady Minto, who was most gracious to visit the school on several occasions—and after attending the studies and practical training-work there for more than three years, has earned the diploma of a trained nurse and midwife. Several students of the school have begun their career as school-mistresses elsewhere; others have consecrated their lives to the cause of spreading education among purdah-women by entering into the teaching-staff of the school itself; while others still, have made the resolve of founding similar institutions in different parts of the country.

The work has thus proved its unique usefulness in various ways, surely but silently; and the time has come for the public to stretch its generous hand for its support and safe continuance in future by removing its pressing needs. The Trust Committee of the Belur Math are trying at present to secure a suitable plot of land measuring about 18 cattahs, in the Nivedita Lane, Baghbazar, and raise a building on the same for the permanent location of the work. The land itself will cost about Rs. 29,000 and it need not be said that the building to be raised will cost no less. We send out this earnest appeal, therefore, to our generous countrymen, to come forward to help the noble institution. The valuable life of the Sister Nivedita who had identified herself so completely with India and her people, has been sacrificed at the altar of this temple of education. Another noble lady whose life is none the less valuable and useful to the cause of poor India, the Sister Christine, has been giving her heart's blood, drop by drop, to rally an earnest band of consecrated lives around that altar for the last fifteen years. Many a noble daughter of India have come forward unreservedly in response to the call. It behoves now on us, dear friends, brothers and countrymen, to come forward to help them cordially, to secure the permanent continuance of the noble work in a habitation of its own. Remember always what the Swami Vivekananda said about the solution of the women question in India—"It is not for us, men, to dictate and chalk out hard and fast plans for the amelioration of women's condition but help them to get a fair education as was the custom in the Vedic ages. Do that and leave unto women the task of solving their own problems."

BRAHMANANDA,
President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

N. B.—Contributions, however small, towards the Land and Building-Fund of the Vivekananda Women's Work and the Nivedita Girl's School, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by (1) the President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Belur, Howrah and (2) Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Upbodhan Office, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

THE RAMAKKISHNA MISSION RELIEF WORK DURING THE FLOOD AND FAMINE IN BENGAL, ASSAM AND THE UNITED PROVINCES.

(*A Report for 1915-16.*)

The Mission has published a full report of its Relief Work during the famine and flood that devastated a very large area of Bengal, Orissa and some districts of the United Provinces in the years 1915-16. It is not possible to do full justice to the report in a short review like this. The magnitude of the relief work can well be gauged by the fact that during the short period, the Mission spent as much as Rs. 82,702-11-3 and it could carry out the same only through the full-hearted support of the generous people of the land. We give below a short summary of the Relief Work carried out during the period as reported:—

Under the first section of the work viz., Famine and Flood Relief in East Bengal and Assam (June to November 1915) the Mission had to grapple with:

(i) Famine in Noakhali and South Tippera (June—July 1915), in which it distributed 224 mds. 29 srs. 8 ch. of rice to over 10,000 needy people, besides clothes and a small pecuniary help.

(ii) Flood in North Tippera and Cachar (July to Sept. 1915), in which 1515 mds. 81 srs. of rice were distributed among a maximum of about 7000 famished people, besides clothes and a pecuniary relief of Rs. 596-1-6.

(iii) Famine Relief at Kotalipara, District Faridpur (Sept.—Oct. 1915), and at Duptara, District Dacca, through trusted agents, in which, respectively, Rs. 400 and Rs. 25 were spent.

(iv) Famine at Rajnagar, District Mymensing (Nov. 1915), in which the workers distributed 64 mds. 20 srs. of rice, and Rs. 9-14-0 in cash.

The next important section of the work was the relief of Distress and Famine brought on by drought, which is divided into the following heads:—

(i) Famine in the Balasore District in Orissa (Sept.—Nov. 1915), in which the Mission distributed 188 mds. of rice, and a small sum in cash.

(ii) Famine and other reliefs in the Bankura District. Chief of these was Famine Relief Work on a big scale (Sept. 1915 to Sept. 1916), in which the Mission had to distribute in thirteen months no less than 8915 mds. 4srs. of rice, 150 mds. 2 srs. 8 ch. of seeds, Rs. 147-8-9 in

MUNDAKA-UPANISHAD.

ओं भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः

भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।

स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवाꣳसस्तनूभिः ।

व्यङ्ग्येभ्यो देवहितं यदायुः ॥

ओं शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om ! with our ears what is auspicious may we hear, O gods ! with our eyes may we see what is auspicious, O ye worshipful ones ! May we who sing praise (to ye) enjoy the life allotted to us by the gods with strong limbs and body. Peace ! Peace ! Peace !

FIRST MUNDAKA.

FIRST CHAPTER.

॥ ओं ॥ ब्रह्मा देवानां प्रथमः संबभूव

विश्वस्य कर्ता भूवनस्य गोप्ता ।

स ब्रह्मविद्यां सर्वविद्यामतिष्ठा-

मथर्वाय ज्येष्ठपुत्राय प्राह ॥ १ ॥

विश्वस्य of the universe कर्ता the maker भूवनस्य of the worlds गोप्ता protector ब्रह्मा the Brahma देवानां of the gods प्रथमः first (before) संबभूव was. सः he सर्वविद्यामतिष्ठां the basis of all knowledge ब्रह्मविद्यां the knowledge of Brahman ज्येष्ठपुत्राय to his eldest son मथर्वाय to Atharva प्राह told.

Brahma, the maker of the universe, the protector of the world, came into being first before all the gods. He told his eldest son, Atharvan, the knowledge of Brahman, the basis of all knowledge.

[The basis of all knowledge—The knowledge of the Supreme Brahman is called here as the fundamental knowledge, since from it derives every other knowledge its proper colour and significance. Its import will be made clear in the third and subsequent verses.]

अथर्वणे यां प्रवदेत ब्रह्मा-

वर्वा तां पुरोवाचाग्निरे ब्रह्मविद्याम् ।

स भारद्वाजाय सत्यवहाय प्राह

भारद्वाजोऽग्निरसे परावसम् २ ॥

ब्रह्मा Brahma अथर्वणे to Atharvan यां what प्रवदेत told, अथर्वणे Atharvan पुरा formerly तां ब्रह्मविद्याम् that knowledge of Brahman अग्निरे to Angira ब्रह्मा said. सः he (Angira) भारद्वाजाय of the Bharadwaja Gotra सत्यवहाय to Satyavaha प्राह told. भारद्वाजः the Bharadwaja (Satyavaha) परावर्तं that (knowledge) got from the superior sources in succession, or the supreme (knowledge) अग्निरसे to Angiras (प्राह said).

What Brahma had told to Atharvan, he told first that knowledge of Brahman to Angiras. Angiras (in turn) told it to Bharadwaja Satyavaha, who again told Angiras that (knowledge thus got) from the superior sources in succession.

[Note—The first two mantrams clearly testify that the knowledge of Brahman has been transmitted to the human society by Brahma himself through a superior chain of *guru parampara*—a worthy succession of teachers and disciples. Hence it should not be taken as one of human origine and so liable to defect owing to human imperfections.]

शौनको ह वै महाशालोऽग्निरसे विधिवदुपसन्नः पप्रच्छ ।

कस्मिन् भगवो विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवतीति ॥ ३ ॥

महाशालः the great householder शौनकः the son of Sunaka विधिवद् Properly, according to the shastraic injunctions उपसन्नः having approached अग्निरसे Angiras पप्रच्छ asked, तु well, भगवः Sir, कस्मिन् what विज्ञाते being known सर्वं all विज्ञातं known भवति becomes.

Shounaka, the great householder, having approached Angiras properly, asked him, "Well Sir, what being known, all becomes known?"

[What being known, etc.—Evidently the questioner wanted to know the First Principle of the whole creation, since its knowledge alone can explain all things, even as the knowledge of a clod of earth makes us know the substance of all possible modifications of earth.]

stands up and sings—"Dear, how far is the forest where resides my beloved Syamasundara,—lo, I am too tired to walk any more!"—While singing in the Bhava of Radha, the Master falls into Samadhi,—is standing erect, motionless, like a picture,—only tears of ecstasy trickling down the two corners of his eyes!

Kedar kneels down touching the feet of the Master and is chanting the hymn :—

इदं यकमक्षमये निर्विशेषं निरीहं
हरिहरविधिवेद्यं योगिमिध्वानगम्यम् ।
जननमरश्चभीतिभ्रंशि सच्चिस्वरूपं
सकलभूतनवीजं ब्रह्मैतन्मयीडे ॥

[We worship the great Intelligence who is equanimous, pure, residing within the lotus of the heart, the object of knowledge even for Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva, attainable by the Yogins through meditation, the destroyer of the fear of birth and death, the seed of all worlds, the One whose real nature is existence and intelligence (absolute)].

After a while Sri Ramakrishna comes down to his normal consciousness.

Kedar has come to Dakshineswar on his way from his home at Halisahar to his place of business in Calcutta. So taking a little rest and seeing the Master he goes away.

Thus forenoon is passed in conversation with the devotees. Srijukta Ramalal (Master's nephew) then brings in a dish some *prasad* of the Divine Mother Kali for the Master and spreads it before a seat; the Master sits there and takes the *prasad*. Even his eating is like that of a child. He puts into his mouth a little quantity of everything. After the meal he goes and sits on his little cot and rests a while.

It is now 3 o'clock in the afternoon, some Marwari devotees have come and seated themselves on the floor of the room; there are also M., Rakhal and other devotees inside.

A Marwari devotee : "Sir, what is the way?"

Sri Ramakrishna : "There are two paths,—one is of *Vichara* (self-discrimination), and the other of devotion (Bhakti). The discrimination of the *real* from the *non-real*—God alone is the real, the eternal, and all else is non-real and non-eternal. The juggler alone is real, and not his jugglery. This is called the path of discrimination.

Viveka and Vairagya. Viveka means this sifting of the real from the non-real. And Vairagya means dispassion towards objects of the world. This does not come all on a sudden, it has to be practised daily. Kamini and Kanchana have to be renounced first mentally,—then subsequently, God willing, they should be renounced internally as well as externally. It is not possible to say to the people of Calcutta that everything should be renounced completely for the Lord,—so I tell them, "First renounce mentally."

"By Abhyasa Yoga (continuous practice of meditation) the dispassion for Kamini and Kanchana is awakened, so has it been said also in the Gita. Continuous practice brings an extraordinary power to the mind; then none feels any difficulty in subjugating the senses, passion and lust. It is like a tortoise that never extends its limbs, once it has drawn them in. Even if you cut it into pieces, it would never extend them."

The devotee : "Sir, you spoke just now of two paths, what is the other path?"

Sri Ramakrishna : "The other is the path of Bhakti or extreme devotion to God. Weep, cry for Him, in solitude and secretly,—cry for His revelation. 'Let thee cry, O mind, the proper cry and then see if Shyama could remain without appearing.'"

The devotee : "Sir, what is the significance of the worship of God with form, and what is the meaning again of the formless, the Absolute?"

Sri Ramakrishna : "As the photograph of your father reminds you of him, so the worship of the image awakens in us in course of time the true form of God.

"Do you know what this *Sakara* of God is like? It is like the rising of bubbles on a sheet of water. It can be actually seen that the different forms are rising from the *Chidakasa*. The divine incarnation is one of the forms. The *Avalara Leela* is also a play of the same Primal Energy. (*Adyasakti*).

"What is there after all in dry scholarship! He is attained quickly, if only one pants for Him. There is no need of knowing many things.

"He who is a teacher has to know many things. You require sword and shield, if you want to kill others; but to kill your own self, a needle or a small knife is sufficient.

"When we proceed to realise our real being we get *Him* only as the last result of our analysis. What is my being—is it the flesh, or the bones, or blood, or marrow,—or the mind or intellect? The ultimate analysis reveals that I am none of these. "*Neti, Neti*" (not this, not this). The Atman cannot be perceived nor touched. He is attributeless, absolute.

"But according to the doctrine of Bhakti, He is full of blessed attributes. *Chinmaya Shyama, Chinmaya Dhama* *—all are made of Chit."

The Marwaree devotees after prostrating before the Master take their leave and go away.

It has become evening now and Sri Ramakrishna is looking at the Ganges. The lamps being lighted in the room, he returns and sits on his little cot, and abandons himself to the thought of the Divine Mother.

THE SIVANANDA LAHARI.

Intense longing for God is the one indispensable element of all forms of *Sadhana*. In Bhaktiyoga it is nearly all the *Sadhana* that is required. It is this longing that leads to realisation which is the end of yoga.

This intense longing is often felt by some, but the difficulty is that it is not persistent. It has therefore to be cultivated. It can be cultivated by contagion, by contact with the minds of those who have expressed it in immortal verse. The poetry of Bhakti is full of this intensity of longing and the Bhakta has always at hand a never failing source of inspiration, in such poetry, to which he can resort for renewing his flagging zeal. The singer of the Sivananda Lahari has recognized it. In one of its verses the author gives expression to his joy in the fact that his Bhakti cannot but grow in strength and ultimately lead to realisation so long as the utterances of the Bhaktas of the past are available for study and meditation. The verse may be rendered somewhat as follows: "Oh Lord of All, what fear have I of spiritual starvation so long as the nectar of Thy glory is accessible to Thy servant, in the shape of the poetry that has been uttered by great Bhaktas. That nectar is like an inexhaustible ocean. Intellect serves as the pump and language as the vessel for lifting it. And poetic genius serves as a channel

* God is spirit and His abode also is spiritual i.e., constituted of spirit only.

for its flow. Thus watered with life-giving thoughts and emotions, the soil of the human heart is endowed with a glorious harvest of fruitful Bhakti." The study and constant meditation of such sacred poetry cannot therefore be exaggerated.

The Sivananda Lahari is one of the loveliest hymns and is hence invaluable for the culture of Bhakti. The subject of this poem is Bhakti, which is the highest Love, the love that exalts the soul and finally merges it into God. Its title shows that Siva, the Blissful, the Ideal, is the source of endless Bliss, *Ananda*, to His devotees. The object of the poem is therefore to prove the Blissfulness of Bhakti, all along, that is, from the very beginning up to its culmination in *mukti*, which is the same as *sayujya*.

This Bhakti is not a modern conception at all. It is at least as old as the Vedas. To give but one instance, the evening Sandhya Upasthana Mantra which is addressed to the Lord under the name of *Varuna*, concludes with the beautiful words "अथा ते स्वाम वरुण प्रियासः." The whole is a prayer for forgiveness of sins and the conclusion shows that forgiveness is prayed for in order to become *dear to the Lord*. Life would not be worth living if the bond of Love between man and God cannot be intensified from day to day so that the heart of man should become His chosen abode.

The practical uselessness of all other means to salvation, such as knowledge, modes of life and even renunciation, if they are unsustained by Bhakti, is the first theme of the poet.

I shall first expand the substance of the verse which brings out the impotence of mere dry knowledge, by the one test to which all human perfection is subjected, the test of death. It would be somewhat as follows:

It is vain for men to spend all their time in learning logic and other sciences, which do not teach men how to conquer Death, which comes to all alike, the weary and the afflicted who are waiting for release, and the brutified automatons of worldly success. It is true that human knowledge is useful in a way. But its usefulness is extremely limited. It has no use at all beyond the scope of this life and even there it is not useful all round. No balm has yet been discovered by scientists or medical men or even by philosophers for the healing of a broken heart, and to this day, Shakespeare's question, "who can minister to a mind diseased," remains unanswered. How then can halting human knowledge help us to unravel the mysteries of Life and Death? No one thinks seriously

that it can. Yet so strong is the spell of this world on average minds that very few men indeed are able to remember it in time to profit by it. Pandits of all sorts, who nourish an utterly false pride on the remains of an ill-digested stock of knowledge are a very common spectacle. Very few have the sense to prepare for the inevitable.

All through life we may pass big with the pride of scholarship that revels only in logical subtlety, and spinning out mellifluous phrases, but betrays the deep abyss of ignorance of the soul when that flimsy cover of verbiage is pierced ; for there awaits the appointed End. There comes a time when we are rudely shaken up and bidden to prepare for a terrible leap. We come face to face with that power called Death whom we regard with dread because of our allegiance to falsehoods and vanities. And when our eyes are opened to the true worth of all kinds of worldly knowledge, at that dead hour, the logician becomes the mere man, trembles at the thought of leaving all his dear world of joys, quakes with terror at the possibilities of the unknown hereafter, becomes a prey to the harrowing agonies of the dissolution of the body, unsustained by any comforting thought. Thus falls he like a victim in a sacrifice, struggling, unwilling, almost lost.

Some there are always who do not wholly give themselves up to the vanities of this world and are quick to profit by every reminder that is given of the evanescence of worldly happiness. They do not put away all thoughts of Death, but boldly seek to know the worst he can bring to man and to arm themselves beforehand. They know the way through Death. And a blessed way it is, such that the radiance of it, reflected on the countenance of clay, is enough assurance for the weeping ones near the scene of Death that he for whom they would grieve has become *अज्ञेय* one for whom grieving would be unnecessary, even wrong. That way can be trodden only by Bhaktas, who even during earthly life have not forgotten their life eternal in God, and have thus secured in Him a powerful friend and protector, a guide through this valley of the shadow of Death. Such a one at the point of death is like a sacrificer, while that part of him which is earthly and ripe for dissolution, the gross body, with all its hopes and belongings, is as it were the oblation which he is going to offer up to the Lord who gave him all that. He reposes in the truth and cheerfully resigns his present life for the sake of a better life to come, knowing that all this is no permanent part of him and hence feeling no regret. To the Bhakta the Lord is all in all and he can lose nothing while the Lord is his to love.

Hence blissful, if not ecstatic, is the death of him who had sought the Lord *in time*, while an irredeemable sadness haunts the death bed of a worldly man. To earn that peace of mind, that unvarying trust in the Lord which would bridge the gulf that is, this is the one thing needful to do on this side of Death. Is it not therefore sheer waste of energy, to learn only those things that serve to deepen our consciousness of the earth and the earthly, and obscure our vision of the Beyond. Nay, more ; it becomes even mischievous, if the mind is not carefully regulated, since it regularly helps to swell one's vanity and to produce a disastrous self-complacency, ruinous in that it blinds one to matter of great moment. The time and labour devoted to mere learning is at the best an extravagant profusion in regard to merely subordinate things.

And if one fails to learn this lesson *when one is hale and hearty*, will one ever be vouchsafed another chance in this life ? Remember the forcible words of the great yogi, Bhatrihari.

यावत् स्वस्वमिदं शरीरं अरुजं यावच्चदरे जरा
यावच्चेन्द्रियशक्तिरप्रतिहता यावत् ह्ययो नायुवः ।
आत्मश्रेयसि तावदेव कृतिना कार्यः प्रयत्नो महान्
संदीप्ते भवने तु कृपस्वननं प्रत्युद्यमः कीदृशः ॥

People who postpone the search for God and the fostering of love for Him to the days of their dotage are as wise as the man who postpones the digging of a well until his house is actually in flames.

Early should one begin to practise Bhakti, and strenuously should one proceed on the path, that when the Lord comes, he may be found ready. Early should man strive to find the peculiar joy of that love and the unspeakable happiness of doing the will of the Lord. For that is the one way to subdue the terrors of Death, to make of him a friend, and to insure the soul for the great voyage beyond, in the unknown realms of after-Death. If one should pin one's faith on this world and occupy himself with the fleeting things of this life, and pay no heed to one's eternal interests, can one make up for it at that dread hour ? Can one escape the deep convulsive woe that life's remorseful retrospect must cause ?

But how then to seek the Lord ? How to make Him our Friend, to become beloved of Him ? There is the rub. It is partly because people think it easy, that they coolly postpone this duty which they owe to their own selves, to almost all their mundane interests. It is easy to say, ' Love the Lord, reverence Him, glorify Him.' But it rests with the heart, that creature of caprice, to do it. People who have passably good hearts and who do sometimes

find them responsive to godward thrills, when they try of their own accord to reproduce those heavenly experiences, find it to their cost how hard it is. The thing is, the heart is rare, which freely and promptly responds to godward thoughts. Ordinary hearts have to be disciplined and cultured that they may sometime become wholly pure and attuned to the love of God. And the methods that sages have prescribed for this culture of the heart may be scrupulously practised for years without any real progress, if the heart does not respond. Adoration must be heart-felt; else it will be empty and vain. Men may want to pray to the Lord for purity of heart, for unselfish love and for clear spiritual vision. But if the heart keeps saying, (in an aside, as it were), "no, not now, not so soon. A few good things of this world first and God after" where is the good? Thus is man handicapped at the very outset by his selfish and sinful past life, and if he is not in earnest, he falls a prey to superstition, and imagines that he is making great progress in spirituality because he is making daily puja in a way. This is his compromise between his unreadiness for the love of God and his feeling that he must be doing something. He glorifies the dead forms of worship and forgets the spirit that giveth life. He becomes an Archbishop Land or a Kumarila Bhatta, and finds too late that he had been but a blind man leading the blind. The last named was a great persecutor of the Bouddhas. But he atoned for it by a terrible penance. He resolved to suffer in his own person the same agony that he had inflicted on innocent men and caused his body to be encased with cow-dung and when it was all dry, he commanded that it be ignited at the toes. The sacred fire travelled slowly, and the heroic saint bore it till it reached the trunk and then he became unconscious. His disciples revived him just a little to let him greet the new-risen Sankara Bhagavat Pāda who came to worship him, and thereafter he passed away as he lay. Such a woeful thing is superstition. It is simply worldliness, which killed in its patent form by a mere intellectual adhesion to the teachings of the religion of Love, assumes a latent form, further to persecute and mislead men. Where superstition takes root, there is no harmony between the head and the heart. The head is but the workshop of the soul, the heart its home in the body and both must intercommunicate for a healthy spiritual life.

The awakened soul of the Bhakta finds his worst foe in himself, in that apathy of the heart, which, undetected, breeds superstition and meaningless ceremonial.

(To be continued).

THE SAINT DURGACHARAN NAG.*

I.

INTRODUCTION.

Struggle for existence, nay more correctly, for the Ideal, is the common lot of all. Becoming is the purpose of the cosmic process, and the Law operates for the destiny in the different stages of Human Evolution. Yet, it is not given to all to understand the move of Life, or have a clear comprehension of the Ideal. The average man is a drift onward unconscious of the opposite shore. But blessed is the person who can decipher the meaning of life and interpret the Ideal in the terms of his own conduct. Such a man is the salt of the society, a beacon light to his species. In the glow of his life others read the ideal. All principal nations of the world have produced, more or less, such souls; their life-efforts have raised the nations towards the realisation of the Ideal, and constitute the true history of the forward march of the nations. That nation is the most advanced, in the true sense of the term, whose heart is prolific with a wealth of such souls, and whose constituent elements are made convergent with a conscious love for the Ideal.

"Hear, ye all, sons of immortality, even those that reside in the shining spheres; I have realised the Supreme Being of solar effulgence, beyond all darkness; knowing Him alone one can attain immortality. There is no other Path,"—thus proclaims the Vedic sage for all time, the Ideal and purpose of life. The soul which has lost its heritage of immortality, is struggling hard through sunshine and rain to retrieve its lost treasure, and by the law of his being, he cannot stop until he gains it.

But of all nations of the world, India has been peculiarly blessed in possessing an abundance of such godly souls whose lustre shines like a heavenly galaxy emerging from the dim nook of the bygone ages and ever spreading on, on the footsteps of time. The darkest days of her history, she deems, were not those that were rendered somber by the economical crises or political stagnation, but those that were not illumined by the sacred lives of such godly souls.

* Mainly adapted from *Sadhū Nagmahasaya* by Sarat chandra Chakravarti in Bengali.

The nineteenth century, in spite of all vicissitudes that clogged her material progress, has witnessed an unparalleled efflorescence of the spiritual being of India in the appearance of a host of godly men of the very first magnitude, whose lives and teachings have won an abiding victory for the cause of spirituality over the rank materialistic rationalism. And the brightest luminary of the galaxy, history designates in the person of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. His advent has set up a new epoch of national life in India and has unloosened a mass of spiritualising energy for the whole world. But, as a big wave is often accompanied by a number of smaller ones to make its swell complete, or as a huge fire sends out its burning sparks as if to augment its glow, even so Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna gave to the world a set of disciples the lives of many of whom have already become a matter of History now occupying a permanent place in its pages, with their Master. But still there were some of these disciples who led their glorious lives beyond the gaze of the wide world and aglowd their immediate surroundings with intense spiritual fervour; and it is the purpose of the present writing to present our readers with a life-sketch of one of these glorious spiritual sons of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. His life affords us a burning example how a life of sannyasa and supreme spirituality can be lived even in the midst of the society and worldly environments.

II.

BIRTH AND BOYHOOD.

Whose biography is the subject of the following sketch, of him the great Swami Vivekananda used to say, "I have travelled far into different parts of the globe, but nowhere I could meet a great soul like Nagmahasaya."

There is a small village, Deobhog by name, at a mile's distance to the west of the port Narayangunj in the Eastern Bengal where Saint Durgacharan Nag, commonly known as Nagmahasaya, was born on the 6th day of Bhadra, 1253 B.S., corresponding to 21st August, 1846 A. D. It was the first lunar day of the light fortnight. The moon was in the Leo of the Zodiac. His father's name was Dindayal, and the mother was Tripura Sundari. Dindayal's father was Prankrishna, mother Rukmini. Their original home was at Tilerdi. Deobhog has been their subsequent settlement for two or three generations. Two daughters were also born to Prankrishna besides Dindayal. Of the daughters Bhagabati the eldest became a widow at the age of nine and remained at her father's place till

her death; but nothing of any importance has been known in respect to the youngest daughter Bharati. It is said that she seldom visited her father's home and predeceased her eldest sister.

Saradamoni, the younger sister of Nagmahasaya, saw the light of the world four years after the birth of Nagmahasaya. Another daughter was born to Dindayal two years later, but the baby remained alive only for four months. Two years after the mishap, Tripura gave birth to a son. But immediately after her coming out of the confinement she succumbed to a puerperal sickness. The baby also followed its mother soon after.

Thus the mother of Nagmahasaya left this world, leaving two of her issues, a son and a daughter, in the care of her sister-in-law Bhagabati. Nagmahasaya was then eight years old and Sarada four years. After this, Dindayal did not think of marrying again. Bhagabati reared up the son and the daughter of her brother with care, and with a special partiality to Nagmahasaya. Remembering the tender affection and care of Bhagabati, Nagmahasaya used to say, "this aunt of mine must have been my mother in my prior lives."

Dindayal was always reverent to gods and Brahmins and was a devout orthodox Hindoo. He was employed on a very low pay in the firm of Messrs. Rajkumar and Hari Charan Pal Choudhuri of Kumartuli in the town of Calcutta. Dindayal had a tiled hut at Kumartuli which was used for his lodging.

Messrs. Pals did not hold Dindayal in the relation of 'master and servant.' He was reckoned as a member of their family. The proprietors had infinite faith in the pious, truthful and non-avaricious Dindayal. They never asked him to submit any account. Once there was discrepancy of a few thousands of rupees in the balance. They were certain that Dindayal did not misappropriate it. So they ordered to put down the whole of the discrepant sum to the account of sundry expenditure. About a year after this incident, the cause of the discrepancy was detected, which led to make their notion firmer than before and their faith on Dindayal thereby increased all the more. Since then Messrs. Pals used to take special care to see Dindayal earn something. Another instance of the strict non-avaricious nature of this petty officer may be cited here.

Messrs. Pals had a dealing in the export of salt, and occasionally they had to despatch the commodity by boats to Narayangunj, as those were not the days of steamer facility. The route lay through

the dense forest and was much haunted by pirates, so a brave and faithful officer was always deputed to go along with every consignment.

Once Dindayal was going with a consignment. On entering the Sunderbuns, it became quite dusk even before the boat could reach a place of safety. So Dindayal thought it not proper to proceed any further; and seeing a big dilapidated house close by and two cottages of peasants in its neighbourhood, he ordered to anchor the boat.

All the boat-men having finished their supper went to sleep. But Dindayal alone keeping a stout stick by his side, remained awake and 'smoked' away the whole night. Gradually the night wore away into the morning hours and about five o'clock Dindayal went down from the boat and walked some paces towards the dilapidated house to ease himself. Being restless by nature, in one place he began to scratch the earth with his fingers. Even after a slight scratching he felt something like a coin underneath the earth. His curiosity was heightened and he removed a lump of mud from the place and found a pot full of gold coins buried. He took out a few and found them on examination to be coins of ancient times. He put them back underneath the earth, and got himself up with all haste on to the boat, and said to the oarsmen "Look here, I have got a scent of some danger here, set sail at once." He did not allow them to stay there even a while to attend to their morning washes. Shifted to a distance of five or six miles from the place, he allowed them to anchor the boat. "At first I was avaricious of the hidden treasure," said Dindayal referring to the incident, "but at once it occurred to me that the treasure might have belonged to a Brahmin; then I should go to the eternal hell if I misappropriate the Brahmin's property." Lest the hidden treasure might tempt him again he left the place in all haste.

Of the incidents of Nagmahasaya's boyhood very little could be gathered. From his very boyhood he was sweet-tongued, well-behaved and modest. At this age the structure of his body was very elegant, and quite stout and healthy. The long curls of lock flowing down his head made him look exceedingly handsome. Being born of a poor parentage no other ornaments save two silver bangles could adorn his body. But for certain we know that few there were in the place who were not moved at the sight of that boy dowered with beauty by Nature herself, dancing about in playful mirth with his curling locks flowing on his shoulder. Whenever the ladies of the neighbourhood would see this handsome boy, they would not miss the opportunity of taking him up into their

laps and dandle him. But there was a peculiar trait in the character of the boy, if any one would offer him anything to eat, he sternly refused it.

In the evening the serene child would cast up his eyes towards the starry firmament and remain long alone gazing at those twinkling specks overhead. "Dear mamma" the boy would sometimes fondly say to his aunt, "Let us go to those realms, I don't feel well to be here." When the moon was up, the boy used to clap his tiny hands and dance in joy. When the trees rustled and moved to and fro by the wind, the boy thought that they were calling him, and he used to say to his aunt, "Mamma, let me play with them;" and with these words he would dance with funny contortions to the imitation of the swinging trees. Seeing the charming dance of the boy the self-forgetful aunt would shower kisses of joy and love on the lovely face of her child.

The aunt was very clever in telling stories from the Puranas; she used to lull the boy to sleep by narrating the stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata. On those days when she felt much fatigued by the household work, she was not able to gratify the child with any story, but the boy could not be made to sleep any how, he would pester the aunt with his importunities; and so at last she could find her release only by telling at least a short story.

Sometimes the boy saw those very stories told by his aunt, in dreams. Sometimes seeing the figures of gods and goddesses in the dream, he woke up out of fear, but even though greatly frightened, he never would call his aunt who after the whole day's toil and labour would be sleeping soundly by his side. He used to get up and sit quietly by her side. In the morning when Nagmahasaya would relate his dreams to his aunt, she would be filled with awe and wonderment.

Like the great Prahlada of the Puranic fame, Nagmahasaya even as a child was not much addicted to plays. But to satisfy his friends he indulged into it occasionally. In play if any one lied, he would suspend all talk with him and never hold his friendship until he repented and promised he would not lie again in future. Even in his boyhood Nagmahasaya did not quarrel with any one. If there arose any dispute amongst his young playmates, Nagmahasaya taking upon himself the task of an umpire, used to decide the matter so judiciously that the parties concerned in the affair being much pleased recognised his leadership. Never would he tell a lie even in play or in joke. From his very infancy

all persons young and old were equally fascinated by his amiable disposition.

There are men still living in Deobhog who would attest with one accord that they never came across a boy so simple, so mannerly, amiable and modest as the son of Dindayal.

After the death of the mother of Nagmahasaya few years more passed away under the loving care of his aunt. With the advancement of his age his thirst for knowledge grew keener. In those days there was not so much abundance of schools as now. There was only one vernacular school in Narayangunj. Nagmahasaya commenced his study there. But he could not advance further than the third class that being the highest class of the school. Nagmahasaya was very sad to see his education checked so prematurely, and expressed an earnest desire to go to Calcutta for further prosecution of his studies to his father (Dindayal), when he came home next during the Durga Puja time. But Dindayal could not give his consent to the proposal and pleaded that with a small income like his it would be impossible for him to bear the expenses of Nagmahasaya's studies in Calcutta. It had a terrible disheartening influence upon Nagmahasaya, and having banished all hope of prosecuting his studies in Calcutta, he searched for a school in his own district. Subsequently he heard one day that there were several schools in Dacca. But Dacca being at a distance of ten miles from Narayangunj, if he had to go there, he would have to walk to and fro 20 miles daily. So the aunt was against the proposal. His other friends also advised him not to go there. But Nagmahasaya was inexorable. Next morning, without informing anybody, he set out for Dacca having provided himself with only a handful of puffed rice for the day's repast. The whole day was spent in searching schools. He came back home after selecting a vernacular school to his choice. It was quite dark when he reached home. In the meantime the aunt had been in search of him from place to place in the neighbouring villages, so she was overwhelmed with joy when she saw him return. First, she served him meals with great affection and care and then asked him the cause of his disappearance during the day. Nagmahasaya disclosed everything to her and said, "I have made up my mind to go to Dacca for my study from to-morrow forward. You will have to cook me meals by eight o'clock in the morning." Seeing his eagerness the aunt said "God bless you, there shall be no difficulty in the way."

Next morning Nagmahasaya started for Dacca and got himself admitted into the Normal School. Here he studied for fifteen

months. During the whole period he was absent only for two days. Rain, sunshine and cold passed over his head equally, from day to day, and nothing could thwart his indomitable perseverance for once. But owing to the great exertion and continuous strain, his health was pulled down slowly. Referring, to these days, he used to say, "I never felt the least tiresomeness when I used to go to Dacca. for studying I went direct through the forest by a short cut. On any day if I happened to feel hungry on my way back, I used to buy a pice worth of puffed-rice and returned doing full justice to it while on the way."

One of the teachers of the school had almost a paternal love for Nagmahasaya. Seeing him come daily on foot from such a distance, he said one day, "Boy, you need not come here all the way to read after taking so much trouble. It would be better for you to stay at my place, and I shall somehow manage to bear your expenses." To this Nagmahasaya replied "No, sir, I do not feel any great difficulty in coming here." Seeing his eagerness for study, the teacher remarked "I know not what this boy will be in future!" Had the teacher been living to see the after-life of Nagmahasaya, he would have witnessed that his prediction was fulfilled amply. Nagmahasaya read in the Normal School at Dacca for a very short period. But within that time he perfectly mastered the Bengali language. His handwriting was most beautiful and his compositions were also simple, thoughtful and attractive. His writings were of an extraordinary type compared with his age.

All of his writings of this period were mainly devoted to the purpose of moulding the character and were full of religious fervour.

Later when Nagmahasaya came down to Calcutta to read medical science, these essays were published in a pamphlet form with the heading "Advice to Boys."

He did not disclose it to any body about the publication or printing of his booklet. Even his most intimate friend Suresh Chandra Dutta did not know anything of this book before it was actually published. Only when it was printed, a copy was presented to him.

All the books were distributed amongst the boys of his village. Still a few copies of this booklet could be found at Deobhog.

THE GOSPELS AND ACTS.

(Continued from page 184.)

ACTS.

The record of Paul is one of unceasing activities, of constant movements through the provinces of Asia Minor and southward to Jerusalem, and to more distant regions still, for he made two journeys to Macedonia and Greece; until these activities were brought to a stop by the determined hostility of his own people at Jerusalem, to escape from whose violence, he was forced to appeal to Rome, to which city he was sent. With his stay at Rome the narrative ends.

We first come upon Paul as a member of the Apostolic body established at Antioch (Chapter XIII, 1). In Chapter XI, v. 19 we read that the members who were compelled to leave Jerusalem on the death of Stephen were scattered through Phœnicia, Cyprus and Antioch. Here they established themselves as Chapter XIII, v. 1 shows. Whether Paul was among those who migrated there or joined them later we are not told.

The narrative is interrupted at the point where the migration from Jerusalem is related, by the insertion of the irrelevant story relating to the setting of the *Christianoi* body at Antioch. It appears to be taken up again at v. 24 of the following Chapter XII which records the successful growth of the party, "the Word of God multiplied."

We then read of Paul's being specially sent out from Antioch on a mission (XIII, v. 2). In this connection the names of Barnabas and Saul are mentioned, but both these were *Christianoi*, and we have already seen why Saul is mentioned. Barnabas being a companion of Saul is brought in no doubt to round off the statement, but both names have no legitimate place in this narrative which concerns the Apostolic body.

We find Paul and his company in the island of Cyprus, where "they proclaimed the Word of God in the synagogues of the Jews." This religious movement we know was a great spiritual movement among cultured Jews, and hence we find that Paul in every place repairs to the synagogue to discourse, and to impart instruction. From Cyprus, Paul goes on to Asia Minor landing at Perga, from whence he proceeds to Antioch of Pisidia. On entering the synagogue here he is asked by the "rulers" to speak. The address begins with a recital of early Jewish legendary history up to the time of David. It then brings in Jesus as the promised saviour of the Jews and concludes with the doctrine of the Divine spirit, the deathless

One "who saw no corruption." From this description it would appear that Paul again "proclaimed the Word," that is, expounded the Jewish scriptures showing that their inner meaning referred to the teaching of the Divine spirit in man, "through whom is remission of sins" (v. 38), "and by him every one that believeth is justified from all things."

His hearers were much interested and "besought that these words might be spoken to them the next sabbath." They wanted to know more of the scriptures.

Here we find an interpolation. The narrative goes on to say:

- (1) "The next sabbath almost the whole city gathered together to hear the Word of God," and that this roused the jealousy of the Jews.
- (2) That Paul threatened to "turn to the Gentiles."

These statements are based on wrong assumptions.

The first on the assumption that Paul's method was to harangue large crowds like the Greek rhetoricians of the time. And the second that he was preaching a new popular faith. Paul was no "Apostle to the Gentiles." He was a teacher of a spiritual philosophy, and confined himself mainly to his own people; but that philosophy is never exclusive, and Paul would not decline to receive any one who came to him to be taught; his system however was a teaching, not a preaching system, and therefore he could not have threatened to "turn to the Gentiles" as if he was a mere preacher.

We may see a hint however, that Paul's second exhortation (he was asked to speak again) was a fuller exposition of the *Word* and that it gave encouragement to other cultured persons than Jews. We read, "The gentiles heard and glorified the Word of God.....as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." This statement shows there were cultured men of other faiths who went to Paul.

The story goes on that at Iconium also "both Jews and Greeks believed."

There seems to be a tendency to represent Paul and his party as martyrs subjected to frequent persecution. It is quite possible that some orthodox Jews of the narrow-minded type did not like the new methods of Paul, but we may be sure that he would have been careful not to rouse popular prejudice too easily.

Then follows the usual "miracle" of the man who was "a cripple from his mother's womb." This is said to have driven the multitude into ecstasies over Barnabas and Paul; but that same multitude immediately after "stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city,"; so it is hard to say which side of the story to accept. Paul after this returns to Antioch, having completed his tour. Barnabas, of course, was no companion of Paul.

From Chapter XV it appears that Paul next went down to Jerusalem to arrange some question apparently connected with the reading of the Law of Moses in the synagogues on the sabbath (v. 21), and Paul returns thence together with Judas and Silas two members, "who were also prophets." This incident is turned into a puzzling story about certain Jewish practices being insisted on among those at Antioch, and that Paul was sent to Jerusalem to consult the elders. Here, it is said, he meets Peter and James, the Apostles and the result of a debate among them was that they write unto the gentiles "that they abstain from the pollution of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled and from blood."

Now, considering that in Chapter XII we are told that James has been killed and Peter imprisoned, it is not possible to understand how they can be still alive or peacefully active. Further, the references to pollution of idols, strangled animals' blood, etc., show that the questions involved—if there were really any such—could only relate to an order of people with whom the Apostolic body, that is that of Peter, James and Paul, could not possibly have had any religious connection. These matters might concern the *Chrestianoï* who took in all classes.* The story therefore as connected with the doings of Paul must be considered as more than apocryphal, in fact, we may say put in to confuse the narrative and give it a Saulite of Antiochan complexion.

Paul now starts on his great western Journey (Chapter XVI). He passes through Phrygia and Galicia and would go on to Asia (the Roman province of that name), but he is "forbidden of the Holy spirit to speak the Word in Asia," it is said, no doubt meaning that he felt inwardly urged to press on. As a parallel to this we have immediately the spirit of Jesus "preventing his going into Bithynia, but it would appear that it was Paul's intention to go westward and not northward.

On Paul's arrival at Troas, the purpose of his being kept from going into the province of Asia becomes evident.

"A vision appeared to him in the night," he saw a man of Macedonia beseeching him and saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." At this point the narrative is taken from a fragmentary diary kept by some unknown companion of Paul, which is also quoted further on. Being written in the first person these portions of the narrative are referred to by writers as the "We" sections. Paul having left Troas by sea arrives at Phillippi on the Macedonian coast. Here another interesting and extraordinary incident takes place. A young woman with "a spirit of divination," that is, some power of occult discernment, on seeing Paul and the others cried out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim unto you the way of salvation," and she did this, it is said, many days.

* Being only a popular faith.

The most important incident of this journey was the visit of Paul to Athens, the great centre of Greek learning and culture, and his intercourse with some of the philosophers of the city, as described in Chapter XVII. Paul on his arrival at Athens was much impressed by its famous sculptures, "he beheld the city full of idols" says the narrator, who has no appreciation of anything pagan. The Athenian philosophers were no doubt interested as "he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons," so they wished to know something of his philosophy (v. 19). But as we follow the description here given (v. 22—31) of Paul's exposition, we can see that he could not have "stood in the midst of the Arpagus" and preached it (v. 22).

THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Paul, in beginning, speaks on the Inscrutable, the Unknown aspect of Deity, "What therefore ye worship in ignorance," as the text puts it.*

THE UNIVERSAL CONSCIOUSNESS.

He goes on to explain that That which is "unknown" in its highest aspect is, when manifested, the Universal Consciousness—"The God that made the world and all things therein," He is the indwelling spirit of all nature, He is not an object or visible being, who could be thought of as dwelling in temples made with hands, or even be "served by men's hands as though he needed anything," He is the life of things.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.

Through this Divine Consciousness "He made of one every nation of men, &c.," and it is through this same Consciousness that men are led to "seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us, &c."

REDEMPTION.

Man being the offspring of God is spiritual, and ought to realise the spiritual. At first, through "ignorance," he is unable to do this. But he has to rise above his intellectual self, and in due time ("he hath appointed a day") through or in the One who represents the true man (*'en Handri'*)—the One ordained—man will be able to judge rightly, through the experiences gained by his earthly lives ("in that he has raised him from the dead.")

This great "Address" so-called of Paul's, which however Mr. Gilbert T. Sadler, in his book, *A short Introduction to the Bible*, says is hardly in Paul's style, is, nevertheless, but an amplification of the teaching already ascribed to the great Apostle and described as

* The idea that Paul was explaining this Deity, as we ordinarily find in our translations is, obviously, incongruous.

"proclaiming the Word." For in substance it is the teaching of the dual—divine and human—consciousness of man, treated in its three aspects of God, Man and the Soul—the teaching of the Christ doctrine. In verse three of this same chapter we read that Paul at Thessalonica spoke of the Christ—"it behoved the Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead," in one aspect the doctrine of the soul of man passing through the varied experiences of its many "lives" on earth—the frequent renewals of physical form, which is the characteristic of "life" on the physical plane.

And we may take it for granted that if "The Sermon on the Mount" contains the essence of the moral philosophy of the Gospel, then Paul's great Address at Athens must be regarded as containing the essence of the intellectual philosophy of the same system. There is no room here for *dogma*. On these two pillars we may safely leave the superstructure of the new revelation of two thousand years ago—that of Jesus of Nazareth—to rest for all time; and it is to an appreciation of this philosophy alone we must look for a revival of the teaching of gospel truth, when that day does come again to that part of the civilised world that has allowed it to be lost.

We saw that Paul's visit to the West was marked out for him, he was "forbidden of the Holy spirit to speak the Word in Asia," he was turned aside from that personal intention of his, and sent on the great errand. The effect of this visit must have been to bring about a thorough understanding between the philosophy of those who heard him (Greeks) and that of his own teachings. The fellowship of ideas between the Greek philosophy and that of those who claimed to represent the philosophy of Paul, at a later time, is referred to by Dr. Hatch, in the Hibbert Lectures quoted above. He says (Lecture V, *Christianity and Greek Philosophy*), "The kinship of ideas is admitted, and explanations of it are offered by both Christian writers and their opponents. 'We teach the same as the Greeks,' says Justin Martyr."

Paul's gaze was turned to the West, and he must have perceived that, as Judaism was being forced out by pressure from the West, the faith which had its roots in the deep spirituality of that religion, would have to look for support, in the future, to the intellect of the Greek.

From Athens Paul proceeds to Corinth the great commercial centre of Greece. Here in a strange place he has to earn his livelihood, and he works, it is related, at his trade of tent maker. But he continues to teach "he reasoned in the synagogue . . . and persuaded Jews and Greeks." There was work for him here also for we read that "Paul was constrained by the Word," and he dwelt there a year and six months "teaching the Word of God among them." An incident is related which disposes off charges of persecution by the

Roman Government. Paul was charged before the pro-consul of persuading "men to worship God contrary to the law," a theological matter. The pro-consul told the Jews that if there was any offence against the law it would receive his attention, but questions of words and names that concerned their religion he would have nothing to do with.

Paul then leaves Corinth and returns to Antioch.

But soon after he proceeds to Ephesus, one of the great cities of Asia Minor. Here he entered the synagogue "reasoning and persuading on the things concerning the kingdom."

It is interesting to note how consistently the narrative describes the character of Paul's teaching in accordance with the original differentiation (XI, v. 19 and 20). The frequent interpolations in the text, stating that Paul preached Jesus as the Christ, are contradicted by this differentiation. For the Jewish equivalent, in the gospel, of the Christ or the Word, is Emmanuel not Jesus. The legendary term Jesus, as we have seen, is the expression employed to describe the still suffering soul not yet become the son. The son is the Christ. Therefore to describe "Jesus" as the Christ or Son is in the Jewish philosophical or theological phraseology of these writings altogether erroneous. So also the expressions "to proclaim the Word," to "teach the Christ" are not reconcileable with the expression "preaching Jesus." Of course, there is a reason for these interpolations. Saul being identified with Paul it becomes necessary to represent Paul's teaching as being the same as that of the Saulite party's (the "Jesus" cult).

Paul makes a stay of two years at Ephesus and the knowledge of the Word spreads widely.

He next "purposed in the spirit" to visit Macedonia and Achaia again, and then to go on to Jerusalem, after which to go even to Rome.

But popular opposition to him begins to show itself from this time. His teaching of the "Way" causes "no small stir" at Ephesus, the seat of the goddess Diana. The image makers connected with the great temple of this goddess attempted to work up a riot. Paul wished to speak to the people and to quiet their fears, which, no doubt, he would have succeeded in doing. But "the disciples suffered him not," they no doubt feared personal violence. However the town clerk was able to calm the excitement, "ye have brought these men who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of the goddess," he told them, from which it would appear that the populace were induced to look upon Paul as one who was introducing a new cult as a rival to their Diana, and hence their opposition.

Paul's second visit to Greece lasted three months. But as he was about to sail for Syria a plot was laid against him by the Jews.

He returned to Asia and proceeded to Jerusalem, as he desired.

At this point there is a noticeable change in the character of the narrative. Hitherto we have had to do with short, simple, in fact meagre statements of movements or teachings with hardly any incidents. Now there are highly dramatic scenes which are related with a considerable amount of detail.

We begin with a disturbance in the temple which arises over Paul (Chapter XXI, 27). He is accused of "teaching all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place.....he brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath defiled this holy place." The city was greatly moved and Paul is assaulted. The Roman Captain rushes down from the castle with soldiers and centurions, and Paul is conveyed to the castle for safety. Here he asks permission to speak, and being allowed to do so, he relates the old story of Saul! Moreover the accusations made would apply to Saul, who had turned against Judaism, but they could not possibly apply to Paul, who was a strict Jew. This story clearly interrupts the narrative of Paul, which is taken up again at v. 21 of Chapter XXII, the words "commanded him to be brought into the castle" (see XXI, 31) giving us the clue.

Paul in a dignified manner informs the captain that he is a Roman citizen; and he is treated with respect. The next day Paul is brought before the Jewish Council. Just as he begins his statement, he, a Roman, is ordered to be struck on the mouth, by the High Priest in the presence of the Roman Captain in whose charge he was. Then Paul is described as practising a ruse on the Council, to set the two sections of his judges against one another. He declares he is "a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; touching the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." At once there is a dissension, the Council breaks up and Paul is taken back to the castle.

We should note here Paul's assertion that he is "called in question touching the hope and resurrection of the dead." This was a disputed question between the two religious sections of the Jews, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the disturbance or perhaps disagreement over Paul might, therefore, have been on account of this point of doctrine rather than on his declaration that he was a Pharisee.

Now comes more drama. A blood thirsty conspiracy is formed against Paul. Some forty men bind themselves under a curse not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. But it does not appear that their chances were so certain. They went to the chief priests and elders and told them of their oath. "Now, therefore..... signify to the Chief Captain that he bring him down.....as though ye would judge of his case.....and we are ready to slay him."

But Paul's "sister's son" somehow comes to hear of the plot, and the Captain is informed. Whereupon the latter sends Paul away,

under a guard of no less than 470 men to Felix the Governor, at Cæsarea; and we are given the very text of the letter addressed to the Governor, so minutely are the details known.

The high priest and elders are now summoned from Jerusalem, and the trial of Paul begins. He is charged with being a pestilent fellow, a mover of insurrections, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, who moreover assayed to profane the temple.

Paul is asked to speak, and he repeats what he said before the Council at Jerusalem, "Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question."

The Governor "having more exact knowledge concerning the Way" understood the motives of the Jews in accusing Paul, so he deferred the case, until the Chief Captain should come, and ordered that Paul should be kept in charge, but not as a prisoner. It is also stated that he sent for Paul, and as he "reasoned of righteousness and self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was terrified"; but "he sent for him the oftener and communed with him." He kept Paul under his own charge the two years he remained before giving over his office to his successor P. Festus.

On Festus's arrival Paul's case is brought up again, and he is asked by the Governor if he would go up to Jerusalem and there be judged. But, no doubt fearing to go amongst the Jews again he replied to Festus, "I stand before Cæsar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged."

But there are still further developments. The King, Agrippa arrives at Cæsarea and Festus mentions Paul's case to him, adding there was no charge of evil against him, and that it was a dispute over religion.

Then comes a great scenic display. Agrippa with his wife enters the place of hearing with great pomp accompanied by the Chief Captain and the principal men of the city.

Festus states the complaint, the Jews want him put to death, but he finds Paul has done nothing worthy of death. As he has however appealed to Cæsar, he must be sent before the Emperor. But he does not know what report he can possibly make. "For it seemeth to me unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not withal to signify the charges against him," a curious difficulty for a Roman Governor.

So Agrippa calls upon Paul to speak. As before he pleads that he was being harassed on account of his religious convictions. "Why is it judged incredible with you, if God doth raise the dead?" Evidently he was arguing from his scriptures, "I stand to be judged for the hope of the promise, &c." (XXVI, v. 6)....."saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come" (v. 22). Between what are plainly the two parts of one and the same speech,

viz., that which ends at v. 8 and begins again at v. 21, we have, thrust in, the episode of Saul again, who certainly could not plead that he said nothing but what the prophets and Moses said, for he had renounced Judaism and had "disputed" with Jews. But Paul had always been a strict Jew, their scriptures were his, the only difference was that he interpreted the scriptures in his own way, and he claimed that that interpretation was the right one. In concluding his defence Paul is emboldened to remark "I would to God that..... not thou only (Agrippa) but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds," meaning of course might become like himself dedicated wholly to the service of God, but not have to suffer for it as he had. The interpolation, "thou wouldst fain make me a Christian" is of course Saulite.

Paul's defence decides the King, "this man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed to Cæsar."

The real facts of this very dramatic and long drawn out story would seem to be as follows—Paul having arrived in Jerusalem and visited the temple the priests and the elders considered it a favourable opportunity to seize him. He manages to escape and take refuge in the castle with the Roman guard. When the Council were summoned to state their complaint they were unable to prove anything against Paul, and he himself asserts that they had nothing to bring against him but his religious teachings. Paul however knowing what his fate would be if he remained in Jerusalem, claimed the right to be tried before the Emperor's Court; and he is accordingly sent on to Rome.

(To be concluded).

REVIEWS.

Tantric Texts and other publications—by Arthur Avalon. (For particulars, see our advertisement page VI).

We are extremely obliged to Mr. Arthur Avalon for his presentation of a full set of his Tantric works to our Library. The merit of his timely publications has become widely known by this time in India and outside. No body can deny that his works have dispelled a mass of gloom that was hitherto enshrouding the Tantric lore in the minds of the outside world, and scholars have come to realise now that the religious history of the land would but be partially understood if no proper study be made in the Tantric literature. The author has shown, further, in his most erudite introductions to the *Tantra of Great Liberation* and *Principles of Tantra* that how the practical religious life of the Hindus to-day is wholly controlled by the Agamic principles, whose proper study alone will afford us the *raison d'être* of our religious observances. We Hindus must feel highly indebted to him not only for his laborious publication of some of the

obscure Tantras which but for him, would not have seen the light of day, but also for his highly critical and sympathetic study of the Tantra Sastra which has made the Sastra quite comprehensible to the modern reader. It is regarded by the Tantrics that the philosophy of Tantra is coeval with Vedanta and represents the most practical aspect of the same. A critical study of the ritualism of the Tantra bears out fully this assumption. Tantra holds not unlike Vedanta :—

प्रथमा प्रतिमा पूजा जपस्तोत्रादि मध्यमा

उत्तमा मानसी पूजा सोऽहम्पूजोत्तमोत्तमा ॥

(First is the image worship, telling beads and chanting hymns are the middlemost, the best is the mental worship, but the worship that constitutes the knowledge that 'I am He' is the best of the best).

Yet, even in the external image worship, Tantra adopts all means to awaken the higher consciousness gradually, so that the devotee going up step by step may ultimately reach the highest goal, the God-realisation in his own self. In principles of creative evolution there may be some minor differences between Vedanta and Tantra, but in the central doctrine of Unity of the Soul both agree, both assert with one voice :—

ब्रह्मादितृणपर्यन्तं मायया कल्पितं जगत्

सत्यमेकं परंब्रह्म विदित्वैवं सुखी भवेत् ॥

विहाय नामरूपाणि नित्ये ब्रह्मणि निश्चले ।

परिनिश्चिततत्त्वो यः स मुक्तः कर्मबन्धनात् ॥

न मुक्तिर्जपनात् होमात् उपवासशतैरपि ।

ब्रह्मैवाहमिति ज्ञात्वा मुक्तो भवति देहभृत् ॥

आत्मा साक्षी विभूः पूर्णः सत्योऽद्वैतः परास्परः ।

देहस्थोऽपि न देहस्थे ज्ञात्वैवं मुक्तिभाग्यभवेत् ॥

बालक्रीडनवत्सर्वं रूपनामादिकल्पनम् ।

विहाय ब्रह्मनिष्ठो यः स मुक्तो नात्र संशयः ॥

* * * *

अयमात्मा सदा मुक्तो निर्लिप्तः सर्ववस्तुषुः ।

किं तस्य बन्धनं कस्मात्मुक्तिरिच्छन्ति दुर्ध्वयः

स्वमायारचितं विश्वमवितर्क्य सुरैरपि ।

स्वयं विराजते तत्र ह्यप्रविष्टः प्रविष्टवत् ॥

बहिरन्तर्यथाकाशं सर्वेषामेव वस्तुनाम् ।

तथैव भाति सद्रूपो ह्यात्मा साक्षी स्वरूपतः ॥

* * * *

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं तथा ज्ञाता त्रितयं भाति मायया ।

विचार्यमात्रे त्रितये चात्मैवैकोऽवशिष्यते ॥

ज्ञानमात्रमैव चिद्रूपो ज्ञेयमात्रमैव चिन्मयः ।

विज्ञाता स्वयमेवात्मा यो जानाति स ज्ञात्मवित् ॥

(Mahanirvana Tantra XIV 118—189.)

[* He who knows that all which is in this universe from Brahman to a blade of grass is but the result of Maya, and that the Brahman is the one and supreme Truth, becomes (truly) happy. The man is released from the bonds of action who, renouncing name and form has attained to complete knowledge of the essence of the eternal and inimitable Brahman. Liberation does not come from japa, homa, or a hundred fasts; man becomes liberated by the knowledge that he himself is Brahman. Final liberation is attained by the knowledge that the Atma (soul) is the witness is the Truth, is omnipresent, is one, free from all illuding distractions of self and not-self,† the supreme, and, though, (as if) abiding in the body, is not in the body.

All imagination of name-form and the like are but the play of child. He who puts away all this, sets himself in firm attachment to the Brahman, is, without doubt, liberated.

The soul which is detached from all things, is ever liberated; what can bind it? From what do fools desire to be liberated?

He abides in this Universe, the creation of His (own) powers of illusion, which even the Devas cannot pierce. He is seemingly in the Universe, but not in it.

The spirit, the eternal witness, is in its own nature like the void which exists both outside and inside all things.

Knowledge, object of knowledge, and the knower, appear by illusion to be three different things; but if careful discrimination is made, spirit is found to be the sole residuum. Knowledge is spirit in the form of intelligence; the object of knowledge is spirit whose substance is intelligence and the knower is the Spirit itself. He who knows this knows the spirit.]

But Tantra lays a special stress in the beginning upon the worship of the Saguna Brahman in the form of Shakti, Shiva or Vishnu. The Shakta-gamas are most fascinating in its advocacy of the motherhood of God. The whole world is, consciously or unconsciously, a worshipper of Shakti. Wherever there is a manifestation of power, the human heart is enthralled by it. But the ignorant mind worships the Power of the world with a desire of manipulating it to its own selfish end; and as a result of that worship it is fettered more and more to the grossness of life with all its concomitant sufferings. Tantra imbues this Power of Nature, i.e., Nature herself, with a conscious soul, and thus transfigures the whole life and creation

* Taken from the translation, *Tantra of the great Liberation* by Arthur Avalon. The translation is rather free in some places—Ed.

† The three epithets of the text, *Vibhu*, *Purna* and *Adwaita* probably refer to the negation of three kinds of differentia, viz., *Swajatiya*, *Swagata* and *Vijatiya Bheda*, in Brahman. They would have been better rendered by the undividable infinite, the all pervasive and one without a second.

as a manifestation of a living Power self-conscious and self-sufficient. Unlike Vedanta, Tantra never views Maya or Prakriti as something separate and yet not separate from Brahman, the Nishkala Tattwa. It asserts that Brahman and its Shakti are one and the same thing when viewed from the stand-point of creation. It never makes any hair-splitting difference between Maya and Mayin (Possessor of Maya), since (गुरुगुणयोरभेदः) there is no real difference between the substance and its attributes. Specially from the stand-point of practical life, such difference is unthinkable, nay mischievous. Making too much of this "distinction without difference" between the Brahman and His Prakriti has led to the degeneracy of the Vedantic cult in some quarters. Panjabi Vedanta has become a term of reproach. Such extreme view in the case of unfit persons cuts them away from the natural and safe moorings of Upasana and worship, and leaves them adrift in the chaos of a so-called Gnana-nistha or Vichara. So the Tantra shows various forms of Sadhana for a devotee suited to different stages of life.

We request all our readers to read at least the three principal works of Tantric publications of Mr. Avalon. viz., *Principles of Tantra*, *Mahanirvan Tantra* and *Prapanchasara Tantra*. We are sure they will be highly benefitted by the study.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

We welcome the appearance of the new weekly '*Hindu Message*'* under the notable editorship of Prof. K. Sundararama Iyer, M. A. and Mr. T. K. Balasubramania Iyer, B. A. It will, we are sure, supply a great demand for a journal of the kind. The necessity of strong advocacy of the Hindu ideal of life in uncompromising terms and looking at things from purely Hindu stand-point, is felt more and more keenly, as the nation is being awakened to the consciousness of its past and present, that it may realise its right destiny in future. The journal aims at voicing "the view of the large party of conservative progressivists," unreservedly and persistently "so as to create and focus public opinion on matters urgently awaiting consideration and wise solution." The second issue contains a well thought out editorial on 'our political situation.' It contains also a portion of Gnana Yoga lectures delivered by Swami Vivekananda in America. It has been published with the idea that it forms part of some "hitherto unpublished lectures of the Swami", evidently not knowing that it has been already printed in the Complete Works of the Swami, Mayavati Memorial Edition. The portions published in the 2nd, 3rd & 5th issues

* Published at Srirangam, Trichinopoly. Annual subscription Rs. 6/- only, for bona fide student Rs. 3/- only.

occur almost verbatim in "Steps to Realisation", complete Works, Part I, Second Edition p. 40. So we request the editors to compare the rest of the lectures they possess with those that have already been published in the complete works, before they appear in the magazine.

We are glad to notice from the report of the works of the Vivekananda Society, Calcutta, for the year 1916, that the Society has extended its usefulness in many ways, fulfilling some of the urgent needs of life in a city like Calcutta. The activities of the society are mainly of four kinds, *viz.*, (1) Preaching, (2) Teaching, (3) Publication work and (4) Philanthropic works. (1) Under the auspices of the society several public lectures on Vedanta and kindred subjects were delivered by such distinguished scholars like Mahamopadhyaya Pramanathanatha Tarkabhusana, Pandit Durgacharan Sankhya Vedantatirtha, Pt Gangacharan Vedantavidyasagar, Swami Suddhananda, and others. Besides these public lectures, weekly classes on the Geeta and monthly conversazione for the members were held in the society room by the Swami Suddhanandaji. (2) Swami Suddhanandaji residing in the society premises devoted himself untiringly in teaching those who sought his help and directly influenced them in moulding their higher lives. Moreover to afford a suitable means for the development of practical religious life a chapel has been attached to the society where the members can perform puja and meditation, etc. (3) The society published during the year under review the 4th edition of *Veeramani* containing all the English, Sanskrit and Bengali poems of the Swami Vivekananda at a very cheap price, and also some pamphlets containing a few of the lectures delivered in the society. (4) As many as 17 poor students were helped during the year with small monthly stipends, and besides these several were helped in the way of occasional donations and examination fees. Some of the students were helped also with college text books. The society also worked hard to secure some pecuniary help for the charitable works of the Ramakrishna Mission such as Famine Relief Work, Gangasagar Seva work.

We congratulate the society which has for its ideal "work as worship" and heartily wish it all development.

From the annual report of the Charitable Dispensary at the Ramkrishna Math, Belur, Howrah for the year 1916, we are glad to learn that the dispensary made a good progress, as the number of prescriptions served during the year was 10,470 as against 7,314 in 1915. This increase of about 40 per cent. is attended with a corresponding increase in the number of patients treated, which was 2,900 during the year.

यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमवर्णमचक्षुःश्रोत्रं तदपाणिपादम् ।
नित्यं विभुं सर्वगतं सुसूक्ष्मं तदव्ययं यद्भूतयोनिं परिपश्यन्ति
धीराः ॥ ६ ॥

यत् तत् what अद्रेश्यं imperceivable अग्राह्यम् that cannot be grasped अगोत्रं without origin अवर्णम् colourless (without form), अचक्षुःश्रोत्रं without eyes and ears (devoid of senses) ; तत् that अपाणिपादं without hands and feet नित्यं eternal विभुं of manifold expressions, सर्वगतं all-pervading, सुसूक्ष्मं extremely subtle ; तत् that, अव्ययं undecaying यत् which भूतयोनिं the source of the creation धीराः the wise परिपश्यन्ति behold everywhere.

That which is unperceivable, ungraspable, without origin, colourless, without eyes and ears or hands and feet,—that which is eternal (yet) of manifold expressions, all-pervading, extremely subtle and undecaying, the source of all creation,—that the wise behold everywhere.

[Unperceivable—i.e., beyond the reach of the sensory organs or the *jñanendriyas*.

Ungraspable—i.e., unapproachable even by the motor organs or the *karmendriyas*.

Colourless—The orthodox commentators have taken *Avaniam* of the text to mean 'attributeless or formless'. But Max Muller translates it as 'casteless', the idea being in fit conjunction with 'Agotra'. But the epithet is used for the Atman in other Upanishads also to denote that it is beyond the three *gunas* which create 'colours' i.e., attributes.

Note—The first half of the Mantram, denotes the Brahman by negative attributes, dissociating It from all objective connotations. The second half speaks of It by some positive epithets, which rather hint at Its nature than define It.]

यथोर्नाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः
संभवन्ति ।

यथा सतः पुरुषात्केशलोपानि तथा क्षरात्संभवतीह विश्वम्

॥ ७ ॥

यथा as ऊर्ध्वनाभिः the spider (तन्तून् the thread) सृजते creates गृह्यते takes back (contracts within) ; यथा as पृथिव्यां in the world श्लोचयः herbs सम्भवन्ति grow ; यथा as सतः spontaneously पुरुषात् from man केशलोमानि hairs (सम्भवन्ति grow) तथा so इह here अक्षरात् from the Imperishable विरवं the Universe सम्भवति grows, comes out.

As the spider produces the thread and absorbs in, as herbs grow on the earth, and hairs come out spontaneously from man, even so does the creation spring forth from the Imperishable.

[*Note*—Here three similes are given to exemplify the spontaneity of the creation from the Imperishable substance, the Brahman. As a spider produces the thread out of its own body and again draws it in without any special effort on its part, so this Universe comes out of the Brahman and goes back to It again in dissolution spontaneously. But the student might think that the Brahman has some purpose and *some* effort in creating the universe even as the spider has ; so the Sruti clears up further that point by the second simile, 'as plants grow on the earth by their own inherent nature, without the least purpose or effort on the part of the earth, even so does the creation come out of Brahman, without Its any purpose or effort'. Then is the Brahman an unconscious, inert substance like Earth ? No,—as in man, although a conscious being, there grow hairs, etc., without any will or effort on his part, even so from the Brahman which is intelligence itself could grow the inert universe. The first simile bespeaks of the Brahman as the place of origin and dissolution of the creation, the second further asserts that the universe even after creation rests in Brahman alone being totally dependent on It. The third goes still further to denote that the creation is a purposeless, effortless, extraneous projection of a certain Power of the Brahman which does not constitute Its real essence which is Intelligence. It should be noted here how the Sruti by the three similes indirectly asserts that the creation is not a real Parinama or transmutation of the Brahman in the Pantheistic sense, but only a projection of Its certain inscrutable power ; and in this sense It is both the efficient and material cause of the universe.]

तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म ततोऽब्रह्मभिजायते । अन्नात्प्राणो मनः
सत्यं लोकाः कर्मसु चामृतम् ॥ ८ ॥

ब्रह्म the Brahman तपसा by Tapas चीयते augments. ततः from That अन्नं food (the primal matter) अभिजायते is born. अन्नात् from food प्राणः the Prana (Energy), मनः the mind सत्यं the true (the five elements) लोकाः the worlds, (तथा next), कर्मसु from works अमृतम् the immortal (results).

By Tapas does the Brahman augment. Of that is born the food. From food are born the Prana, the mind, the true and the worlds ; and from work proceed the immortal results.

[*Tapas*—The word is explained in the next mantram by knowledge. Before the starting of the creation, the whole universe appeared in the Brahman in the form of ideas or knowledge, which subsequently concretised themselves in creation as matter and material objects. Max Muller translates it as 'brooding,' because he finds 'This is the only word in English which combines the two meanings of warmth and thought.' The translation might have been happy and correct out of the context, but here, the word 'brooding' does not express at all the force of the word Tapas. No doubt brooding connotes a deep thought coloured with a warmth of feeling, but it indicates also a will associated therewith which might translate itself into action at any time. But *Tapas* of the text cannot mean all these, as then it would be a direct contradiction to the import of the previous mantram. Hence *Tapas* should be taken simply in the sense of knowledge or idea, as explained above.

The Brahman does augment,—By the knowledge the Brahman expands since it makes the latent Brahma-Shakti manifest in the form of the creation. Or, as a seed augments into a tree, so does Its causal nature expand into the creation.

The food—It refers to the primal matter or Prakriti. Matter is often called 'food' in the Upanishads, as it is the *object* of perception or enjoyment of the Purusha.

It is rather curious to note here that the matter is said to be the cause of Prana, whereas in Prasna-Upanishad it is said that both came out from the Prajapati simultaneously (*vide* Prasna-Upanishad I-4, III-3, VI-4, and notes thereon). Perhaps this

apparent contradiction between the two Upanishads is due to the conceptions of different degrees of subtlety and grossness. In this Upanishad Matter means the primal matter, the Mother of the whole creation, and in the Prasna-Upanishad *raye* means the grosser manifestation of matter in contradistinction to Prana or Energy.

The True—i.e., the five *Maha-bhutas* out of which are fashioned the fourteen worlds.

The immortal results—i. e., the fruits of actions, which cling to life until they are enjoyed. They are called immortal because nothing can destroy them, or hamper their fruition.

Note—This mantram purports to give the *modus operandi* of what has been described in the previous one.]

यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद्यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः
तस्मादेतद्ब्रह्म नाम रूपमन्नं च जायते ॥ १ ॥

यः who सर्वज्ञः omniscient यः who सर्वविद् understands all वस्तु whose ज्ञानमयं consisting of knowledge तपः Penance. तस्मात् from that एतत् this ब्रह्म the Brahma (Hiranyagarbha) नाम Name, रूपं form, अन्नं matter जायते are produced.

He who knows all and understands all, whose Tapas consists of knowledge,—from Him are produced this Brahma, name, form and matter.

[Who knows all—i.e., Knows all in a general way, He being the cause of all.

Understands all—i. e. Knows all in the special sense, as he is all pervading.

Whose Penance consists of knowledge—Tapas means in ordinary parlance a certain amount of power brought forth by self-mortification and brooding. The reason why knowledge is called Tapas here, is perhaps due to the expression of power with knowledge of the Brahman.]

End of the First 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.

VOL. IV.]

DECEMBER, 1917.

[No. 8.

WHICH WAY?

BY

Swami Suddhananda.

The high summits of the Himalayas, piercing through the clouds, rising tier above tier strike awe and wonder into the mind of the onlooker; the mountain rivers rumbling with pebbles in their bosom are rushing on towards the plains with a thrilling harmony of sweet and solemn musical notes; and in the midst of that Nature's grand display of sweet and terrific beauty lies the *Ashrama*, a peace-retreat, bedecked with Deodar and other mountain trees. Tired of his busy life, now burnt in the furnace of the world, now caught in its stifling whirlpools, man runs at times in search of such a peace-retreat. Ah, what a joy is it to sit on the solitary bank of that mountain river attuned with its music and lose in the infinity! Then the world appears like a dream,—a faint recollection as it were of a past which no longer exists; mind sinks deeper and deeper in the region of *Samadhi*, there is no desire, no will but ecstasy with the consciousness of the Infinity.

Had this rapture been everlasting, with no possibility of its cessation then certainly, we should have said, there is no higher state than this. But nay, man has to come down again, the body-consciousness returns and that experience of *Samadhi* becomes a dream and the world that appeared as a shadow asserts its stern

reality with all its wonted force. The body is there, with its thirst and hunger, health and disease : desires gradually gather round, grow stronger and stronger and spread their net on all sides. Like a bird caught in the meshes, he has fallen from that sweet retreat of peace, he runs to the vale of misery, and once more entangles himself in the snares of work. But again feeling choked in misery he takes shelter in that abode of peace once more.

This, in general, is the lot of the people who come to reflect. But what is the end ?

The question naturally arises, is there then no other means to attain that blessed peace, but to renounce this busy, bustling world ?

Generally, we hear people say that religion cannot be practised in the midst of worldly activity. Not only do we hear this from the lips of the sanyasins, but the most worldly men also say the same. But what does this renouncing of the world mean ? If it means giving up doing external work, shirking responsibility of maintaining wife and children or of serving parents, then we should say, there is none more irreligious than he who renounces the world. Unless one be extremely heartless, brutal or lifeless, one cannot renounce the world in this way, and such renunciation instead of elevating his soul results in its complete degradation. What then does the renunciation of the world really mean ?

In the first place, we should consider—how does this question arise at all. Why should I give up, what I possess, what I have obtained ? If I give up what I have, I am acting most foolishly. I have little, I must have more, I must further extend my possessions—nay, I must expand my authority all over the world. Then alone will come satiety ; then alone will peace be attained. Why then do people talk of renunciation ? What is to be renounced ? What object of mine is there to be given up ?

The goal of our life is to be comprehended a little more clearly. If possession means an exercise of authority outside of us where does it finally lead to. We have seen instances of it in the lives of the great world-conquerors like Napoleon, Cæsar, Alexander and others. We cannot attain in this way the possession of the world-empire. That is a vain, mad attempt, indeed ! The real struggle should lie in gaining possession of the kingdom within. When man enters into this struggle staking everything of his life, all his external activities are naturally lessened, and so people wrongly judge that he is on the way to give up everything completely. Very few people realise how he is really bent on most

intense activity ? Out of this misunderstanding arise all sorts of difficulties.

Thus, it is clear, that there is no necessity for our giving up work ; work we must have to do ; but only we need know the secret of doing work ! To understand this, nothing helps us so much as the Bhagavatgita. If we carefully analyse Its teachings we get the following main ideas :—

- (1) As a rule it is not proper to give up work wantonly.
- (2) Work even with some desired object in view (*Sakama Karma*) is better than inaction.
- (3) *Nishkama Karma* (action with no desire for fruits) is again better than *Sakama karma*.
- (4) Between *Sakama* and *Nishkama Karma*, there is no difference with respect to activity itself. But the difference lies with reference to motive. By *Nishkama* is meant turning the mind away from desires for external objects, such as, wealth, prosperity, name and fame, etc., and directing that desire Godward or towards Liberation. Desire for liberation, or devotion to God is not reckoned as 'desire'. Here we should note that by *Nishkama* many understand a state devoid of all desires or motives. But we cannot imagine any activity absolutely devoid of desires or motives, except in the case of *Siddha Purushas* or *Avatars*.

(5) *Nishkama Karma*, or action done without any low motive tends to purify the mind. Then it becomes fit for concentration and meditation or practising yoga. When a man is established to a certain extent in the practice of *Nishkama Karma*, then giving up of external action, at times becomes necessary for him in order to practise more of concentration and meditation. Yet this cannot be described as giving up of action."

Let us now try to understand a little more explicitly the aforesaid point. Those who are toilers in the field know full well, how an infinitely more difficult than doing any other work, is the struggle for concentration and meditation. Manual labour is no task at all in comparison with it. Just sit a while and try to concentrate your mind and you will realise how extremely restless it becomes and what an amount of force you will have to exert to fix it in one place. In this connection we should have to understand what is concentration of mind ; wherein lies the difference between this and the state of sleep or inaction of the mind. Ordinarily man's mind is found to have two states, the active and the inactive. But what is the state of mind in concentration ? How to make him understand this, who has never had it ? To

make one understand anything that is unknown to him, there is no other way but to explain it by analogy with a thing that is known. Now, the active and the inactive states of mind are all familiar to us. The state of concentration can be made familiar by drawing an analogy from either of these states. From the outward semblance it is commonly compared to the inactive state of the mind in sleep or swoon. But its real nature is not explained by this comparison and only a surface view is given thereby. So, there is the other way of making it clear, namely, by describing it in terms of activity. The mind in meditation is much more active than when it perceives external objects. In fact, the state of activity is superior to the inactive state, and the state of concentration again is still superior to the active. Imagine, that you are sitting quiet, there is no ruffle in the mind, and yet it is not in a stupor but calm and full of joy; perception of external objects has, as far as possible, faded away, and the light of knowledge within has become brighter than when external objects are perceived. This gives only a glimpse of the meditative state. And this state is the fruit of long strenuous practice and sustainable only by persistent effort.

Now, the real mistake lies in the fact that people before becoming, in the least fit for practising meditation, speed to renounce work, thinking it to be easy of accomplishment. By giving up external works, they imagine, Peace and Beatitude will come of itself! while as a matter of fact Karma Yoga is the path for common people.

This word "*Karma Yoga*" needs a clearer understanding also. Otherwise no relation can be pointed out between the state of activity and the meditative state. First, mark the expression; the injunction is to practise *Karma Yoga* and not *Karma* alone. *Karma* or work, everyone more or less is doing. We are always doing some work,—good or bad or indifferent. But we are not all *Karma Yogis* for the matter of that. In order to become a *Karma Yogi*, something more besides *Karma* (work) is necessary, and that is mental and not external. Work, we have to do, but we should have a motive as well. What is that motive? We have constantly to consider the purpose of our activity. For instance, I am active, say, for earning money. Now I have to ask myself—what is this earning for? If it is for a complete satisfaction of the senses, I must understand with the help of the teachings of the Guru and the Shastras, that this earning of money is not for my personal sense-enjoyment; I have the right of use only of so much money as is required for the mere sustenance of my body and that of the members of my family,—the rest is for the poor, my brothers.

Some may ask how can this selfless attitude of the mind come all of a sudden? Nobody says that it will come *at once*.

The Shastras tell us that all people are moved to work by their nature, and these works are solely done for the enjoyment of the senses. To such souls who have faith in the scriptures, some philanthropic and charitable acts and the performance of some sacrifices are enjoined. He who is mad after sense-enjoyments, is an unbeliever in the Shastras, God, Soul, Spirits, and in the life hereafter. Hence, if such a man ever does any philanthropic work, he does it as a social service or merely because it is the fashion of the day; this has no connection whatsoever with religious beliefs; his heart is not after following any Shastric injunction. But he who has developed a faith in life after death, can really believe that by performing such and such sacrificial work or by worshipping such and such God, he will enjoy such and such happiness in the next world. Now, leaving aside the discussion whether or not any such gods truly exist, or the performance of those works really produces the desired fruits, either here or hereafter,—if we only consider the effect of these works on our life, on our character, we shall find, notwithstanding their being called *Sakama*, and *Prabritti Marga* that in reality they are but the first rung of the ladder that leads to the *Nishkama karma*. The Shastric significance of the sacrifices is offering things to gods. And in the Gita, it is stated that the remnant of the sacrifice, which is nectar, is to be enjoyed. Thus we get one step towards *Nishkama*. And there are many more steps to reach the *Nishkama* stage. Now, I resolve to do *Nishkama karma*, but my mind is running after desires—Still we have to do it gradually, step by step. Through continuous practice, mental application and persistent effort, in course of time, there will come a stage, when no attraction for external objects of desire will be the motive power, then the love for the Lord, or the desire to attain freedom (*mumukshutvam*) will furnish the impetus for work. Some say, if there be no desires for external objects, all zest for work will disappear. But why? If I believe that by work only I shall realise Him, and that through work alone I shall get freedom, why should there not be the zest for it? Rather, earnestness will increase thousand-fold. Truly speaking, there is not much difference between the various kinds of work; the motive behind being the real measure of goodness or badness; we have the saying "As you think, so you become."

A doubt may arise here—Is there then no utility of the institution of Sannyasa, if man has to practise Karma yoga throughout

his whole life? We have previously shown that the meditative state or the stage of Sannyasa is the culmination of Karma yoga, and it has been also pointed out that that is a very exalted state of mind and extremely difficult to attain. But before attaining completely the stage of Sannyasa, is there no other *Ashrama* (Stage of life) besides the life of a householder for attaining that state fully? And even if it is taken for granted that there exists some such stage, it may be questioned.—“Is that life to be adopted in old age after living long in the world, or is that possible to be adopted even in young age?”

The instances that we come across in the Upanishads, speak mostly of married, householder life. Yajnavalkya had two wives. And in his old age, probably, he took to Sannyasa life, realising its necessity. Gargi, that learned lady, it seems, was unmarried. Elsewhere rarely we find examples of adopting Sannyasa Ashrama. Though examples may not be many, we find in some of the older Upanishads the teaching to adopt the Sannyasa life.* Lord Buddha took Sannyasa in his youth and made most people adopt that life. Following him, Sankaracharya also preached the adoption of Sannyasa life before taking to other Ashramas,—and made a few Sannyasin disciples as well. But he could not quote any text from the older Upanishads in support of his view except the text, “यदहरेव विरजेत् तदहरेव प्रजयेत् etc.” from the probably more recent Javalopanishad. But in the monastic institutions founded by them we see that not a little importance is attached to work, e.g., preaching, doing good to others and so on.

Among the modern educated people there are many who hold views against the Sannyasa institution; and among them again there are a few who quote Upanishads and the Gita, and other Scriptures in order to prove that it is against the Shastric injunctions.

Of course, there is no denying the fact that as a result of an adoption of the sannyasa life before becoming fit for it, a great deal of harm has been produced in every country. But those who have followed our previous arguments, cannot but admit that Sannyasa is the ultimate stage of human life. For, the more a man progresses onward, towards *Dhyanyoga* from Karma yoga, the lesser become his external activities. In the Gita, Lord has explicitly stated this truth in the verse :

आरुह्योर्मुनेर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।

योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥

* The Sannyasa life is spoken of in the Mundaka Chhandogya, Brihadaranyaka, Svetasvatara and Kousitaki Upanishads.—Ed.

(For the man of meditation wishing to attain purification of heart leading to concentration, work is said to be the way : For him, when he has attained such (concentration), inaction is said to be the way.]

Those who have carefully studied Shankara's commentary on the Gita, will know how the teachings inculcating Sannyasa lie hidden in the Gita although it apparently speaks of the path of the *karma* only. Shankara in explaining the words सर्वारम्भः and अनिकेतः has made the idea clearer, and those explanations appear to be quite natural and not forced.

However, in discussing the problem of how to conduct our life, we at last come to this conclusion that *Ashrama dharma*, as it prevailed in olden times, seems to be the best. All without exception must enter the Brahmacharya Ashrama (or, the student life, the life of celibacy). In that stage along with religion secular education should be imparted to make one fit to earn one's livelihood. When the course of education will be completed according to their individual tendency and mental aptitude, some will enter the householder's life, while others will take to Sannyasa ashrama, knowing the practice of meditation to be the highest goal of life. But those who will enter the householder's life, should also bear this in mind that finally they too must resort to the other two Ashramas. Surely, some changes must have to be made in these four Ashramas with reference to place, time, and individuals, and also a suitable mode of education is to be introduced; but in all cases, we must faithfully follow, the basic principles of the four Ashramas.

But, these can never be actually translated into practice so long as the machinery of the society is not thoroughly reconstructed. And to accomplish that again, great, powerful teachers need preaching it for a long time. But so long as that is not done how are we to find out the means by which individually, we can proceed towards bettering our lives?

One method is to try to find out the way by discrimination and contemplation; moreover if devotional prayers are made to Him, the Omniscient Lord, from the depth of the heart, He will surely open your inner-eye to the path fitted for you. And the last recourse is, if you have such faith in any person that you can accept his words without hesitation, even if they be against your sentiments, then to throw upon him the responsibility of showing you your path.

From a general discussion of the subject, we arrive at the conclusion that there are some people who, from the very beginning, should try to control their minds by severing all connections with the world, and again there are others who would have to pass through this world. There cannot be one path for all people, but by whatever way we may proceed, the stage where the ultimate fulfilment of life is realised, is the same as the state of meditation or the state of renunciation of (external) works, or what is called the Sannyasa ; but, every one has to pass through work. It cannot be doubted that even in the present state of our society, the stage of Sannyasa can be attained by one without necessarily separating oneself from the environments of the world.

But we must be specially careful about one thing. Those who assert that the *Brahma lila* can be enjoyed through the perception of the sense-objects—those that are afraid to call this world a *maya*,—must come out and speak in the clearest terms what they mean. The tendency to mould the ideal after one's own fancy, must be checked ; on the otherhand, mind has to be moulded according to the ideal.

To sum up, a clear conception of the ideal has to be formed ; and through whatsoever way, it has to be reached. If you think your surroundings are unfavourable to the realisation of your ideal, you must give them up, unmindful of any consequence, or you should make those circumstances, by your utmost effort, conducive to the realisation of the goal. Never lower the ideal by fashioning it after the weakness of your mind ; on no account say that the circumstances hold you back from reaching the ideal. The soul is free, it is not dependent on any circumstances. Have faith then that you are not the slave to your circumstances, but they are your slaves ; if you have a mind, you can shape the circumstances to suit you, nay, you can go beyond all circumstances. You are the Lion—you mistake yourself for a sheep and belittle your own glory. "Arise, awake and stop not, till the goal is reached."

A STUDY IN MANTRA SHĀSTRA.

(Nāda—The First Produced Movement.)

Shakti-tattva dealt with in the preceding article * is really the negative aspect of the Shiva-tattva. Though dealt with separately, the two are indissolubly one. Shakti-tattva as the *Tattva-sandoha* says is the Will of Shiva as yet unmanifest :—

Ichchhāsaiva svachchhā samtatasamavāyiniṣṭi śaktiḥ.

Sacharācharasya jagato bījam nikhilasya nījanīlīnasya.

These two Principles (Shiva-shakti Tattva) are the ultimate Potency of creation, and as and when they (considered as one Tattva) commence to act, the first movement towards manifestation takes place. After the previous restful state of Shiva-Shakti there follows the union for the purpose of creation of the two principles which are Shivatattva and Shaktitattva. So it is said in the Shākta Tantra, "Shiva-Shakti samāyogāt jāyate srishtikalpanā" (From the union of Shiva and Shakti arises creative ideation). This union and mutual relation is called Nāda. As the relation is not some substantial thing apart from Shiva or Shakti, Nāda is really Shiva-Shakti passing from the state of mere potency into that of the first ideating movement, from which at length, when finally perfected, the whole universe is evolved. The Shākta Tantras frequently employ erotic symbolism to explain the creative process. This has led a missionary author to the conclusion that "throughout its symbolism and pseudo-philosophisings there lies at the basis of the whole system.....the conception of the sexual relationship as the ultimate explanation of the universe." An American author has called it "a doctrine for suffragette monists"—"religious feminism run mad." Both statements are examples of those depreciative misunderstandings which are so common in western descriptions of eastern belief and which seem so absurd to any one who has understood the subject. How can "sexual relationship" which exists on the gross plane of matter be the ultimate explanation of That which has manifested not only this but all other relations and subjects. As for "feminism" and the supposed priority of the feminine principle, the doctrine has no more to do with either than with old age pensions or any other social question. We are not dealing with the biological question whether the female antedates the male principle, or the social question of the rights of Woman, but with those

* See *Vedanta Kesari*, Page 112.

ultimate dual principles, aspects of the one active Consciousness, which projects from Itself both man and woman and all other dualities in the universe. Shiva and Shakti are one and neither is higher than the other. But how are European writers to be blamed when we find a distinguished Indian Sanskritist affirming that according to Shākta doctrine "God *is* a woman" (the italics are mine).

Shakti is spoken of as female, that is, as Mother, because that is the aspect of the Supreme in which It is thought of as the Genetrix and Nourisher of the universe. But God is neither male nor female. As the Yāmala says for the benefit of all such ignorance "neyam yoshit na cha'pumān na shandah na jadah smritah." These are all symbolisms borrowed from the only world which we ordinarily know—that around us. As for the charge of pseudo-philosophy, if it be that, then the same criticism must apply to the Advaitavāda Vedānta. For the Shākta Tantra is the Sādhanaśāstra of Advaitavāda presenting the teachings of Vedānta in its own manner and in terms of its own ritual symbolism. Thus it is said that Nāda is the Maithuna of Shiva and Shakti and that when Mahākālā was in Viparīta Maithuna with Mahākālī (a form of Maithuna again which is symbolical of the fact that Shiva is Nishkriya and Shakti Sakriyā)—there issued Bindu. For Maithuna others substitute the logical term Mithasamāvayah as a description of Nāda which is Kriyāshakti. Before the appearance of Shabda there must be two. Unity is necessarily actionless, Two involves a third—which is the relation of both; a Trinity of Power which is reflected in the Trimurti of the Mayik world as Brahmā, Vishnu, Rudra.

From Nāda came Mahābindu and this latter differentiated into the Tribindu which is Kāmākalā the Mūla of all Mantras. In Pralaya, Shiva and Shakti exist as the "two in one"; Shiva as Chit, Shakti as Chidrūpinī; the Parā Shakti—not being different or separated from Shiva (Avinabhāvasambandha) and being undivided supreme Chit-Shakti (Akhandaparachichhakti).

The Shāradā-Tilaka (1-7) then says :—from the Sakalaparameshvara vested with the wealth of Sachchhidānanda (Sachchhidānandavibhavāt) appeared Shakti (Shakti Tattva); from Shakti, Nāda and from Nāda, Bindu (Mahābindu). Sakala means with Kālā; that is the Brahman with what the Sāṅkhya calls Mūlaprakriti, the Vedānta calls Avidyā and the Shākta Tantras or Agamas call Shakti. On the other hand Nishkala Shiva is Nirguna Shiva or that aspect of the Brahman which is unconnected with the creative Shakti; just as Sakala Shiva is the Brahman so associated, Shiva

in either aspect is always with Shakti for Shakti is but Himself; but whereas the Shakti associated with Paramashiva is Chidrūpinī and Vishvottirṇā or beyond the Universe; the Shakti which is associated with the creative Shiva is that which appears as the Universe (Vishvātmaka). The Parāshakti is one with Chaitanya at rest. The other aspect which ripens into Nāda and Bindu denotes the "swollen" condition of readiness (Uchchhūnāvasthā) of Her who existed in a subtle state in the great dissolution (Mahāpralaya). These two Shaktis (Nāda, Bindu) are stages in the movement towards the manifestation of the Self as object that is as the Universe. In these the mere readiness or potency of Shaktitattva to act develops into action. In Nādashakti therefore Kriya predominates. When we speak of stages, development and so forth we are using language borrowed from the manifested world which in the sense there understood are not appropriate to a state prior to manifestation! for such manifestation does not take place until after the appearance of the Purusha-Prakriti Tattva and the development from the latter of the impure Tattvas from Buddha to Prithivī. But a Sādhanaśāstra even if it had the power to do otherwise could not usefully use terms and symbols other than those borrowed from the world of the Sadhaka. The Prayogasāra says that the Shakti who is "turned towards" the state of liberation (Niramayapadonmukhī) awakes as Nāda and is turned to Shiva (Shivonmukhī) at which time She is said to be male (Pungrūpā). She who was one with Parashiva in Pralaya as the coalesced "I" (Aham) and "This" (Idam) now in Her creative aspect as Shaktitattva transforms Herself into Nāda. Nāda is action (Kriyāshakti rūpā). In simple language, potency and readiness to create, (Shaktitattva) becomes for the first time active as Nāda and then more so as Bindu which is a further development of Kriyā Shakti dealt with in the next article.

According to Rāghava Bhatta in his Commentary on the Shāradā some writers do not speak of Nāda, though the author of the Shāradā does so in order to indicate the sevenfold character of Tāra. The Nāda state is however indicated by those Achāryyas who speak of Kālā. So it is said "in the Kālatattva which is Sound" (Ravātmani Kālatattve). In the Hymn to Bhuvaneshī also it is said "Obisance to Thee who art called Tattva in the character of Sound" (Namaste ravatvenatattvābhidāne).

Nāda occupies the same place in the Mantra scheme as the Sadākhyā Tattva of the 36 Tattvas, for Bindu is Ishvara Tattva. As consciousness reaches forth to enjoyment and the "I" is separated from the "This," what was mere diffusive consciousness

as Sadākhyā Tattva is objectified into the all-embracing Akāsha the Guna of which is gross Shabda ; that is something experienced as an object apparently different from and other than ourselves.

Nāda which etymologically means " sound " is a technical term of the Mantrashāstra. The latter Shāstra is concerned with Mantravidyā, and Mantra is manifested Shabda which also literally means "Sound." By " Sound " of course is not meant gross sound which is heard by the ear and which is the property of the Kāryākāsha developed as a Vikṛiti from the Prakṛiti Tattva which with the Puruṣa Tattva occupies the place (though without its dualities) of the Puruṣa and Prakṛiti of the Sāṅkhyas. Gross sound belongs to the impure creation as a Guna of Akāsha or the ether which fills space. To avoid misconception it is better to use the word Shabda which with Artha is manifested in the "Garland (or Rosary) of Letters" (Varnamālā with which I will deal on some future occasion).

Nāda is the most subtle aspect of Shabda, as the first putting forth of Kriyāshakti. Paranāda and Paravāk are Parāshakti. Nāda into which it evolves is the unmanifested (avyaktātmā) seed or essence (Nādamātra) of that which is later manifested as Shabda; devoid of particularities such as letters and the like (Varnadivishesharahitah) it develops into Bindu which is of the same character. From the Mantra aspect as the source of Shabda this Mahābindu as it differentiates to "create" is called the Shabdabrahman. Bindu when differentiated is also the source of the Vikṛitis or Tattvas and of their Lords (Tattvesha). In its character as Shabdabrahman it is in the source of the manifested Shabda and Artha (Shabda-shabdārthakaranam). Shabdabrahman is thus a name of Brahman as the immediate creative source of the manifold Shabda and Artha.

What Shabdabrahman is has been the subject of contention as Rāghavabhaṭṭa's Commentary shows. It is sufficient to say here (where we are only concerned with Shabdabrahmātmaka Bindu so far as it is necessary to explain Nāda) that Rāghava Bhaṭṭa rightly says that Shabdabrahman is the Chaitanya in all beings (Chaitanyam sarvabhūtānam). This cosmic Shakti exists in the individual bodies of all breathing creatures (Prāṇi) in the form of Kundalini (Kundalīrūpā). Nāda therefore which assumes the aspect of Bindu is also Chaitanya and Shakti. Nāda is thus the first emanative stage in the production of Mantra. The second is Bindu, or Shabdabrahman ; the third is Tribindu (Bindu, Nāda and Bīja) or Kāmakalā ; the fourth is the production of Shabda as the Mātrikās which are the subtle state of

the subsequently manifested gross letters (Varna) ; and the last is these gross letters, (Sthūlashabda) which compose the manifested Shabda or Mantra composed of letters (Varna) Syllables (Pada) and sentences (Vākya). Thus Mantra ultimately derives from Nāda which is itself the Kriyāshaktirūpa aspect of Shiva-shakti who are the Supreme Nāda (Paranāda) and Supreme Speech (Paravāk). The Prayogasāra says "Oh Devī that Antarātmā in the form of Nāda (Nādātmā) itself makes sound (Nādate svayam) that is displays activity. Urged on by Vāyu (that is the Prāṇavāyu in Jīvas) it assumes the form of letters." Nāda again is itself divided into several stages, namely, Mahanāda or Nādānta, the first movement forth of the Shabdabrahman ; Nāda when Shakti fills up the whole Universe with Nādānta ; in other words the completed movement of which Nādānta is the commencement ; and Nirodhiṇī which is that aspect of Nāda in which its universal operation having been completed it operates in a particular manner and is transformed into Bindu, which is the completion of the first movement of Shakti in which She assumes the character of the Creative Lord of the Universe (śhvara Tattva). Nādānta considered as the end and not the commencement of the series is that in which there is dissolution of Nāda (Nādasya antalayah). Above Bindu the Shaktis which have been already given in previous articles become more and more subtle until Nishkala Unmanī is reached which as the Yoginī hridaya says is uncreate motionless speech (Anutpannanishpandā vāk) the twin aspects of which are Samvit or the Void (Shūnya Samvit) and Samvit as tendency to manifestation in a subtle state (Utpitsuh samvit utpatyāvasthā sukshmā). Unmanī is beyond Kāranarūpā Shakti ; where there is no experience (Bhānam) of Kāla or Kaiā nor of Devatā or Tattva, in the sense of category, as that which distinguishes one thing from another. It is Svanirvānamparampadam, the Nirvikalpaniranjana-shivashakti which is Guruvaktrā.

Nāda and Bindu exist in all Bīja-Mantras which are generally written with the Bindu above and the Nāda below for this is the form of the written Chandrabindu. In however some of the old pictorial representations of Ongkāra the real position of Nāda is shown as being over Bindu as an inverted crescent. Thus the great Bīja, Hrim (ॐ) is composed of Ha, Ra, I and Ma. Of these Ha=Akāsha, Ra=Agnī, I=Ardhanarīśhvara and M=Nāda-bindu. The five Bhūtas are divided into two groups Amurṭta (formless) and Murṭta (with form). Both Akāsha and Vāyu belong to the first group, because until the appearance of Agni as Rūpa, there is no colour and form. Agni therefore heads the

second division. When Akāsha is with Agni there is form; for Ra is the first manifestation of Rūpa. This form is in Ardhanarīshvara the combined Shiva-Shakti who hold all in themselves. The first three letters represent the Ākāra or form aspect. The Mantra receives its complete form by the addition of the Mahātmya which is Nāda-bindu which are Nirākāra (formless) and the Kāraṇa (cause) of the other three in which they are implicitly and potentially contained; being in technical phrase Antargatah of or held within Bindu which again is Antargata of all the previously evolving Shaktis mentioned. The meaning of the Bija Mantra then is that the Chidākāsha is associated (Yukta) with Rūpa. It is thus the Shabda statement of the birth of general form; that is form as such of which all particular forms are a derivation. Hrim is, as pronounced, the gross-body as sound of the ideation of form as such in the Cosmic Mind.

The degree of subtlety of the Shaktis preceding and following Nāda is in the Mantra Shāstra indicated by what is called "the utterance time" (Uchchhāranakāla). Thus taking Bindu as the unit: Unmanī is Nirākāra and Niruchchāra, formless and without utterance, undefined by any adjective; being beyond mind and speech and the universe (Vishvottirṇā). The Uchchhāranakāla of Samanī (so named Manahsahitātāt (on account of its association with mind), the preceding Shakti Unmanī being tadrahīta or devoid of that,) is 1/256. of Vyapikā 1/128 and so on to Nādānta 1/32, Nāda 1/16 to Ardhachandra which is 1/2 of Bindu and to Bindu itself.

Nāda is thus in Mantra Shāstra that aspect of Shakti which evolves into Bindu which later as differentiating into the Tribindu is called the Shabdabrahman who is the creative source of Shabda and Artha and thus of the revealed Shabda which Mantra is.

I would in conclusion meet an objection which I have heard urged namely that the Mantra Shāstra treats its subject with unnecessary complexity of detail. It is undoubtedly difficult and requires careful study. Simple minds may be satisfied with the statement that God created the world. Veda too gives an explanation of the cosmic problem in two words "He saw" (Sa Aikshata). But who saw and what and how did He see? How also if there be only One came there to be anything to see? And what is to see (Īkshana). For the process is not like looking out of a window and seeing a man passing. "He" is Consciousness which is in Itself (Svarūpa) actionless. How then did "It" see and thus become active? Because It has two aspects one (Nishkalashiva) in which It is actionless and the other

(Sakalashiva) in which it is Activity as the embodiment of all the Sangskaras. In this last aspect it is called Shakti. The latter term denotes Active Consciousness. How can one and the same thing have two contradictory aspects? We cannot say, otherwise than by affirming Svabhāva. The ultimate Reality is alogical and unexplainable (Anirvachaniya). That it is one and not two is, it is said, proved by Veda and the actual experience (Sānubhava) had in Yoga. What is "seeing"? It is not the observing of something outside which was there before it was observed. "Seeing" is the rising into consciousness void of objects of the memory of past universe existing in the form of the Sangskāras. Before this can occur Consciousness must obscure to itself its nature and (though in truth an unity) must experience itself as an "I" observing a "This" which it seemingly projects outside Itself. There is no answer again to the question how this is possible except inscrutable Shakti (Achintya Shakti). But just as a man rising from deep sleep has first a more or less bare awareness which is gradually killed out with the thought of self and particular objects; consciousness coming to itself so that in the waking state it again recognises the world which had vanished utterly in dreamless slumber; so it is with the Cosmic Consciousness. Just as man does not pass at once from dreamless slumber to the fullest waking perception; so neither does the Cosmic Consciousness. It passes gradually from its dreamless slumber (Sushupti) state which is the general dissolution (Mahāpralaya) to the waking state (Jāgrat) which is consciousness of the gross universe. The degrees in this emanative process are the Tattvas described in the last article. Manifestation, which is nothing but presentation of apparently external objects to the inner consciousness, is as experienced by the limited consciousness gradual. The seeds of the "I" and "This" are first formed and then grown. The first principal stage is that before and in Ishvara Tattva or Bindu and which therefore includes Nāda. The second is that of the world consciousness arising through the agency of Māyāshakti. These two stages are marked by two principal differences. In the first the "This" (Idam) is seen as part of the self, the two not being differentiated in the sense of inner and outer. In the second the object is externalised and seen as different from the self. In the first when the Self experiences itself as object; the latter is held as a vague undefined generality. There is, as it were, an awareness of self-scission in which the self as subject knows itself as object and nothing more. The degrees in this process have been already explained. In the second not only is the object defined as something which appears to be not the self, but there are a multiplicity of objects each marked by its own differences;

for Māyā has intervened. The whole world-process is thus a reawaking of the Cosmic Consciousness from sleep to the world into which at Dissolution it had fallen; and the Tattvas mark the gradual stages of re-awakening, that is re-awakening to the world but a falling into sleep so far as true consciousness is concerned. So in Kundaliyoga when Kundalini sleeps in the Mālādhāra man is awake to the world; and when She awakes, the world vanishes from Consciousness which then regains its own state (Svarūpa). There is no reason to suppose that, judged in the terms of our present experience, the change is other than gradual. But how it may be asked is this known or what the stages are; for were we there? As individuals we were not, for we speak of that which preceded the formation of the Sakala Jīva Consciousness. But Jīva was there as the plant is in the seed. It is the one Shiva who displays himself in all the Tattvas. Those who fall back into the seed have experience of it. There are however two bases on which these affirmations rest. In the first place there is correspondence between all planes. "What is without is so manifested because it is within"; not of course in the exact form in which it exists without but in the corresponding form of its own plane. We may therefore look for instruction to our daily life and its psychological states to discover both the elements and the working of the cosmic process. These also disclose a gradual unfolding of consciousness from something in the nature of mere awareness to the definite preception of a variety of multiple objects. But the normal experience is by its nature limited. That normal experience is however transcended in Yoga-states when consciousness becomes Niralambapuri that is detached from worldly objects: the experience wherein is (in part at least) available for the instruction of others. Secondly the Shāstras are records of truth beyond the senses (Atindriya Tattva). The Tattvas are not put forth as mere speculative guesses or imaginings of what might have been. When however supersensual truth is described in language it is necessarily expressed in terms, and with the use of symbols, of present experience. That experience is had under conditions of time and space and others. We know and speak of mere potency ripening into actuality, of potential energy becoming more and more kinetic, of shifting states of consciousness and so forth. These are matters the knowledge of which is drawn from the world around us. But this does not necessarily make them wholly untrue or unreal as applied to higher planes. One of the commonest errors is to raise false partitions between things. The experience is real for it is Shiva's and His experience is never unreal. It is according to its degree (that is on its plane) real; an

expression (limited though it be) of the ultimate Reality Itself. We can think in no other terms. But it is also true that these terms and symbols having only complete validity on our plane are no longer wholly true for Consciousness as it uses from it. But other forms of Consciousness must take their place until the Formless is reached. The Tattvas explain (limited though such explanation be by the bounds of our thought and language) the modes through which the returning Consciousness passes until it rests in Itself (Svarūpavishrānti) and has Peace. And so the Buddhist Mantrayāna aptly defines Yoga in the sense of as result, (which in Tibetan is called rNal-rByor) as the "Finding rest or peace". This final state, as also those intermediate ones which lie between it and the normal individual world-consciousness, are only actually realised in Jñāna Yoga (by whatsoever method Jñāna is attained) when the mind has been wholly withdrawn from without and faces the operative power of Consciousness behind it (Niramayapadonmukhi).

But here we are dealing with Mantrayoga when the mind is thinking the states with Jñāna, in whatever degree, realises as Consciousness. The Mantra Shāstra looks at the matter of which we write from the standpoint of Mantra that is of manifested Shabda its object. Kundalinī is both Jyotirmayī, Her Sukshmarūpā; and Mantramayī Her Sthūlarūpā. We begin with the latter. All things are then defined in terms of Shabdārtha and of the various causal forms which precede it. The first of such produced forms is Nāda which becomes Bindu and then on the differentiation of the Tattvas the "hidden sound" (Avyaktarava), the Logos or Cosmic Word utters "the garland of letters" (Varnamāla) of which all Mantras are formed. It traces the degrees in which the ideating Cosmic Consciousness becomes as Supreme Speech (Paravāk) the genetrix of the subtle and gross Shabda which are the Matrikas and Varnas respectively. That Supreme Speech (Paravāk) is without idea or language, but is represented as gradually assuming the state in which it utters both and projects from Itself into the sensual world the objects (Artha) which they denote. The actual manifestation of these from Parashabda through Pashyanti Madhyama and Vaikhari will be described in another article. The practice of Mantra Yoga not only gives, from a merely intellectual standpoint, an understanding of Vedānta which cannot ordinarily be had by the mere reading of philosophical texts; but also produces a pure Bhāva ripening into Mahābhāva through the purification of mind (Chittashuddhi) which such practice (according to the rules of Sādhana laid down in the Tantras or Mantrashāstra) gives, as one of its Siddhis. What the Western, and sometimes the English

educated Indian, does not understand or recognise, is the fact that the mere reading of Vedantic texts without Chittashuddhi will neither bring true understanding or other fruitful result. The experienced will find that this apparent complexity and wealth of detail is not useless and is from an extra-ritual standpoint to a considerable extent, and from that of Sādhana wholly, necessary. A friend of mine was once asked by a man in a somewhat testy manner "to give him a plain exposition of the Vedāntas in five minutes." It takes years to understand perfectly any science or profession. How can that which claims to explain all be mastered in a short talk? But more than this; however prolonged the intellectual study may be, it must, to be really fruitful, be accompanied by some form of Sādhana. The Tantra Shāstras contain this for the Hindu, though it is open to him or any other to devise a better if he can. Forms ever change with the ages, while the truth (if it be such) which they express, remains.

"THE GOSPELS AND ACTS."

(Continued from page 184).

ACTS.

The simple and unvarnished first-hand account of the incidents of Paul's voyage to Rome, being from one of the "We" fragments is in pleasing contrast to the highly worked up story of his trial we have just gone over. After a prolonged voyage Paul arrives at Rome and is well-received by the brethren. He is also treated considerably by the authorities being allowed to "abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him." After an interval of a few days he calls his friends together and makes known his case to them and explains why he is sent to Rome. They assure him that they had heard nothing against him from any source and they add that they would like to know his opinion regarding "this sect" which "everywhere is spoken against," some sect to which probably he had attributed his troubles. Which sect is meant is not specified, but if we may hazard a supposition it is the sect of the Jesus cult, the same that was known as the *Christianoi*. For this is the only sect, with the exception of the Nazarenes to which Paul himself belonged, of which mention is made in these narratives. The definiteness also of the designation—"this sect"—plainly points to one that was well-known. It is not improbable that that cult may have viewed the Apostolic body with suspicion and jealousy, and indeed these very documents would seem to show that it subsequently supplanted the Apostolic body and obtained possession of their documents.

We are not told anything of Paul's trial, probably it never came off for want of accusers or at any rate of evidence. But Paul continues his teaching in Rome; as usual "he expounded, testifying the Kingdom of God and persuading them both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning till evening." This qualifying expression testifies to his untiring zeal in the service of Truth.

Then follows one of the usual inconsistent and unmeaning interpolations in the text that turn away the sense of something already stated and attempt to give a different shape to it. We are just told of Paul's kind and welcome reception among his countrymen at Rome and of his successful work, that he testified, and persuaded the Jews from their sacred books. Now we read he denounces some of them. The idea of denunciation could only rest on the mistaken notion that Paul was simply a *preacher* trying to "convert" the undiscerning crowd by talk. These interpolations among writings relating to the Apostolic body show that they must have been introduced long after the times of the first Apostles and of Paul, when all knowledge of the principles of their teaching had faded from the religious memory.

Here the narrative of Paul ends. Looking over these records we must admit that those of the earliest Apostles read as if they were no more than hints intended to indicate the nature of their teachings. We find that these all are based on the philosophical doctrine of the Christ—the Divine in man. But this absence of details clearly points to the possession of very scanty traditional information in regard to the Apostles themselves and their doings.

We come on historical ground in connection with Paul. The earliest accounts in his case also can only be considered as traditional for the same reason. We are told nothing beyond the statement that he proclaimed the Word. It is in connection with his first visit to Macedonia that we have a section of the fragmentary "We" document. It relates Paul's leaving Troas, his arrival at Philippi and an incident or two that occurred there (Chap. XVI). The next fragment of that document is found at Chap. XX, v. 5, when Paul leaves Philippi after his *second* visit. It brings him up to Miletus (v. 15). It is taken up again at Chap. XXI, v. 1, which is apparently a continuation of the former. The intervening matter would seem to be an interpolation, the speaker in this case is too self-assertive for Paul and too despondent. The last fragment of the document forms Chap. XXVII and XXVIII up to v. 16. The characteristics of this document are its simplicity of style and freedom from anything of the marvellous or startling.

Paul has now reached the goal that had been marked out for him (Chap. XIX, v. 21). Having visited Greece and, no doubt, established centres there, he is now brought to the heart of the Empire. We read

he abode there "two whole years in his own hired dwelling and received all that went in unto him." That is a vague statement. But he must have had very definite work to do. As nothing further is said about him after this, it is possible that he withdrew from the active and external side of his labours and confined himself to their higher aspects, among chosen disciples. For we may be sure that the task before him was to pass the light on to those coming after. These must have received it in secret, and passed it on in the same manner. For there have been since, and still are, schools whose origin may be traced to Judeo-greek beginnings, and so it is quite possible that there may be or may have been philosophical schools claiming descent from the Apostles.

THE CULT OF "JESUS"

Indirectly connected with the narrative of Paul there is an incident related in Chap. XVIII which demands notice. At v. 24 we read that a certain Alexandrian Jew named Apollos came to Ephesus. He is described as "an eloquent man" and "mighty in the scriptures," also that "he spake and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, knowing only the baptism of John." Two friends of Paul, Aquila and Priscilla met him at Ephesus. They were impressed by the manner in which he spoke in the synagogue. But he had been taught by word of mouth only, that is, was acquainted with the legends and beliefs of his sect, and no more. So Aquila and Priscilla, it is said, "took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more accurately." Apollos apparently was a member of a cult of Jesus, similar to that we have already read of in Chap. XI, viz.: the *Christianoi*. It was a popular creed, he knew "only the baptism of John," that is, baptism by water, the outward rite of immersion in a running stream (see Acts, I, 5 and John I, 33). There seems to have been such a cult in existence before the beginning of the Christian Era. Dr. C. J. Whitby, in his book "Makers of Man," remarks: "Professor W. B. Smith has adduced many reasons for suspecting the existence for some indefinite period among the Jews of the Dispersion, of the cult of a divine person whose name or title was Jesus." Then there is the following footnote—'Cf. "Was there a Pre-Christian Jesus cult?" by A. Ransom.' Dr. Whitby goes on to say, 'The followers of the New Testament Jesus were, on this hypothesis, but the originators of a new sect or heresy in an already ancient worship of a divine person bearing the same name, while the New Testament documents themselves "bear evidence of being the writings of a party that attempted to effect a compromise between the followers of the old Jewish cult and the Christian schismatics." Hence the repeated occurrence, in the Gospels and the Acts, of the phrase *ta peri tou jessu*, "the things concerning the Jesus," which certainly reads like a stereotyped form. Dr. Whitby hereby falls into the natural error of identifying the followers of Jesus of Nazareth with

those of the other Jesus (the ancient cult). The former were not "the originators of a new sect or heresy in an already ancient worship, &c," since they never belonged to the latter sect. In another footnote of the book quoted ("Makers of Man") we read, 'an ancient Nassene (Gnostic) psalm, of Non-Christian and probably Anti-Christian origin, "represents Jesus the son, resting in the bosom of the father, and begging to be sent, to suffering, erring man" (Arthur Ransom, *loc cit sup*).

The Jesus of this cult was most probably Jesus of Bethlehem of Matthew's Gospel.

But if John was a preacher of this cult, Jesus (of Nazareth) could not have gone to him to be baptised, or, at any rate, in the public manner stated in the Gospel. For the *Holy Spirit* is said to have descended on him at his baptism, an expression which could not be employed in connection with a mere outward symbol, such as water-baptism is. John himself we know recognised the essential difference between the two baptisms (John I, 26),; and besides, we do not read in John's Gospel that Jesus was baptised by him, only that John bare witness of the descent of the Holy Spirit.

That the baptism of John was a different thing from "the baptism with the Holy Spirit," which was the baptism of Jesus, is plain. Again that the "word of mouth" instruction, which Apollos had received in the cult, was different from "the way of God" method imparted to him by Aquila and his wife is also plain. Therefore, that Paul's method was a different thing from that of the Jesus cult, a result we have already reached, is corroborated by this incident of Apollos.

Popular customs and practices linger long and we still find the old forms of the Jesus cult in existence—water-baptism and word of mouth instruction, while the higher Apostolic methods have passed away and are absolutely forgotten. There are to day many Apolloses but no Aquilas or Priscillas.

This is a significant fact and it points the earnest student of these scriptures to the direction in which he must look for a real advance in scriptural truth and a return to Apostolic methods, viz.: to the old injunction of the Master, *melanoeile*. Raise the *Thought* level, after purifying the mind of all lower desires.

And indeed these are the spiritual elements in every creed, the essence of every religion, obscured often by the tendency of the mind to materiality—to look at things as if from without. In Acts XVII, 29 we are enjoined that being of like nature to God we ought not to look upon Him as an outward object, as some materialised thing. The *Thought* and *Mind* level should be raised out of the tendency to look outwards. Men should realise their inner nature. God is not an outer object but the spirit within man, and therefore,

man being of like nature with him ought to realise the spiritual within, ought to live in his inner nature, instead of entirely dissipating its powers in pursuing the external. It is this concentration of energy that every religion teaches by its various moral and spiritual precepts. Nowhere is it put more plainly that it is the outward seeking mind that draws men into evil than in that practical book of these scriptures, the Epistle of James: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted of evil, and He Himself tempteth no man; but each man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed." Thus purification of the mind is the withdrawing of it from the influences that draw it outwards, so that the soul may be able to rise to its spiritual self.

We have come to the end of our study of these very interesting and very important records of events of two thousand years ago. They tell us of the external side of a great spiritual movement which sprang up among the Jews some one hundred years before the beginning of our era, under the direction of him who is vaguely known as the Rabbi Jeschu. The movement worked itself outwards from the quiet and secrecy of some Jewish cloister. The changing times, the influence of intellectualism over the conduct of human life and progress called for a re-assertion of the spiritual side of human nature.

This was recognised amongst some of the more spiritual-minded in Judæa at this time. Some great event was also being looked for in the Roman Empire; and in the temple in Jerusalem the aged Simeon who was "righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, the Holy spirit being upon him," saw that there was coming "a light for uncovering (from darkness) of the nations" (Luke II, 32). Judaism seemed the best starting point for the new revelation, or rather for the new repetition of the old revelation. But this was the temporal *locale*. The real springs of the movement were, of course, in that Spirit of Truth, which, like an atmosphere, always surrounds the lives of men. For the world is governed by Truth. Now and again there forms a centre of force in this atmosphere which sends out its waves, and they beat upon the minds of men so that they may react and respond to the truth. Such a wave was set in motion at this time from the centre of Jewish spirituality, which, moving with the aid of the wide-spread Greek culture of the day spread out to all parts of the civilised world. The Truth was the same. The ancient mystical ideas of the Jewish scriptures, now almost lost, and forgotten by their teachers, were revived again. Hence, the Kingdom of Heaven began to be proclaimed as against the too assertive claims of the Kingdom of man, and the spirit of religious truth and honesty as against the blind and self-seeking orthodoxy.

Both Jew and Greek were now to see that their faith was one, and that the spiritual goal was the same for all men. The Jew who

had become exclusive, imagining that he was the chosen of a just God, was reminded by one who was himself a Jew that "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him."

The gospels but accentuate the spirit of Israel, of whom Matthew Arnold writes in his *Literature and Dogma*: "They (Israel) had dwelt upon the thought of conduct, and of right and wrong, until the *not ourselves*, which is in us and all around us, became to them adorable eminently and altogether as a *power which makes for righteousness*; which makes for it unchangeably and eternally, and is therefore called *The Eternal*."

This movement therefore was but a re-assertion of The Old Testament faith, of the power of a spirituality that never dies, that, perhaps, may burn low for a time but inevitably flashes and brightens up again. The New Testament writings only reflect, in a degree, the spirit of the Old. For expression of every phase of human religious sentiment, of every longing of the soul, its expectation and devotion, its aspirations after the Divine; for insistence on righteousness and holiness of living; for lofty and awe-inspiring thoughts on the Divine Majesty, Glory and Power; for faith in Divine governance and guidance and the final restoration of all things through the spirit of the Divine; and even for simplicity and grandeur of language. Take up the writings of the Old Testament at any place and their awfulness and dignity are striking. Such a scripture and such a faith can never be superseded or forgotten. New faiths may be lit at their flames but these cannot extinguish the old, they can only testify to their worth, and sing to their praise. For new faiths do not make new truths. As an instance, it is the ancient spiritual faith of the Jew that has become the legacy of the world of these later times, his God and Redeemer are still the God and Redeemer of men; the old truths of his scriptures are again repeated to the world once more, and the work is also again done by a Jew. Who knows but that even the races of men may be the same. And there can be no new truth to reveal if the eternal verities are always the same, they can only be variously reflected in the minds of men. New names of prophets and saviours may be heard but the working agents in these processes of the revolving ages are the same that were before: When Jesus asked his disciples, "who do men say that I am? They told him saying, John the Baptist; and others Elijah; but others one of the prophets" (Mark VIII, 28). Thus the new Teacher was but the former Teacher come back once more. Again, as we read (Mark IX) when Jesus gave to his chief disciples Peter, James and John, after taking them up to a high mountain by themselves, that wonderful look behind the veil of his personality, the disciples saw there Elijah and Moses, Stephen also speaks on this point (Acts VII, 37)—"This is that

Moses who said unto the children of Israel, a prophet shall God raise up unto you from among your brethren like unto me." And Moses when he said this must have had in view more than one re-appearance of the prophet for he is referring to the whole future history of his people, until "thou shall be perfect with Jehovah thy God" (Dent. XVIII, 18).

This ancient land of India we know has also its records of many *Avalaras* drawing their inspirations from the Eternal Vedas.

Thus the Truth ever lingers about the spirits of men to call them to God, and these special calls are made according to the times and seasons of God.

This is one of the great lessons we may learn from a study of these Gospels.

THE SAINT DURGACHARAN NAG.

III

Nagmahasaya was now grown up. With a view to strengthen the bond of family life the aunt of the motherless boy settled his marriage. The boy was married to Srimati Prasanna Kumari, an eleven year old daughter of Sri Jagannath Das a well to do man of Raisdia in Vikrampur.

Five months after his marriage he came down to Calcutta and stayed with his father. He began his studies in the Campbell Medical School ; but his strong zeal for learning did not meet with an equal measure of success. Here also he could not prosecute his studies for more than a year and a half ; why he left the Campbell Medical School, is shrouded in mystery like many other events of his life.

After leaving the Campbell Medical School, Nagmahasaya studied Homœopathy under Doctor Behari Lal Bhaduri the renowned Physician. As days went on Dr. Bhaduri became much attracted by the amiable disposition of Nagmahasaya and finding in him an eager student taught him with great care. In order to impart him a practical training, Dr. Bhaduri would take Nagmahasaya in company with him while on his visits to the patients. Daily Morning and Evening Nagmahasaya used to get his lessons from Dr. Bhaduri and would revise them at home. Nearly two years passed away thus. Nagmahasaya had to remain in Calcutta for the most part of the year for acquiring experience in his calling; his wife too mostly remained in her father's house ; consequently he had hardly any opportunity of cultivating acquaintance with his wife since his marriage and even when

opportunities came, Nagmahasaya felt shy to come near his wife. If the wife happened to be in his native village at the time when he had gone there he would climb a tree as the evening approached and would remain there, lest he should have to pass the night with her. He would never come down from the tree until and unless his aunt promised to allow him to live in her own room.

At this curious conduct of her nephew she would console herself with the thought that better feeling towards his wife would come in time though not now. But alas, her hopes were blasted by the sudden death of the daughter-in-law. The news of her death reached Nagmahasaya in Calcutta. She died of dysentery ; the untimely death of his wife touched him deeply but he felt much relieved. He thought that Providence freed him from worldly bondage, and therefore was happy. But Dindayal was greatly shocked at her death. Thinking that he would build a new home of happiness by the marriage of his son he never married again after the loss of his wife. But what man proposes God disposes. Dindayal made up his mind to get his son married again and at once started for his village with the son. But the bride after his choice could not be found out within the limited time he could spare. Therefore having left the selection of the bride in the hands of his son-in-law he came back to Calcutta with his son.

Nagmahasaya again took to the study of Homeopathy. He bought a small-box of Homeopathic medicines and began to treat the poor people of different localities and distributed medicines amongst them for nothing. Dr. Bhaduri remarked on more than one occasion that he had very good results in many difficult cases by the use of medicines prescribed by Nagmahasaya. Nagmahasaya was a prodigy in prescribing medicines. On a certain occasion the mother-in-law of Nagmahasaya came to Calcutta ; she saw the divine power in his treatment of patients and used to say, "my son-in-law is verily *Mahadeva* (God). Whatever medicine he gives is always effective." Gradually the good-name of Nagmahasaya came to be known all round. While yet a student, the young physician became the refuge of the poor. Patients began to pour in great numbers to his house. Nagmahasaya could now earn money if he so desired, but he did not do so as his ideal was not to get practice ; he treated people in order to serve them. He would never miss any opportunity of serving others. He never hesitated to do even menial work in serving others. His father's friends sometimes took advantage over him and made him do their marketing ; he carried even their bags of rice and bundles of fuel.

Nagmahasaya was always ready to serve the distressed. There was a rich man at Hatkhola named Premchand Munshi ; although he was rich, he never engaged any servant for him in his house. He had a distantly related cousin who had to do all the work of a servant and a cook. Munshi used to take his daily bath in the river Ganges. He used to go once before his bath, to Nagmahasaya's place to get tobacco prepared by him for several times at short intervals. He would then get oil from Nagmahasaya for bathing. Finishing his ablution in the Ganges he would return home. Thus he passed his days. Suddenly his cousin died. Premchand was extremely miserly and for fear of incurring extra expenses he never mixed with his neighbours. Therefore he was now put to great difficulty ; not a single man lent him a helping hand for cremating the dead body of his cousin. The millionaire of aristocratic birth begged for help from door to door of his neighbours but none came to his rescue. Driven to despair Munshi took refuge in the Nag family ; the father and son helped him out of that critical situation.

After a year's apprentice under Dr. Bhaduri, Nagmahasaya came to be acquainted with Suresh Babu. Suresh came of the well-known Datta family of *Hatkhola*. Before coming in contact with Sree Ramakrishna, he had a leaning towards Brahmoism. While Suresh was a worshipper of god without form and had no reverence for gods and goddesses Nagmahasaya was an out and out orthodox Hindu, and had an unshaking reverence for gods and Brahmins. Now and then there were hot discussions between them. Nagmahasaya used to argue thus:—"God and goddesses of Hindus as well as Brahman are all true, but it is only after persistent effort and sustained application that *Jivas* (mankind in general) in the course of several lives may attain the realisation of *Brahman* but I doubt whether even one or two in a million attain this stage." He would further remark "Well Sir, do you go so far as to say that the *Vedas*, the *Puranas*, the *Tantras* and the *Mantras* are all false ? The realisation of *Brahman* is the final goal indeed, but until and unless one goes through all these, one cannot attain Him. Unless *Mahamaya* wills, unless She makes way none has the power to realise Him for himself ! Suresh would vehemently reply, "Keep aside, Sir, your *Shastras*, etc., I have no faith in them" ; but Nagmahasaya's prostrations before the images of gods and goddesses and his unshakable respect towards Brahmins, made him think within himself that a man of such a faith can surely attain the Brahman very soon.

GENERAL NEWS.

We have received a copy of the sixteenth annual report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram, Kankhal, Hardwar, for the year 1916. From a perusal of the Report the public will be able to estimate the importance and extent of the work of service and the relief of suffering which were undertaken during the year. The Sevashram ministered not only to peoples coming from widely distant parts of India but to members of all communities, irrespective of caste, creed or nationality. The total number of persons who obtained relief during the period under review (January to December 1916), were 18,458, of which 844 were in-door patients and 18,114 were out patients. It will be seen from the record given in the report that the relief work of the Sevashram has rapidly increased from 42 in-door and 178 out-door patients during the first year of its existence to 844 in-door and 18,114 out-door patients during the year under review. This extraordinary increase in the number of patients who daily come to the Sevashram for relief, unmistakably prove what amount of service to humanity this Sevashram is doing. Owing to the rapidly increasing usefulness of the institution and consequent pressing demands for relief, expansion in its operations in certain directions has become imperative ! A general ward for accommodating poor diseased pilgrims as well as poor people from the outlying villages is a pressing necessity to be built. (About the sum of Rs. 5,000 has been subscribed to ; Rs. 1,500 still needed). The present out-door dispensary being situated away from the public road, it is intended to build a new house with spacious rooms in a prominent place on the road side. It has been estimated that a sum of Rs. 5,000 would be necessary for the construction of the said out-door dispensary. The present building will then be used as an additional ward to the in-door hospital. A guest-house for the relatives of the diseased pilgrims when they are admitted into the hospital is also an urgent necessity which is estimated to cost Rs. 3,000. The Sevashram has recently started a Night-School for the poor boys of the locality—who receive a sort of primary education in reading, writing and arithmetic. It is intended to raise the school to the Middle-Vernacular standard. A permanent building to suit its requirements is now intended to be built ; a cost of Rs. 3,000 is estimated for it. The Sevashram appeals to every one who sympathises with the aims and objects of the Sevashram, its catholicity and its ideals of service as preached by Swami Vivekananda, which is sought to be practicalised here, to contribute generously to any of the above funds and to help it to carry on its work ; and we hope its appeal will be readily responded to by the generous public.

The Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram, Brindaban for the year 1916 is to our hand. We are glad to learn that the Sevashram has been able to acquire some 8.32 acres of land on the banks of the Jumna, just when in consequence of an enormous increase of work, it was sorely in need of extending its buildings. The building works have commenced. But it is to be regretted that the Sevashram cannot complete the hospital for want of proper funds. It cannot take up in its hands to build up separate wards for infectious diseases, a surgical ward, operation room, out-door dispensary, kitchen, worker's quarters, menials' quarters, latrine and a guest house. It is also in need of building one home for the invalids. It would be a pity if funds be not forthcoming for realising the noble project of the Sevashram. The striking record of 317 in-door and 37,771 out-door patients in the year 1916 will speak for the extent of work done by this Sevashram.

From the annual report for the seventeenth year of the Ramakrishna Mission Branch Centre Dacca we come to learn that the centre has extended its activities in various directions. Its objects and scope fall under the following three heads—(1) Missionary work, (2) Educational work and (3) Charitable work. As regards Missionary work, the Dacca Mission holds weekly religious sittings on entirely nonsectarian principles to infuse religious fervour into the minds of the local people. It is gratifying to note that the Mission is trying its best to impart primary education among the boys of poor and neglected classes; with that object in view it has started one Sree Ramkrishna Free School. The Mission authorities, we learn, have a view in their mind to gradually develop this school into a free High English School conducted under monastic control. The system of giving practical training on gardening, agriculture and some cottage industries to the young boys of the school in addition to the general curriculum shall be soon introduced. Only recently the centre has started one in-door hospital where the number of patients treated was 19 and in its out-door department 101 patients were treated. While opening the indoor-hospital, Lord Carmichael, the ex-Governor of Bengal, in appreciation of its charitable work spoke in the course of his address—"The members of the Ramkrishna Mission are actuated by that spirit of helpfulness which is so much needed in this world, the spirit that makes men ask themselves the simple question—"can I help" and which makes them say—"If I can it is my duty to do so," the spirit which leads to social service without any distinction of caste or race or creed.

We owe an apology to the Secretary, Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, for not being able to review at an earlier date, its thirty-ninth annual report which he so kindly sent to us. We are glad to inform our readers that the Mission operations—the work to which the Samaj attaches the greatest importance—have been more vigorous than in previous years and during the year under report the missionaries and workers visited almost all the presidencies and provinces of India. It is highly worthy of praise that education in all its grades, higher, secondary, middle and primary among middle classes, and backward and labouring classes receive great attention in the hands of the Samaj and it has been very active in spreading female education in Bengal. Its social service has grown big and we hope this work will in future be done with more concentrated energy.

SECOND CHAPTER.

तदेतत्सत्यं मन्त्रेषु कर्माणि कवयो यान्यपश्यन्तानि त्रेतायां
बहुधा सन्तानि । तान्याचरथ नियतं सत्यकामा एष वः पन्थाः
सुकृतस्य लोके ॥ १ ॥

तत् that एतत् this सत्यं true ; कवयः the wise मन्त्रेषु in the Mantras (hymns) यानि which कर्माणि sacrificial works अपश्यन् saw त्रेतायां in the three Vedas (or in the Treta age) बहुधा in various ways सन्तानि are spread. सत्यकामाः O truth seekers, नियतं always आचरथ perform वः for you सुकृतस्य of good deeds लोके to the world एषः this पन्थाः path.

This is the truth ; what works the wise saw in the Mantras are much elaborated in the three Vedas. Do ye perform them ever, O ye truth-seekers ; this is your path to the world attainable by meritorious works.

[Note—In this chapter the Sruti exhorts those who want heavenly enjoyments, to engage themselves ever in sacrificial works as described in the Vedas. The motive is that by such performances man will gain the experience of the truth of the ephemerality of worldly as well as of heavenly enjoyments, as will be delineated in the next chapter. Unless man experiences it himself to a certain extent, the higher doctrines of renunciation, Jnana, cannot have any hold upon him. This is the reason why Karma Kanda precedes the Jnanakanda, Karma and Upasana naturally must precede the Jnana or Supreme Knowledge.]

यदा लेलायते अग्निः समिद्धे हव्यवाहने ।

तदाज्यभागावन्तरेणाहुतीः प्रतिपादयेत् ॥ २ ॥

यदा when समिद्धे well ignited हव्यवाहने in the sacrificial fire (lit the carrier of oblations to the gods) अग्निः the flames लेलायते flare, तदा then आज्यभागौ the two portions of fire, अन्तरेण between आहुतीः libations प्रतिपादयेत् pour.

When flare high the flames of well-lit fire, let oblations be offered (with faith) between the two portions of fire (where ghee should be poured).

[Note—Flame is considered as the tongue of Fire, and all oblations should be offered into it, implying thereby that they are put into the very mouth of Agni as it were. No oblation should be poured when the fire is smouldring. Here reference is made of Agnihotra sacrifice, that precedes all other sacrifices.]

यस्याग्निहोत्रमदर्शमासमचातुर्मास्यमनाग्रयणमतिथिवर्जितं
च । अहुतमवैश्वदेवमविधिना हुतमासप्तमास्तस्य लोकान्निहन्ति
॥ ३ ॥

यस्य whose अग्निहोत्रं Agnihotra sacrifice अदर्शम् devoid of (Darsha) works to be done during the New-moon day, अपौर्णमासम् devoid of the sacrificial works to be done during the full-moon day, अचातुर्मास्यं devoid of the sacrificial work to be done during the four months of Autumn, अनाग्रयणं devoid of the harvest sacrifice, अतिथिवर्जितं unattended by guests, अहुतं devoid of offerings, अवैश्वदेवम् without the Vaiswadeva ceremony, i. e., feeding the animals and birds, अविधिना not according to the injunctions, हुतम् offered, तस्य his आसप्तमान् to the seven लोकान् the worlds निहन्ति destroy.

Whose Agnihotra is devoid of the Darsa and Pournamase sacrifices, is without the four-months' (autumnal) observances, is not attended by guests and devoid of Vaiswadeva ceremonies, is not offered at all or offered improperly,—(that Agnihotra) destroys his seven worlds.

[Destroys his seven worlds—i. e., by such irregular performance of the Agnihotra, he cannot attain any of the seven worlds, viz., Bhuh, Bhuvah, Swah, Maha, Jana, Tapa and Satyah.]

काली कराली च मनोजवा च सुलोहिता या च सुधूमवर्णा ।
स्फुलिङ्गिनी विश्वरूची च देवी लेलायमाना इति सप्त जिह्वाः ॥ ४ ॥

काली, कराली, मनोजवा, सुलोहिता, सुधूमवर्णा, स्फुलिङ्गिनी, विश्वरूची
these are the seven names, देवी brilliant, लेलायमानाः flickering इति
these सप्त seven जिह्वाः the tongues.

Kali, Karali, Manojava, Sudhumavarna, Sulohita Sphulingini and the brilliant Viswaruchi are the seven flickering tongues of fire.

एतेषु यश्चरते भ्राजमानेषु यथाकालं चाहुतयो आददायन् ।
तन्नयन्त्येताः सूर्यस्य रश्मयो यत्र देवानां पतिरेकोऽधिवासः ॥ ५ ॥

यः he who भ्राजमानेषु flaring एतेषु into these यथाकालं in proper time, चरते performs (sacrifices) एताः these आहुतयः oblations हि indeed सूर्यस्य of the sun रश्मयः rays (भूत्वा becoming) आददायन् offered तं that देशं world नयन्ति lead यत्र where एकः one देवतानां of the gods पतिः lord अधिवासः (भवति) resides.

If a man performs the sacrifices in proper time into these flaring flames,—these offered oblations, in the form of solar rays, take him to that world where the lord of gods resides.

[Take, etc.—i. e., by virtue of those offerings he goes to the heaven of Indra.]

एषोहीति तमाहुतयः सुवर्चसः सूर्यस्य रश्मिभिर्यजमानं वहन्ति ।
प्रियां वाचमभिवदन्त्योऽर्चयन्त्य एष वः पुण्यः सुकृतो ब्रह्मलोकः
॥ ६ ॥

सुवर्चसः effulgent आहुतयः the offerings एहि एहि come here, come here, एषः this वः your सुकृतः earned by good works, पुण्यः holy ब्रह्मलोकः the world of Brahma, इति thus प्रियां sweet वाचम् words अभिवदन्त्यः speaking, (तथा so also) अर्चयन्त्यः praising तं that यजमानं the sacrificer सूर्यस्य of the sun रश्मिभिः by the rays वहन्ति carry.

The luminous offerings welcome him saying, “come here, come here, this is the holy Brahma-world earned

by thy good deeds," and thus praising the sacrificer with sweet words carry him on the rays of the sun.

[Note—The Sruti speaks here rather poetically how a sacrificer by virtue of his sacrifice attains heaven.]

पुत्रा ह्येते अहदा यज्ञरूपा अष्टादशोक्तमवरं येषु कर्म ।
एतच्चेयो ये अभिनन्दन्ति मूढा जरामृत्युं ते पुनरेवापि यन्ति ॥ ७ ॥

एते these हि assuredly अष्टादश eighteen fold यज्ञरूपाः the yajna पूजाः raft अहदाः infirm, येषु in which अवरम् the inferior, कर्म work उक्तं is told ये which मूढाः ignorant, unwise एतत् this ज्ञेयः as the supreme good इति अभिनन्दन्ति cry with joy ते they पुनः again एव indeed जरामृत्युं old age and death अपि यन्ति get.

Frail indeed is the raft of an eighteen fold yajna, in which these inferior works are mentioned. Those ignorant persons who praise these as the supreme good, get old age and death again and again.

[Eighteenfold yajna—The yajna that is performed with the help of sixteen priests, the *yajamana* for whom the sacrifice is done, and his wife.]

अविद्यायामन्तरे वर्त्तमानाः स्वयं धीराः पण्डितं मन्यमानाः ।
जहन्त्यमानाः परियन्ति मूढा अन्धेनैव नीयमाना यथान्धाः ॥ ८ ॥

अविद्यायां in ignorance अन्तरे in the midst वर्त्तमानाः existing, स्वयं himself धीराः wise पण्डितंमन्यमानाः puffed up with vain knowledge जहन्त्यमानाः suffering again and again, मूढाः the fools अन्धेन by the blind नीयमानाः led अन्धाः the blind यथा as परियन्ति wander about.

Fools, wise in their own conceit, dwelling in the midst of ignorance, (yet) puffed up with vain knowledge, suffering again and again, wander about like the blind led by the blind.

[Cf. *Kathopanishad*, II. 5.]

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. IV.]

JANUARY, 1918.

[No. 9.]

A STUDY IN THE MANTRA SHÂSTRA.

(Bindu or Shakti Ready to Create.)

BY

Arthur Avalon.

From Nâda, previously described, evolved Bindu (Nâda bindu-samudbhavah). What then is Bindu? Literally the term means a "drop" or a "point" such as the Anusvâra breathing. But in the Mantra Shâstra it has a technical meaning. It is not, as a distinguished Indian Sanskritist called it merely a "drop." It is not that "red drops" mix with "white drops" and so forth a description of his which reminds one more of the pharmacy or sweet shop than the Shâstra. This and other statements betray an ignorance of Indian tradition and a mental attitude alien to Indian thinking which distinguishes so many of those whose souls have been captured in the net of an English education. Those who speak another's language and think another's thought must see to it that their own Indian self is not, through the dangers to which it is thus exposed, lost. But even an educated Western, ignorant of the Shâstra, but with a knowledge of the history of religious thought would have perceived the significance of the term Bindu when he had learnt that one of its literal meanings was a "Point,"

In an anonymous Mystical Work published in the eighteenth century by one of the "French Protestants of the Desert" called *Le Mystère de la Croix*, it is said (p. 9). "Ante omnia Punctum exstitit; non to atomon, aut mathematicum sed diffusivum. Monas erat explicite: implicite Myrias. Lux erat, erant et Tenebrae; Principium et Finis Principii. Omnia et nihil: Est et non."

"Before all things were, there was a Point (Punctum: Bindu) not the Atom or mathematical point (which though it is without magnitude has position) but the diffusive (neither with magnitude nor position). In the One (Monas) there was implicitly contained the Many (Myrias). There was Light and Darkness: Beginning and End: Everything and Nothing: Being and Non-being (that is, the state was neither Sat nor Asat)." The author says that the all is engendered from the central indivisible Point of the double triangle (that is what is called in the Tantras Shatkona Yantra) regarded as the symbol of creation. "Le Tout est engendré du point central indivisible du double triangle." This "Point" is one of the world's religious symbols and is set in the centre of a Shatkona as above or in a circular Mandala or sphere. On this symbol St. Clement of Alexandria in the second century A.D. says that if abstraction be made from a body of its properties, its depth, breadth, and then length "the point which remains is a unit, so to speak, having position; from which if we abstract position there is the notion of unity" (Stromata V. 2. Ante Nicene Library Vol IV). Again Shelley in his "Prometheus" says "plunge into eternity where recorded time seems but a point."

Where does the universe go at the Great Dissolution (Mahā-pralaya)? It collapses so to speak into a Point. This point may be regarded as a mathematical point in so far as it is without any magnitude whatever but as distinguished from it, in that it has in fact no position. For there is then no notion of space. It need hardly be said that this is a symbol, and a symbol borrowed from our present experience cannot adequately represent any state beyond it. We only conceive of it as a point as something infinitesimally subtle which is in contrast with the extended manifested universe which is withdrawn into it. This Point is Bindu. But this again is to make use of material images borrowed from the world of objective form. Bindu is an aspect of Shakti or Consciousness; therefore it is interpreted also in terms of our present consciousness. As so interpreted and as Īshvara Tattva, which it is, Shakti is called Bindu; because here consciousness completely identifies itself with the universe as unmanifested Idam and thus subjectifies it and becomes with it a point of consciousness.

Thus by way of example the individual mind is completely subjectified and exists for each of us as a mathematical point (and so it is spoken of as being of atomic dimension) though the body to the extent to which it is not subjectified, appears as an object or extended thing. We never conceive of our own minds as extended because of this complete subjectification. In the same way the consciousness of Īshvara completely subjectifies the universe. He does not of course see the universe as a multiplicity of objects outside and different from Himself: for if He did He would be Jivā and not Īshvara. He sees it as an object which is a whole and which whole is Himself. In Sadākhya Tattva "Otherness" (Idam) is presented to Consciousness by Shakti. This Idam is then faintly perceived (to use the language of the Vimarshinī on Īshvara Pratyabhijñā III. 1, 2) "in a hazy fashion (Dhyāmala prāyam) "like a picture just forming itself" (Unmīlita-mātra chitrakalpam); seen by the mind only and not as something seen without by the senses (Antah-karanaika-vedyam). The object thus vaguely surges up into the field of consciousness in which the emphasis is on the cognitive aspect or "I" (Aham). This however is not the "I" or "this" of our experience, for it is had in the realms beyond Māyā. The "This" is then experienced as part of the Self. In Īshvara Tattva all haziness gives place to clarity of the "This," which is thus seen completely as part of the Self; the emphasis being on the "This." After equal emphasis on the "I" and "This" in Shuddhavidyā Tattva the two are wholly separated by Māyā. When therefore the Yogī passes beyond the Māyik world his first higher experience is in this Tattva.

Nāda and Bindu are states of Shakti in which the germ of action (Kriyā-shakti) so to speak increasingly sprouts with a view to manifestation producing a state of compactness of energy and readiness to create. Rāghava Bhatta (Comm. Shāradā I. 7) speaks of them as two states of Shakti which are the proper conditions (Upayogyāvasthā) for creation. They are like all else aspects of Shakti, but are names of those aspects which are prone to and ready for creation (Uchchhānāvasthā). Bindu is said to be the massive or Ghanāvastha state of Shakti. The Prapanchāsāra Tantra says that Shakti is seized with the desire to create and becomes Ghanībhūta (Vichikīrshu ghanībhūtā). Thus milk becomes Ghanībhūta when it turns into cream or curd. In other words Shakti is conceived as passing gradually from its subtle state through Shakti-tattva and Nāda (in its three stages) and becomes what is relatively gross or massive as Power which is

fully equipped to pass from the stage of potency into that of active manifestation. That stage is Bindu which is called Mahābindu or Parabindu to distinguish it from the other Bindus into which it subsequently differentiates.

The commentary of Kālīcharana on the Shatchakranirūpana (see my Tantrik Texts, Vol. 2, V. 4) citing Todala Tantra (Ch. VI) says that the Supreme Light is formless; but Bindu implies both the Void (Shūnya) and Guna also. Bindu is the Void in so far as it is the Supreme Brahman. It implies Guna as being the creative or Shakti aspect of the Brahman which subsequently evolves into the Purusha and Prakriti Tattvas of which the latter is with Guna. The commentary to V. 49 states that this Bindu is the Lord (Ishvara) whom some Paurānikas call Mahā Vishnu and others the Brahmapurusha; and (V. 37) that Parabindu is the state of "Ma" before manifestation; being Shiva-Shakti enveloped by Māyā. As to this it may be observed that the letter M is male, and Bindu which is the nasal breathing sounded as M is the unmanifested Shiva-Shakti or Ma which is revealed upon its subsequent differentiation into the three Shaktis from which the universe proceeds. Bindu as the cause is Chidghana or massive consciousness and Power in which lie potentially in a mass (Ghana), though undistinguishable the one from the other, all the worlds and beings about to be created. This is Parama-Shiva and in Him are all the Devatās. It is thus this Bindu which is worshipped in secret by all Devas (V. 41) and which is indicated in its different phases in the Chandrabindu (Nāda, Bindu) Shakti and Shānta of the Om and other Bija mantras.

This Bindu is in Satyaloka which, within the human body, exists in the pericarp of the thousand-petalled Lotus (Sahasrāra) in the highest cerebral centre. It is, as I have already said, compared to a grain of gram (Chanaka) which under its outer sheath (which is Māyā) contains the two seeds (Shiva and Shakti) in close and undivided union.

Kālīcharana (V. 49) thus cites the following: "In the Satyaloka is the formless and lustrous one. She is like a grain of gram devoid of hands, feet and the like. She has surrounded Herself by Māyā (that is She is about to create by the agency of this Power of Hers). She is Sun, Fire and Moon. She being intent on creation (Unmukhī) becomes twofold (Dvidhā bhītvā) and then, by differentiation of Shiva and Shakti, arises creative ideation (Srishtikalpanā). Shiva and Shakti are of course not actually divided for they are not like a chupatti or some other material thing. It might seem unnecessary to make such obvious remarks

did not experience tell me of the absurd misunderstandings which exist of the Scripture. When we read that God "is a woman," that the Shākta Tantra is "Feminism" with a doctrine similar to that of Prof. Lester Ward's primacy of the female sex that "the conception of the sexual relationship is the ultimate explanation of the universe" and so forth, no caveats, however obvious, are unnecessary. What of course is meant is that whereas in Pralaya, Shiva and Shakti existed as one unity of consciousness, They in creation, whilst still remaining in themselves what they always were, project the universe which is Shakti; and then we have the Paramātmā and Jīvātmā consciousness which seem to the latter to be different.

Although Parabindu and all which evolves from It are nothing but aspects of Shakti and in no wise different from It, yet as representing that state of Shakti which immediately precedes creation, it is this state of Shakti which is said to be the cause of the universe of name and form (Nāmarūpa); concepts and concepts objectified; or Shabda the word and Artha its meaning. The states of Shakti preceding Bindu are those in which the Bindu state is in process of being "evolved" according to what we may call an Avikrita Parināma and when evolved it is the cause of the universe. Really they are merely aspects of one and the same pure Shakti. This is not an evolution in time. As Plotinus says, the universe "was formed according to intellect (here the Cosmic Power or Prapancha Shakti which manifests as Mahat) and intellect not preceding in time but prior" (in the sense that cause precedes effect). This again, as all descriptions, (in so far as they are applicable to the transcendent Shakti) is imperfect for sequence of cause and effect involves to our minds the notion of time. This Supreme Bindu as containing in Himself all Devatās is the ultimate object of adoration by all classes of worshippers (V. 44) under the name of Shiva, or Mahā Vishnu or the Devi as those call It "who are filled with a passion for Her Lotus Feet." The sectarianism of the lower mind, still existent in both East and West, is here shown to be a matter of words (the fight for which is of such interest to many) and is reduced to its real common denominator. As the Lord says in the Gītā, whomever men may worship all such worship comes eventually to Him.

Parabindu is thus the Head of every line of creation; of the Tattvas or Vikritis from Buddhi to Prithivī and their Lords (Tattvesha) and of the Shabda or Mantra creation; all belonging to the Vikara Srishti or Parināma Srishti. The development after

the manifestation of Prakriti is a real evolution (Parinama) for Consciousness has then been divided into subject and object in time and space. What is spoken of in terms of a development in the Ishvara body is not that. There Shakti assumes various aspects with a view to create but without manifestation. Shaktitattva, whilst remaining such, assumes the aspects of Nāda and Bindu.

The next stage is thus described in the Shāradā Tilaka (Ch. I) as follows :—

Parāshaktimayah sākshāt tridhāsu bhidyate punah
Bindur nādo bījamiti tasya bhedāh samīritāh
Bindur shivātmako bījang shaktir nādestayor mithah
Samavāyah samākhyātaḥ sarvāgamavishāradaiḥ.

(That which is supreme Shakti again divides Itself into three, such divisions being known as Bindu, Nāda, Bīja. Bindu is said to be of the nature of Shiva and Bīja of Shakti, and Nāda is the mutual relation between these two, by those who are learned in the Āgamas).

One Ms. I have seen has Bindur nādātmanako, but the commentary of the Shatchakra (V. 40) explains this as Shivātmaka. These form the three Bindus (Tribindu). Nāda here again is Trait d'Union, the Yoga of the other two Bindus as the Prayogasāra calls it. (See Rāghava's Comm. to V. 8 of Ch. I Shāradā). These are Shiva, Shiva-Shakti, Shakti. By this it is not to be understood that Shiva or Shakti are ever altogether dissociated but the aspects may be regarded as Shiva or Shakti pradhāna respectively. Bhāskararāya in his valuable commentary on the Lalitā Sahasranāma says "From the causal (Kāraṇa) Bindu proceeds the effect (Kāryya) Bindu, Nāda and Bīja. Thus these three which are known as supreme, subtle and gross arose." (Asmāchcha kāraṇabindossākshātkramena kāryyabindustato nādestato bījam iti trayam utpunnam tadidam parasūksmāsthūlapadaiḥ kathyate, V 81).

One text of the Prapanchasāra Tantra says that the Parabindu divides into two parts, of which the right is Bindu, the Male Purusha or Hang, and the left Visarga the Female Prakriti or Sah making the combined Hangsah. Hangsah is the union of Prakriti and Purusha and the universe is Hangsah. In however the Ms. on which my edition of that Tantra is based (Tantrik Texts, Vol. III) it is said that the Bindu (Para) divided by Kāla becomes threefold as Bindu, Nāda, Bīja. Substantially the matter seems one of nomenclature for the two Bindus which make Visarga become three by the addition of the Shiva

Bindu. Moreover as Hang is Shiva and Sah is Shakti, the combined Hangsah implies the relation which in the Shāradā account is called Nāda. So it is also said from the first vowel issued "Hrīm," from the second Hangsah, and from the third the Mantra "Hrīm, Shrīm, Klīm," (i) the first indicative of general form; the second being a more Sthūla form of Ākāsha and Agni (Sha = Ākasha; Ra = Agni) held as it were within the "skin" (Charma) of the enveloping Ardhanārīshvara: the third commencing with the first and last letters including all the 24 Tattvas and all the fifty letters into which the general Form particularises itself.

Parabindu is Shiva-Shakti considered as undivided, undifferentiated principles. On the "bursting" of the seed which is the Parabindu the latter assumes a threefold aspect as Shiva or Bindu, Shakti or Bīja and Nāda the Shiva-Shakti aspect which, considered as the result, is the combination, and from the point of view of cause, the inter-relation of the two (Shāradā V. 9) (i) the one acting as excitant (Kshobhaka) and the other being the excited (Kshobhya). The commentary on V. 40 of the Shatchakranirūpana speaks of Nāda as the union of Shiva and Shakti; as the connection between the two and as being in the nature of the Shakti of action (Kriyāshaktisvarūpā). It is also said to be that the substance of which is Kundalī (Kundalinīmaya). All three are but different phases of Shakti in creation (Comm. V. 39) being different aspects of Parabindu which is itself the Ghanāvasthā aspect of Shakti.

Thus in the first division of Shakti, Nāda, Bindu, Nāda is the Maithuna or Yoga of Shiva and Shakti to produce the Parabindu which again differentiates into threefold aspects as the Shaktis, though in grosser form, which produced it. Though the Gunas are factors of the gross Shakti Prakriti, they are in subtle form contained within the higher Shaktis. This Shakti as the first potentially kinetic aspect about to display itself is the Chit aspect of Shakti and Chit Shakti is, when seen from the lower level of the Gunas, Sāttvik; Nāda is in the same sense Rājasik, for Shakti becomes more kinetic gathering together its powers, as it were from the previous state of barely stirring potency, for the state of complete readiness to create which is Bindu and which in the aforesaid sense as Ghanibhūta foreshadows that Tamas Guna which at a lower stage is the chief factor which creates the world, for the latter is largely the product of Tamas. Each aspect of the Tribindu again is associated with one or other of the Gunas. These divisions of aspect from the Guna stand point are not to be understood as though they were separate and exclusively concerned

with only one of the Gunas. The Gunas themselves never exist separately. Where there is Sattva there is also Rajas and Tamas. In the same way in the case of the three Shaktis Ichchhâ, Jnâna, Kriyâ from which the Gunas develop, one never stands by itself, though it may be predominant. Where there is Ichchhâ there is Jnâna and so forth. And so again Shakti, Nâda and Bindu are not to be severed like different objects in the Mayik world. In each there is implicitly or explicitly contained the other. Parameshvara assumes (for the Jîva) successively the triple aspects of Shakti, Nâda, Bindu, Kârîya Bindu, Bîja, Nâda, thus completing by this differentiation of Shakti the sevenfold causal sound-forms of the Pranava or Ongkâra ; namely Sakala Parameshvara (which is Sachchhidânanda for even when the Brahman is associated with Avidyâ its own true nature (Svarûpa) is not affected) Shakti (Shaktitattva) Nâda (Sadâkhyâ Tattva) Parabindu (Ishvara Tattva) Bindu (Kârîya) Nâda and Bîja. It is not clear to me where (if at all) the Shuddhavidyâ Tattva comes in according to this scheme, unless it be involved in Nâda the Mithasamavâya ; but the Purusha-Prakriti Tattvas appear to take birth on the division of the Parabindu into Shiva and Shakti or Hang and Sah ; Hangsah being the Purusha-Prakriti Mantra.

The first impulse to creation comes from the ripening of the Adrishta of Jîvas on which Sakala Parameshvara puts forth His Shakti (which means Himself as Shakti) to produce the Universe wherein the fruits of Karma may be suffered and enjoyed. All the above seven states are included in, and constitute, the first stage of Ikshana or "Seeing" and is that state in which Shabda exists in its supreme or Para form (Parashabdasrishti). She who is eternal (Anâdirûpâ) existing subtly as Chidrûpinî in Mahâpralaya becomes on the ripening of Adrishta inclined (Utsuka) for the life of form and enjoyment, and reveals Herself on the disturbance of the equilibrium of the Gunas. As the Vâyaviya Samhitâ says "Parâ Shakti through the will of Shiva is revealed with Shiva Tattva (for the purpose of creation). Then She manifests as the oil which is latent in, exudes from, the sesamum seed." Parameshvara is Saguna Shiva or the Ishvara of Vedânta Philosophy with Mâyâ as His Upâdhi. He is Sat, Chit, Ânanda in Mâyâ body and endowed with all Shaktis (Sarvavedântasiddhantasârasangraha 312, 313, 315). There is, as the Panchadashî says, (3-38), a Shakti of Shiva which is in and controls all things which have their origin in Ananda or Ishvara. When Ishvara is moved to create, this Ishvara-shakti or Mâyâ which is the aggregate of, and which yet transcends, all individual Shaktis issues from Him and

from this Mâyâ issue all the particular Shaktis by which the universe is evolved and is maintained. The same substance is, to a large extent, to be found in all accounts under a variety of presentment or symbols ; even where there are real differences due to the diversity of doctrine of different Vedantic schools. This is not the case here : for the account given is a Sâdhanâ presentment of Advaitavâda. The Shâkta Tantra teaches the unity of Paramâtmâ and Jîva though its presentation of some subjects as Shakti, Mâyâ, Chidâbhâsa is different (owing to its practical view point) from Shankara's Mâyâvâda. On this matter I may refer my readers to the article which I recently wrote on Shakti and Mâyâ in the second number of the *Indian Philosophical Review* (Baroda).

The three Bindus constitute the great Triangle of World-Desire which is the Kâmakalâ ; an intricate subject which I must leave for a future issue. The three Bindus are Sun, Moon and Fire and the three Shaktis Ichchhâ, Jnâna, Kriyâ associated with the three Gunas, Sattva, Rajas, Tamas. I do not here deal with the order or correspondence which requires discussion. From them issued the Devîs Raudrî, Jyeshthâ, Vâmâ and from them the Trimûrti Rudra, Brahmâ, Vishnu.

The three Bindus are also known as the white Bindu (Sitabindu), the red Bindu (Shonabindu) and the mixed Bindu (Mishrabindu). These represent the Prakâsha, Vimarsha and Prakâsha-Vimarsha aspects of the Brahman which are called in the ritual Charanatritaya (The Three Feet). The Gurupâdukâ Mantra in which initiation is given in the last or Shadâmnâya Dîkshâ represents a state beyond the Shukla, Rakta and Mishra Charanas. So it is said in Shruti that there are four Brahmapada, three here and one the Supreme which is beyond.

As is the case in many other systems the One for the purpose of creation is presented in twofold aspect (i) for Unity is actionless and their relation involves a third aspect which makes the Trinity. But this apparent differentiation does not derogate from the substantial unity of the Brahman. As the ancient Rudrayâmalâ (II. 22) says : "The three Devas Brahmâ, Vishnu, Maheshvara are but one and formed out of My body."

Ekamûrtistrayo devâ brahmavishnumaheshvarâh
Mama vighrahasangkliptâh srijatyavati hanti cha.

From the differentiating Bindu are evolved the Tattvas from Buddhi to Prithivî and the six Lords of the Tattvas (preceding from Parashiva the seventh) who are the presiding Devatâs of

mind and of the five forms of matter. Here on the diremption or dichotomy of Consciousness, Mind and matter are produced. That is Consciousness functions in and through the self-created limitations of mind and matter. It was on this division also that there arose the Cosmic Sound (Shabda Brahman) which manifests as Shabda and Artha. This is the Shabda-brahman ; so called by those who know the Āgamas.

Bhidyamānāt parādvindor avyaktātmā ravo bhavat,
Shabdabrahmeti tang prāhuh sarvāgamavishāradāh.

(Shāradā Tilaka I).

It will be observed that in this verse the first Bindu is called Para and to make this clear the author of the Prānatoshinī adds the following note: "By Parabindu is meant the first Bindu which is a state of Shakti (Parādvindorityanena shaktyavasthārūpo yah prathamabindustasmāt). Shabda-brahman is the Brahman in its aspect as the immediate undifferentiated Cause of the manifested and differentiated Shabda or language in prose or verse ; and of Artha or the subtle or gross objects which thought and language denote. It is thus the causal state of the manifested Shabda or Mantra.

THE SIVANANDA LAHARI.

(Continued from page 200.)

In the ninth verse of the Sivananda Lahari we find the following thoughts:—

"Oh Lord of Umā, I know Thee instinctively to be the most intimate of all that exists, the nearest to my true self, and worship Thee from day to day with flowers. But that lower nature of mine nurtured in the worship of mammon and sensuality, is still alive, and barren therefore is my worship, barren of love and barren of fruit. How many are those who know Thee to exist, but calmly acquiesce in the fact without more ! How few are those who eagerly search for Thee and seek to throne Thee in their hearts ! Somehow it happens that Thy grace is fullest unto those that unreservedly place the strongholds of their personality at Thy disposal, and yearningly beseech Thee to enter and assume full sway over the whole. But oh ! my heart is tough with the worldliness of ages, and Love, except at rare moments, becomes impossible. Thus is worship a dull routine, mechanical and fruitless. The daily consciousness is still impure, standing aloof from Thee, ignoring Thee, occupying

itself with transient things, and cherishing puerile attachments. Oh for that glorious day when the whole heart will be at one with Thee and be cast into the mould of Thy Love ! Hast Thou no power, Oh Lord of Uma, to quell this unruly ally of mine and make it responsive to Thy symphonies, can'st Thou not cure me of this disease of indifference, which keeps me proof against the poetry of Thy Love, incapable of the thousand thrilling fancies that come to Thy lovers unsought?"

Thus does the poet make a grievance of his own imperfection and an occasion for whole-hearted prayer for Realisation. Oh that hardness of the heart, that deadness of the soul, which disables a mind from praising the Lord when it wants to ! Yet out of this does the poet of love find a way. The very depth of his misery in imperfection he converts into an asset, he makes of it a solvent for that heart of his which he accuses of hardness and reaches a height of pathos in prayer which marks the high water-level of all true poetry. Out of this great poem one verse is more beautiful than all the rest, and that is the thirteenth verse, beautiful from its naked simplicity and truth and its aliveness to the need of God. It should be tasted and assimilated, word by word, and syllable by syllable, it is too precious to be wasted. Here is given somewhat an imitation of it.

"Oh Lord, I am come unto Thee like a gambler who has staked and lost all, and even sold himself into slavery to his opponent, the spirit of Evil and Delusion. In sheer lightness of heart and stupendous ignorance of Thy laws, I entered into worldliness, thinking I was but making experiments, like the moth that plays with the flame. Lured on by little oases of pleasure, I wandered far away into the desert of vanity and now I am in it for good, Oh Lord, unless Thou leadest me back. My craving for the things of this world has become intense, while my faculty of self-denial has left me, a prey to self-indulgence. Fool as I have been, too late I realise the truth of Bhartrihari's lines—

इह हि मज्जरगीतं नृपमेतद्रसोऽयं
स्फुरति परिमलोऽसौ स्पर्श एषस्वनानाम् ।
इति हतपरमार्थैरिन्द्रियैर्ज्ञान्यमाणः
स्वहितकरचूर्तैः पञ्चमिर्वञ्चितोऽसि ॥

This fair world of Thine, which Thou hast created, for poets to see and love, finding in all things a diversified commentary of Thee, this I looked at with eyes of sensuality, and fitting it is that I should find it tasteless and devoid of good. Yet thrice cursed is this *samsara*, this taking of the outer life by the wrong end, in that

the discovery of one's mistake is no help towards reformation. He who is entangled in it is far from all hope of reclamation, far from Thy allegiance, far from the ways of wisdom and love unselfish.

I once held it as an article of faith that Bliss, that *inalienable attribute of Thine*, lay ensconced in the objects that had power over the fancy, and went pursuing it all over the world, now seeking to acquire this thing, now that, fancying each time, I was going to acquire an endless mine of bliss. But it deluded me at every turn. There was no "*endless mine of Bliss*" to be found in any finite thing whatever. But once the fever of the chase for supposed means of happiness was on me, it became impossible to go back from it and return to Thee. For this chase led me further and further away from Thee, so that even Thy existence is forgotten or with difficulty remembered. Philosophy teaches me that happiness is freedom from the worry of desire, for when the native energy is conserved, instead of being wasted, the Bliss that is ever flowing from Thee must be manifest. But it is now no good. Somehow it is too late for me to accept this new knowledge, to make it mine by acting upon it. For while habit governs my will and leads it on to pursue vanities, my reserve power grows less and less. I grow old and helpless, while my wrong habits grow ever younger. Fain would I rise in rebellion and seek Thee out for succour and refuge. But helplessly am I borne along among the breakers of desire, and peace and pure devotion come not unto me.

Where is Thy infinite beauty that stealeth hearts even from the reprobate, Thy infinite grace which maketh light of sin and waiteth not to be sued? If all this be not moonshine, then quickly rescue me from the trackless mazes of the realm of sense, guide me out of the darkness that blindeth every faculty, ransom me out of this bondage. Give me that purer sight that sees the tricks of nature and the means of victory. Grant that I be no more the plaything of the senses. Grant me that love which shall starve this craving, taking the heart into its own safe keeping. Oh! let me have the power to say nay at need.

For dire is my condition and urgent is my need. I am not like those who are content to vegetate through life, and have not yet found out the dreariness of it all, nor longed for the life of the spirit, the life that is near to Thee. I am as it were neither fish nor fowl, neither thoroughly at home in the life of the senses, nor able to soar into the realm of pure consciousness where I would like to be. This world is not for me, and misery acute will be my lot

until I learn to live in the other. Who then, in all this teeming world, Oh Thou of unrestricted mercy, does need Thy succour most? The willing slave is happy in his chains. But whoso has received the message of Freedom, of the life on the Heights, how can such be other than miserable and discontented? Great is my self-reproach and well-enforced by repeated failures, by the utter fruitlessness of the chase for happiness that I continually get drawn into—fruitless save in the restlessness and impotence that it brings on. None therefore, Lord, is in a state so parlous as mine own. None hath such crying need of Thy reclaiming grace.

Or, can it be thought that I have other hopes than in Thy allegiance? Am I at all adequate, weakened as I am in body and in mind, to tread the path of Yoga, fit for great-souled ones, where wisdom lights the way and will sustains? Art Thou not the saviour of the lost and fallen? Hast Thou not perfect sway over the human heart, able to still the rage of passion and to quicken the growth of wisdom and the power of self-control, Thou whom the Vedic seer placed within his inmost heart, saying "*वियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्*"? Taking Thy name the poet and the prophet win their way to human hearts. Spurn me not, sinful as I am, but save me somehow. Thine the choice of fitting means, for I resign myself utterly to Thee."

How can the Lord withstand such prayer? Aye, He quickly sendeth peace into the heart with hope for the future. So the poet naturally finds an answer to his prayer in a renewed faith in that Divine Law which assures unfailing mercy to the least of beings. We find the poet quickly coming into a milder atmosphere in the fifteenth verse. This is what he says: "It is true, Oh Lord, that, in the extremity of my despair, I do fall foul of Brahma, and the laws that Thou hast ordained. I call Him names and say that at the best He must be a fool to afflict one so poor. But now I see that He, Thy other self, doth but provide a channel for Thy mercy. Come the worst that can ever come, it can never annihilate the consciousness within, the tiny flame that Thou hast lent. Where then is all the power of Pain? What can betide me in the worst affliction? This *iota of fire*, which is the germ of a glorious state to come, of citizenship in Thy exalted realms, this soul that I am has passed through innumerable thunderstorms of doubt and fear and weathered them all, for Thou wert all along sustaining it. But is that all? now that I see a little of Thy ways with men, I find that all affliction is a blessing in disguise. They are the forces that Thou sendest in, to help the struggling soul from out this dark abyss. They are electric shocks that rouse to life the Lord within,

who is Thyself reflected—he who surveys the warring hosts of passions and desires, and calmly weighs them in the scales of Truth and gives them each his due. And Thou art there beside, to give him strength and wisdom. Thus even adverse Fate is a friend in disguise. It brings into action Thy *mercy-aspect* and makes me quickly the recipient of Thy saving and healing grace. So, adieu to all care and fear. Welcome is all the seeming evil that comes of the working of Thy law. All things but prove Thy utter solicitude for the saving of Thy children."

We can compare with this the words of Jesus—"Blessed are the poor and miserable, for they shall be comforted." "All jackals have the same cry," so said the blessed Sri Ramakrishna to his disciples.

In fact the Bhakta knows that prayer is in itself unnecessary, though he *will* pray whenever the whim comes, just to give vent to his discontents. What is really wanted is the feeling that is at the root of all prayer, *viz.*, the feeling of perfect kinship unto God. This is brought out in the thirty-fifth verse, which can be rendered as follows:

"Thou art the provider of all there is, that is good, and the preserver too of the good that Thou hast given, *so long as it continues to be good*. It is Thy ever-ready goodness that secures to living beings all the good that there is in this world. And this not merely in the world of physical life, but also in the world of spiritual life. All of truth that man knows is of Thy imparting. By Thy grace man comes to know of things visible and invisible. Nothing there is that is beyond Thy might, for even the human heart, which is so hard to subjugate and rule, Thou canst do with as Thou pleasest. In fact Thou art the most wonderful of all thieves, for Thou stealest the heart from all evil allegiance and endowest it with sufficient of Thy own infinite perfection. Thus there is no limit either to Thy might or Thy grace. What need then is there that I should tell Thee anything, as to how I am and what I need? Knowest Thou not without my telling Thee, that I, Thy child, am lying here, overthrown by foes invisible and held down in the toils of *samsara*? I love myself but I do things which I know to be hurtful to myself. Thus my love for my own true self is weak and wanting. But Thy love for each of Thy children is so perfect that it cannot be more, even if there were but one child for Thee to love and cherish. Thus Thou art plainly far more loving unto me than my own self. I need not pray to Thee, but I shall think of Thee always as my nearest Friend, Father,

Mother, Guru, all in one. Thou art my treasure, my estate, my everything, my very own."

This is the joy of Bhakti. But other moods must prevail sometimes. There is the mood of discontent, of self-depreciation, and in these too the Bhakta indulges, so as to nourish the seed of Bhakti which will finally redeem the soul from all discontent.

For example the Bhakta finds ample cause for discontent in himself, that part of himself which he calls his mind. It is to him the pregnant cause of all evil. The poet therefore has a good deal to say about the mind. It is in truth nothing more than the bundle of good and evil tendencies derived from the past life and stored in the subconscious part of the person. These tendencies are generally latent, but they are, on occasion, brought to the conscious plane, and then act with such suddenness and power, that the will is unable to interfere.

This subconscious mind is practically infinite. Its action cannot be foreseen, much less controlled, except by an exercise of great vigilance and will power. Vigilance comes from knowledge and right desire, the desire for freedom, and will power can arise only when this desire becomes irresistible.

Now so long as the human soul is conditioned by body and mind, it cannot find the source of knowledge and pure desire inside itself. It is perfectly natural therefore for the soul to turn, in all its troubles, to God who is the storehouse of all good. This slowly but surely establishes the relation of Love between God and the Soul. The soul comes to look upon God as its Ideal, or as the only proper object of Love, and in any case there is a constantly growing association between the conditioned soul and the unconditioned Paramatma which brings into operation the law called *Bhringa Keeta Nyaya*. The soul being by nature potentially Divine can and does actually become such by association with the Divine.

(To be continued.)

THE SAINT DURGACHARAN NAG.

CHAPTER II.—(continued).

Suresh used to go to Nagmahasaya's place in the evening and there almost everyday they would have some such discussions, but neither was able to win the other over to his religious belief. It is strange how these two persons of opposite nature felt attracted to each other, but, ever since their first acquaintance they became lifelong friends and whenever they met each other they used to have conversations on religious subjects only.

Suresh would often take Nagmahasaya to the Nababidhan Samaj founded by Keshab chandra Sen. Though Nagmahasaya highly appreciated the preaching of Keshab, he did not like the manners of the Samaj. Nagmahasaya read with great zeal the "*Chaitanya Charit*," "*Rupsanatan*" and "Lives of mohammedan saints," all published by the Brahmo Samaj; with great feeling he would sing the song "Make me mad, in Thy love, Oh Mother," of the *Nababidhan Samaj* although he had not the gift of a musical voice.

From the very beginning of their acquaintance Suresh found in Nagmahasaya a man of spotless character; from his boyhood he was religious and he observed to the last day of his life all the social customs and usages prevailing among his people. It is said that Nagmahasaya in his boyhood was particularly impressed by the translation of the Persian book named "*Hatem tai*," yet his faith and devotion to the Lord never waned. Once a few friends of Nagmahasaya having studied some atheistic literature, began to preach atheism and sometimes argued with Nagmahasaya. Nagmahasaya even though vanquished in arguments, would firmly assert "I have not the least shadow of a doubt about the existence of God." Later in his life he often said "what is the use of ratiocinating over an entity that exists in all reality? God is self-effulgent like the Sun."

From about this time Nagmahasaya began to lose all attraction for medical science, and instead, commenced a study of religious books; but on account of his father's importunities he could not sever his connection with Dr. Bhaduri all at once. Nagmahasaya did not know Sanskrit; consequently, he carefully read the Bengali translations of the *Puranas*, the *Tantras*, and the like; if he chanced to meet a *Pandit*, eagerly he would have the true meaning of the *Shastras* explained to him. He used

to take daily bath in the Ganges and regularly observed the rites of Ekadashi (the eleventh lunar day, a fasting day). Everyday at nightfall he used to go to the neighbouring cremation ground (Kassi Mittra's Burning Ghat) for a walk; he would sit there alone wrapt up in deep thought till late hours of the night. In the dead of the nights the pyres with prostrate corpses laid on them glowed with the dying fire, the Ganges flowed down, and her murmuring notes commingled with the rustling music of the solitary Peepul tree hummed a melodious pathos of life and death! No language expressed it but it irresistibly touched the human soul. Nagmahasaya would sit there for hours and think "vanity, vanity, all are vanities; God alone is the Truth. Unless He is realised the life is verily a burden. How shall I realise Him? Who would show me the way?"

Sometimes Faquirs, Sannyasins, and Sadhakas came to that burning ghat; with a longing heart Nagmahasaya would ask them those questions but no one could rightly give an answer to him. He found that most of them were in quest of Siddhi (psychic powers); their aim was not the attainment of pure love for God. There one day he met a Tantric Sadhaka who when he was questioned about "Bamachara Sadhana", began to narrate some horribly uncouth practices; on hearing him Nagmahasaya said "You will have to gather more experience yet, you have not understood the Tantras in the least". His experience of these types of men instead of creating faith in religion sometimes raised doubts in his mind. Only an old Brahmin who practised Sadhana in that cremation ground and was an initiated Tantric Sannyasin evoked his respects; he had no sectarian views; he was liberal and had great power of insight; although as an initiate he took *Karana* regularly. He explained to Nagmahasaya the profound significance of Tantric practices and mysteries of *Shada-Chakra* (six lotuses) very clearly and elaborately. Nagmahasaya expressed his desire to practise Sadhana according to the principles of Tantras whereupon the old Brahmin blessed him and gave him hopes saying that Mother would soon fulfil his desire. Nagmahasaya used to say of him, "The Brahmin had advanced much on the way to realisation; he was quite conscious even at the dying moment and breathed his last on the bank of the Ganges."

As directed by this old Brahmin, Nagmahasaya would now and then make Japam and meditate in the stillness of the night in that cremation ground. One day while he was meditating he saw the vision of a white effulgence; thenceforth he regularly went there and practised Japam and meditation.

In course of time Dindayal came to know of it and it created some anxiety in his mind. He at once wrote to his son-in-law to select a bride for Nagmahasaya. He thought that his son was quite young and as there was no tie to bind him (Nagmahasaya) to the worldly life he roved with mendicants and sannnyasins; when he would be married all these foolish ideas must disappear. The son-in-law lost no time in selecting the bride, Sreemati Sarat Kumari, the first daughter of Ramdayal Bhunia of Deobhog, and informed Dindayal about it. Dindayal brought this proposal of marriage before his son but Nagmahasaya refused to marry again. Dindayal tried his utmost but could not persuade his son to marry. Since then there had been often exchange of hot words between the father and the son. The father fasted in anger, the son also went without food. Thus they passed some time most miserably. Once Dindayal said "I am made a liar at this old age for you, because I have given my words for your marriage to the bride's party". Nagmahasaya replied "Once you got me married, but that girl died; again you are going to place somebody's daughter into the jaws of death." Dindayal replied "Aye, fate is determined by the divine dispenser! if you disobey me, your father, you will not succeed in any sphere of life; I will curse you so that you shall not progress in your religious life."

He was indeed between two fires. On the one hand there would be the curse of his father, on the other the realisation of Truth would be barred to him. He thought within himself, "I know, intercourse with women is the root of all misery and bondage, but my father directs me that way." Alas! Oh God! what am I to do?" Being much mortified Nagmahasaya one day said to his father "We see all sorrows and sufferings of men result from marriage. Therefore please have mercy on me, father, and give up your resolution; I beseech you, kindly do not put me into the bondage again. So long you shall be living I shall serve you heart and soul, I shall serve you hundred times more devotedly than your would-be daughter-in-law. Please save me."

The sorrowful looks of his son and his importunities deeply impressed the old man. He thought if his son for whose happiness he was proposing the marriage, be not happy by it what was the necessity of it then; it would be better to drop the proposal. But it at once struck him that if Durga Charan did not marry, his lineage would be at an end; *Sraddha* ceremony of his fore-fathers would be stopped. At this Dindayal was overwhelmed with grief, but there was no remedy for it. Reasonings, reproaches and rebukes were of no avail. The old man was much

afflicted and wept secretly. Nagmahasaya was not at home at the time. On his return, he entered the room and found his father weeping; it touched him to the quick. Nagmahasaya argued within himself, "There is none to call my own in this world except my father, and alas! I have become the cause of so much sorrow to him. Away with religion; from this day forward I shall obey my father at all cost. If my father gets consolation by getting me married I must do that." Arriving at this conclusion the son lost no time to report to his father that he would marry. The old man could not catch his words at once and remained dumb-founded. He only stared at his son, with tears still in his eyes. Nagmahasaya repeated, "Please fix the date for the marriage and drop a letter to inform our people in the village."

Coming to himself Dindayal with great joy replied "My boy, you have saved my honour and thus my Dharma also has been saved. Do what you like after you have married, I shall not say anything. I whole heartedly bless you my dear boy, may God fulfil your desire." Next Dindayal hastened to Messrs. Pals' place to tell them this good news. Pals were very glad to hear it and promised to bear a portion of the marriage expenses.

All were merry; but he who was going to be married was in the throes of great agony. Nagmahasaya left the house as soon as he gave his consent for the marriage to his father. All day long he roamed about in the streets and passed the whole night sitting on the bank of the Ganges and weeping bitterly; there was none to share his feeling. To whom would he give vent to his mental suffering? He went without any food. Dindayal could not know anything of it, for he was busy fixing the marriage date, writing letters to his village and buying the necessities.

Gradually all and sundry were bought with the exception of the bridegroom's suit. Dindayal asked his son to buy it from the market after his own choice, but Nagmahasaya refused to do so; consequently Dindayal himself had to get it from the market.

The day when they were to start for their native village approached. Dindayal was busy packing things. As usual, even that day Nagmahasaya went out for a walk on the bank of the Ganges at night fall. Before returning home he bowed down to the Mother Ganges and said "O Mother! So have I heard that Thou art the purifier of all sins; therefore, if I be defiled by the dirt and dust of the world in becoming a house-holder, wash them off, O Mother; and both in weal and woe give me refuge at Thy hallowed feet." Thereafter he returned to his house and the father and the son set out for their native village.

"YOU ARE A COWARD."

(A Story.)*

It was a bright summer evening. Sukumar was going out for a walk to the river side, his favourite place of retreat after the day's hard toil with the books. As he went a little distance, he saw a fair looking young man, a strong stalwart figure, beckoning him to come to him. When Sukumar approached nearer he found there a poor woman lying senseless on the road side. Evidently she was suffering from a terrible infectious disease and no one cared for her. This gentleman, it seemed, happened to pass by that way and finding her there in that helpless condition, wanted to take care of her. He said, "Excuse me, Sir, I want your help to carry this woman to my house. I believe you will consent to this. I have great faith in the younger generation!" These words, so simple and free from all formalities, had a charming effect upon Sukumar and, as though, forced out a consent from him.

Since that day Sukumar was known to Ramesh Babu, for that was the name of the gentleman. As days passed on Sukumar came to know of his friend more and more. How sweet and amiable he was! He had the naked simplicity of a child with a wonderful admixture of gravity of the grey hair. When he would sit quiet, lost in his own self, he looked as if he did not belong to this world. Yet he had a great love for the poor, the down trodden, the forsaken ones. When he would go to their huts and sit with them, it seemed as if he was one of their own kith and kin. His head and heart were always active to alleviate their misery. None could even suspect that he came of a high family or that he was an educated cultured gentleman, when he talked to them in their own way, the deep problems of life, Philosophy or the modern scientific ideas or the past and present situation of their country. The wiseacres of the world looked down upon him for his absolute indifference to his own selfish ends. And at times he received even harsh treatment at their hands for his naive manners and high-souled generosity. But nothing could disturb the native serenity of his mind!

On the contrary Sukumar was a young man of hot temperament. He could not brook the idea of his friend's remaining

* Adapted from a story in the Udbodhan, a Bengali Monthly Organ of the Ramakrishna Mission.

passive under all circumstances; and many a time he lectured to him about the maxim 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' But on all occasions his words fell flat on Ramesh Babu and he failed to convince the latter that resistance to evils is an essential virtue of the world. Lately, Sukumar came to learn of an incident in which Ramesh was malignantly insulted by some wicked persons, and yet he did not retaliate against them. At this Sukumar got excited and hastened to his friend's house to rouse his ire against those men, and work for retaliation.

Ramesh Babu was deeply engrossed in study in his room. Suddenly the doors were flung open and Sukumar entered in breathless speed. Ramesh turned his eyes towards the intruder and asking him to take his seat, merged himself again in his study. Sukumar's whole frame was shaking in anger and he waited a while. But the silence was unbearable, he could not contain himself any longer and burst out "I say, now stop reading please. I have not come here to pass my time idly. I have other things to do." Ramesh with a little blush turned up his eyes and smilingly said, "Excuse me; I did not do well to forget that you are a busy man."

Without further preamble Sukumar related to him right off the incident as he had heard and asked him if it were true. First Ramesh wanted to avoid the answer by bringing in other topics but Sukumar almost lost temper and bawled out "Don't you feel ashamed of yourself! How can you allow any one to treat you just as one pleases? I have come across many a person in my life; but never have I seen a man like you perfectly devoid of all sense of self-respect."

Ramesh replied with an unruffled calmness "Have patience, my brother. Do not get so much excited over a trifle."

"Trifle? Shame!" he cried out, "We must avenge it. I can't allow you to pocket such an insult silently. You have not to do anything. Just permit me and you shall see what we can do. Nothing more, I will drive home into the hearts of those wretches this simple truth that playing with fire is not safe."

With an affectionate eye of reproach Ramesh said gently, "Be not so much upset, Sukumar; what appears as wrong in our eyes who knows how it looks in His Eyes. It may be the Divine dispensation from on High. Perhaps some good may come out of it! Moreover, don't be carried away by a momentary impulse and forget the eternal truth that God alone is the Supreme Judge of

right and wrong, and that the final authority of retribution rests with Him only." Gradually his voice grew softer and softer and faded away into a hush, and then again he continued, "Misery and happiness are equal factors in the formation of character and in many instances misery proves to be a greater teacher. Fools only want happiness, court an easy life. But they who have wide experience of men and things, who have plumbed the sea of life, know full well, that misery teaches more than happiness, that poverty is a greater benefactor than wealth. Blows bring out the inner fire more than praises."

Interrupting him Sukumar vociferated, "Truce to your Philosophy! It pays little in the practical world. You may defend yourself by such metaphysical ratiocinations, but to me this seems nothing but sheer cowardice and weakness to silently put up with such gross insults as that."

Ramesh shrugged and cast a look of surprise at Sukumar and wanted to speak something, but his voice got choked with feeling. At last he burst out in unwonted manner, "Tush, Sukumar, how little you know of me. Do you know how anxiously I am waiting these long twelve years for an adverse blow—a severe blow, that would make every fibre of the soul realise the emptiness of this world;—a blow whose relentless touch would smash down all affections and attachment for the world? But alas! that never came. Oh, who can tell me when it will come. You are right my friend; I am weak, I am coward. Else how could these twelve years slip away without my accomplishing anything!"—His countenance fell; his eyes became vacant, and voice choked up in despair.

Sukumar got nervous. He was astonished to find in him this sudden change. In a mild voice he apologised "Forgive me brother; you know my mind; I never meant to offend you. I became excited only because my heart aches to see anybody speaking ill of you." Ramesh interrupted smilingly "Well, well, let me first accuse you of a guilt and then you may ask for forgiveness. Be pacified and take your seat. Your words only remind me of an incident in which an old friend of mine some twelve years ago accused me of the same thing, that I was weak and coward. I did not pay heed to his words then but now I will hear you."

Curious to know the incident Sukumar asked him, "Who was it?"

"That is a long story" said Ramesh "but anyhow I will tell you briefly"; then he began to narrate:

"I was then only 11 or 12 years old. Of all my classmates Kalicharan whom I used to call Kalidada, won my love and admiration the most. He came of a low family, belonging to the farmer class. He was sent to the high school for education after he had completed his course in the primary school; and he was then aged about 18 or 19 years. His strong, muscular frame, his beautiful eyes and smiling face attracted all who happened to see him; and for his amiable and affectionate disposition everybody loved him. Self-help was his motto and cleanliness was his habit. He was my neighbour and often I would go to his little room to pass my leisure hours in good talks with him. The room had only a small bedding and a wooden box for its furniture; he used to put his few school books on that box which also served the purpose of a wardrobe for his simple clothing. There hung a picture of Sri Krishna from the wall and by its side in a niche he kept the great epic Mahabharat, which he often used to read in his leisure hours. Every morning and evening he used to burn incense before the picture. He was very fond of telling stories from the epic and I would listen to him with rapt attention and often was carried away by emotions when he described beautifully the heroic deeds of Bhishma, Arjuna or Sri Krishna of the bygone ages. Thus many a day passed with him happily.

One evening while we were returning from our usual walk on the river side, we heard the sound of bells and blowing of conch-shells of the vesper service. No sooner had I heard this than I asked my friend to come to attend the service of *Govindaji*. We went and stood in the front hall of the temple; the image of *Govindaji* could not be seen distinctly from there. So I told him, "Let us get up on the verandah and see clearly the image of the Lord." But Kalicharan did not at first dare to do so. He said, "No, my brother, I must not go there. I come of a low caste and if anybody sees me there, I may be taken to task for it."

"Pah! This is our temple. Who would dare to say anything if I stand by you?" So saying I dragged him up to the verandah. The evening service being over, the priest came to serve *Padodakam*. Finding Kalicharan there he almost lost his temper and said in a harsh tone, "What is this? Why did you come up here? Could't you stand down there?" I replied, "He has not come here out of his own accord. I brought him up here." Paying no heed to my words he continued, "He is a child. What does he know? But you are grown up. You should have

had some sense. Aye, this is the way with these low class fellows ; as soon as they begin to learn a few words in English, they deny all gods and goddesses." Kalicharan thus insulted and put to shame, hastily got down from the verandah and was going away. I followed him and catching him by the hands beseeched, "Don't be offended, brother. I shall report it to my father and do the needful to-morrow." Kalidada with a deep sigh answered, "I am not offended with any body, dear. Having born in a low family I should have acted more discretely."

The next day I reported it to my father, but he laughed away the whole matter."

Sukumar was, all the time, attentively hearing the happy remembrances of his friend's childhood ; now interrupting he asked, "Well brother, these low class people are all Hindus. They also believe in the same gods and goddesses. Why then are they not allowed to enter into the temples ?"

"I don't know", he said, "how such laws came in vogue. I think, this is all vain self-conceit of the so-called higher classes. Thinking too highly of themselves, they think that they are polluted even at the touch of others, and so they believe that their gods and goddesses also like them are defiled by others' touch. Out of hatred and jealousy, by sheer brute force, they have closed the doors of their temples against these low class people, but they are unable to shut the door of His Grace against them. Lo ! To crush the vanity of these heartless men, Lord incarnates Himself in every age and gives his unstinted loving embrace to all, even to the lowest of the low ! Then the poor, the miserable, the down-trodden—all alike are carried away by that flood of His Love and Grace. This Universal Love is proclaimed again and again, yet the eyes of the higher classes are not opened to it. They install His clay images in their temples and worship them with all care and reverence, with flower and incense, but alas, His Soul of Love, His *Premamaya vighraha*, is left unadored and unnoticed. You ask them why they do so, they will tell you, 'And yet the Mrs. Grundy.'

Sukumar asked, "Well, there are so many people who are religiously disposed like your Kalidada, and simply owing to the fact of their low birth they are deprived of performing all religious ceremonies ; is there no way out for them ?"

"Yes, there is. How long can such wrongs be borne ? The message—"Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached"—has been once more proclaimed. Low will be high, the *Chandala*

will become a Brahmana—through the grace of the Lord ! And that is why the prophet of this age has brought Him out of all limitations of temples and churches, and installed Him in the midst of the broad universe, that all alike high or low, may worship Him to their heart's content."

"Pray, explain it more clearly."

"Why ? Don't you know what Swamiji has said :

"I bequeath to you, young men, this sympathy, this struggle for the poor, the ignorant, the oppressed. Go now this minute to the temple of Parthasarathi, and before Him who was friend to the poor and lowly cowherds of Gokool, who never shrank to embrace the pariah Guhak, who accepted the invitation of a prostitute in preference to that of the nobles and saved her, in His incarnation as Buddha—yea, down on your faces before Him, and make a great sacrifice ; the sacrifice of a whole life for them, for whom He comes from time to time, whom He loves above all, the poor, the lowly, the oppressed. Vow then to devote your whole lives to the cause of the redemption of these three hundred millions, going down and down every day.'"

"Well, to come to our story, what happened next ?" asked Sukumar.

Ramesh continued : "From that day a sudden change came upon Kalidada. He had been so jolly, but now he became grave. Most of the time he wanted to be left to himself. But his love for me never abated. On one occasion we went to hear *Hari Katha*. The *Bhagavatar* was describing the life of Dhruba. He was narrating how the young boy left his home with a burning desire to realise God ; how he was roaming about quite frantic with God-love and now and then crying for Him in a note of wail 'Oh, my Lord, O Hari, come, appear before me once.' O how touching, how sweet was the description ! The *Bhagavatar* was again and again harping upon that tender theme which touched the softest chords of the hearts of his audience. When the tension of Dhruba's frantic love for the Lord reached its climax, He appeared at last. I looked then at Kalidada and detected tears of ecstasy flowing down his cheeks. After it was over we went out to the river side for our evening walk and there we talked of Dhruba, his renunciation and his vision of God, etc. I asked him, "Do you believe, Kalidada, that if we also give up the world and pant for God like Dhruba, we can also see God ?"

His eyes sparkled and with a slight touch of amusement he turned round and said, "Is there any doubt ? At times I also feel

to go out into the forest, in search of the Lord, like Dhruva, and cry for Him there to my heart's content. Yes, the forest is the best place, for there will be none to despise me for my low birth. I feel as if, some one from within my heart is telling me in an imperative voice, 'If you want to attain Hari, come away trampling under your feet all attachments and desires for the world. It is all true, do not doubt it!'

I said, "I can't ascribe any reason for this, but I too feel that I must see Hari by all means. Otherwise there is no peace. But again—"

Before I had finished my words, Kalidada firmly said, "No, no 'but'; there must be no wavering. If we can give up everything for Him, He is sure to come to us. If Dhruva, a young lad of five years, could suffer so much for Him and thus see Him, why then can't we also attain Him by the same means?"

We talked in this strain for a long time and at last we settled to leave our homes during the small hours of the next morning. Absorbed in this thought I went to bed at night and fell asleep. Suddenly I got up at midnight remembering our resolve of the previous evening. My heart began to throb violently. My younger brothers and sisters were lying fast asleep by my side. I wanted to have a look at them for the last time, but the room was pitch dark; so I could not see them. Sighing a deep sigh, I slowly opened the door and slipped out. The pale moon was still glimmering on the western sky as a solitary witness of the nocturnal life, and a deep hush enveloped the whole earth. As I stood outside on the road, I felt creepy and a strange feeling of exhaustion arose within my heart. But Kalidada was waiting for me under a mango tree on the other side of the road. He came hurriedly to me and said, "I am waiting for you for a long time. The small hours will soon fleet away; hurry up." Then we set out on our aimless journey. After walking for some distance, I felt unnerved and seeing a big banyan tree on the road side, I told Kalidada, "Come, let us take a little rest here."

"No," he said, "we must not stop on the way. Your parents might be searching for you by this time."

A thrill passed over my whole frame; the heart began to beat rapidly; the memories of the happy days with my parents, the affectionate caresses of my brothers and sisters rushed into my mind. Moreover, 'where to go,' 'how to get food,' 'how to live,' and all such other thoughts began to agitate my mind and with a deep sigh of despair I spoke, "Kalidada, let us go back."

He was surprised and asked "why?"

In shame and fear I bent low my head and whispered, "My heart aches to leave all."

"Brother, how can you attain Hari, if you do not give up all? Come, don't feel nervous. Everything will be all right by His Grace."

In a trembling voice I replied, "No, Kalidada, I feel so nervous and miserable. I can't go."

Aye, it was some twelve years ago, yet it is quite vivid to my memory; he stood before me, as a veritable emblem of renunciation, his figure shining with the golden rays of the morning sun, looked full at me with his big beautiful eyes and said exactly in the way you told me just now, "you are weak, you are a coward."

I began to weep in shame. "So weak you are. Had I known it before, I would not have asked you to come with me."—So saying Kalidada turned to proceed alone. I caught hold of his arms and requested him to come back home. He snatched away his hands from my grip, stood still for a while and then strode on with firm steps. I looked and looked till I lost sight of him, but he never turned nor faltered but sped on, like a lion freed from its cage. "विजयराज केसरी"

THY CAPTIVE, MY FREEDOM.

Make me a captive, Lord,
And then I shall be free ;
Force me to render up my sword
And I shall conqueror be.
I sink in life's alarms
When by myself I stand ;
Imprison me within Thine arms
And strong shall be my hand.

My heart is weak and poor
Until its master find ;
It has no spring of action sure
It varies with the wind ;
It cannot freely move
Till Thou hast wrought its chain,
Enslave it with Thy matchless love,
And deathless it shall reign.

My power is faint and low
Till I have learned to serve ;
It wants the needed fire to glow,
It wants the breeze to nerve ;
It cannot drive the world
Until itself be driven ;
Its flag can only be unfurled
When Thou shalt breathe from heaven.

My will is not my own
Till Thou hast made it Thine
If it would reach a monarch's throne
It must its crown resign ;
It only stands unbent
Amid the clashing strife,
When on Thy bosom it has leant
And found in Thee its life.

—The Revealer,

अविद्यायां बहुधा वर्तमाना वयं कृतार्था इत्यभिमन्यन्ति बालाः ।
यत्कर्मिणो न प्रवेदयन्ति रागात्तेनातुराः क्षीणलोकाश्च्यवन्ते

॥ ९ ॥

अविद्यायां in ignorance बहुधा in multifarious ways वर्तमानाः existing बालाः boys वयं we कृतार्थाः of accomplished aims इति thus अभिमन्यन्ति think. यत् because कर्मिणः the sacrificers रागात् owing to passions न not प्रवेदयन्ति know, (तस्मात् therefore) क्षीणलोकाः the enjoyments of the worlds attained by good karma being over, आतुराः dejected च्यवन्ते come down.

Though variously immersed in ignorance, the children (ignorant) consider themselves as of accomplished aims. As the Karmis know not (the truth) owing to their attachments, they fall, miserable, their enjoyments of the worlds being over.

[Note—Those who perform the sacrifices with great desire of attaining the heavenly bliss, do so out of sheer ignorance of the Truth. Such a person is bound to come back here again or go even to lower regions after the expiry of the enjoyments of the fruits of his Karma. Thus the same misery of life overtakes him again.]

इष्टापूर्तं मन्यमाना वरिष्ठं नान्यच्छ्रेयो वेदयन्ते प्रमूढाः ।
नाकस्य पृष्ठे ते सुकृतेऽनुभूत्वेमं लोकं हीनतरं वा विशन्ति

॥ १० ॥

प्रमूढाः the deluded fools इष्टापूर्तं the sacrifices and charitable works enjoined by the scriptures वरिष्ठं supreme मन्यमानाः thinking अन्यत् other (than this) श्रेयः beneficial (अस्ति there is ; इति this) न वेदयन्ते do not know. ते they सुकृते acquired meritorious deeds, नाकस्य पृष्ठे in the heavenly regions, अनुभूत्वा having enjoyed, इमं लोकं this world हीनतरं inferior वा or विशन्ति enter.

The deluded fools thinking the sacrifices and the charitable works (enjoined by the shastras) as of supreme

value, know not the other blessed (goal). Having enjoyed in the heights of heaven, the fruits of their Karma, they come down again to this world or even enter into a lower one.

[इष्टापूर्तः Ishta means sacrifices enjoined in the Sruti, and Purta means the charitable works enjoined in the Smriti, such as, digging ponds, sinking wells for the public, establishing alms-houses, dedicating public gardens, or shady trees on the road side, etc.]

The blessed goal—i.e., Mukti which is attained by Jnana as will be described later on.

They enter again etc.—i.e., they are born into this human world, or as animals or plants.]

तपःश्रद्धे ये ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये शान्ता विद्वांसो भैक्ष्यचर्यां चरन्तः ।
सूर्यद्वारेण ते विरजाः प्रयान्ति यत्रामृतः स पुरुषो ह्यव्ययात्मा
॥ ११ ॥

ये those who हि verily शान्ताः of peaceful mind विद्वांसः the learned भैक्ष्यचर्या the vow of mendicancy चरन्तः practising अरण्ये in the forest तपःश्रद्धे in penance and faith उपवसन्ति live ते they विरजाः purged of all impurities सूर्यद्वारेण by the Path of the Sun (तत्र there) प्रयान्ति go यत्र where सः that अमृतः immortal अव्ययात्मा imperishable पुरुषः Being (अस्ति is).

Those wise men of peaceful mind who live in the forest in penance and faith, leading the life of mendicancy, freed from all impurities, verily attain by the Path of the Sun that world where that immortal imperishable Being is.

[Of peaceful mind.—i.e., men of self-control, since no peace of mind can be attained unless and until the senses are brought under complete subjugation.

Who live.....faith.—i.e., the sannyasins who lead the austere life of self-abnegation and devotion, far away from the busy haunts of men and temptation.

Freed from all impurities.—i.e., free from taints of desires and egotism.

The Path of the Sun.—The Deva-Yana.

That immortal imperishable Being.—Hiranyagarbha or Brahmā.

Note.—In contradistinction to the attainment of the lower heaven by means of the sacrifices as mentioned in Mantram II. 6., here the Sruti speaks of the attainment of the highest heaven, the Satyaloka or the world of Brahmā, through the performance of devotional practices and self-control. It should be noted that the reference has been made here only to the *Krama Mukti* or gradual emancipation and not to the *Jivan Mukti* or immediate emancipation which is attainable in this life by means of supreme knowledge. For a Jivan Mukta there is no going anywhere at any time. As soon as the supreme knowledge of the soul dawns, the bubble bursts, the limitation of the soul disappears, and what rests is one infinite ocean of consciousness absolute. Hence no coming or going is possible in that case; neither is there earth nor heaven for him; all becomes negated to the consciousness in one stroke.]

परीक्ष्य लोकान्कर्मचितान्ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायाभास्त्यक्तः
कृतेन ।

तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम्
॥ १२ ॥

ब्राह्मणः a Brahmana कर्मचितान् attainable through works लोकान् worlds परीक्ष्य having examined, निर्वेदं dispassions आयात् should get कृतेन by the caused अकृतः the uncaused न अस्ति cannot be had. तत् that (Atman, the uncaused) विज्ञानार्थं to know, for the knowledge of, सः he समित्पाणिः with sacrificial fuel in hand श्रोत्रियं well versed in the Vedas, ब्रह्मनिष्ठं devoted to the realisation of Brahman गुरुं a Guru एव verily अभिगच्छेत् should go.

Having examined the worlds attainable through Karma a Brahmana should get dispassionate towards them (vairagya). The Uncaused cannot be had by the caused. To know that, he, with sacrificial fuel in hand, must

approach a Guru who is well-versed in the Vedas and absolutely devoted to the realisation of Brahman.

[*Note.*—Heavenly enjoyments and pleasures of this world are attained by the performance of rituals and meritorious works as enjoined in the Vedas and the Smrities, and spoken of in the beginning of this chapter. But all such enjoyments, whether temporal or celestial, that are caused by actions, are but momentary and changeable as all created things are,—all are shadows, at best, glowing shadows, in the midst of a long panorama of shadows. Even the æonian life of Brahma is but a moment before the transcendent eternity of the Atman. Moreover, all karmas done with selfish motive are impinged with ignorance and as such their results bring only bondage in their train. Hence the Sruti exhorts that a true Brahmana, being true to his sathvic nature, should get Vairagya having scrutinised all lives, both mundane and heavenly. The aspirant of the Eternal life of the soul should remember that the uncreated eternal Atman can never be realised by any action whatsoever. It is the Ignorance, Avidya, that has put up the show, created this phantasmagoria, of all relative life and existence known as Universe; and nothing can destroy it, nor help the soul, its captive, to escape from its thralldom, except Jnana, the knowledge of the true nature of the soul (including its Sadhana also). So the Sruti directs the aspirant to seek out a Guru who is well-versed both in the theory and practice of the self-realisation and attain that supreme Jnana with his aid.

The uncaused.....caused.—Atman being transcendental is beyond all law of causation; hence no karma can produce its realisation.

Sankaracharya breaks up this passage into two sentences and paraphrases as follows.—इह अकृतः नास्ति, अतः अस्माकं किं कृतेन आयासबहुलेन कर्मणः। “Here in this world there is no trace of the uncreated eternal, and hence what need have we with the created, i. e., work which is fraught with so much difficult exertion.”

With sacrificial fuel in hand.—It was the custom in ancient time that the disciple must render all services to his Guru, in the way of collecting sacrificial fuel and fruits from the forest, drawing water, tending cattle and such other personal works.]



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. IV.] FEBRUARY & MARCH, 1918. [No. 10 & 11.

HINDUISM AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

BY

The Swami Vivekananda.

(Translated from Bengali.)

By the word “the Shastras” are meant the eternal Vedas without beginning or end. In matters religious the Vedas alone are the supreme authority.

The Puranas and other religious scriptures are all denoted by the word “Smriti.” Their authority goes so far as they follow the Vedas and do not contradict them.

Truth is of two kinds :—(1) the sensuous, i. e., that which is cognisable by the five ordinary senses of man, and by reasonings based thereon. (2) The transcendental, i. e., that which is cognisable by the subtle, supersensuous power of Yoga.

Knowledge acquired by the first means is called Science; and what is acquired by the second is called the Vedas.

This whole quantum of the supersensuous Truth having no beginning or end, and called by the name of the Vedas, are ever-existent. The creator himself with the help of these truths is creating, preserving and destroying the Universe. The person in whom this supersensuous power is manifested, is called a Rishi

and the supersensuous truths which he realises by this power are called the Vedas.

This Rishihood, this power of supersensuous perception of the Vedas, is real religion. And so long as this does not develop in the life of an initiate, so long is religion a mere empty word to him and it is to be understood that he has not taken yet the first step in religion.

The authority of the Vedas extends to all ages, climes and persons; that is to say, their application is not confined to any particular place, time and persons.

The Vedas are the only exponent of the Universal Religion.

Although the supersensuous vision of truths is to be met with in some measure in our Puranas and Itihasas and in the religious scriptures of other races, still the four-fold scriptures known among the Aryan race as the Vedas being the first, the most complete, and the most undistorted collection of spiritual truths, deserve to occupy the highest place among all scriptures commanding the respect of all nations of the earth, and furnish the *rationale* of all their respective scriptures.

With regard to the whole Vedic collection of truths discovered by the Aryan race, this also has to be understood that those portions alone which do not refer to purely secular matters and which do not merely record tradition or history, or merely provide incentives to duty, form the Vedas in the real sense.

The Vedas are divided into two portions, the Jnana-kanda (knowledge-portion) and the Karma-kanda (ritual-portion). The ceremonies and the fruits of the Karma-kanda are for ever confined within the limits of the world of *Maya* and therefore they have been undergoing and will undergo transformations according to the law of change which operates through time, space and personality.

Social laws and customs likewise, being based on this Karma-kanda, have been changing and will continue to change hereafter. Besides these, minor social usages have from time to time been recognised and accepted as being compatible with the spirit of the true scriptures and the conduct and example of holy sages. But blind allegiance only to usages such as are repugnant to the spirit of the Shastras and the conduct of holy sages has been one of the main causes of the downfall of the Aryan race.

It is the Jnana-kanda or the Vedanta only that has for all time commanded recognition for leading men across *Maya* and bestowing salvation on them through the practice of Yoga, Bhakti, Jnana

or selfless work; and as its validity and authority remain unaffected by any limitations of time, place or persons, it is the only exponent of the universal and eternal religion for all mankind.

The Samhitas of Manu and other sages following the lines laid down in Karma-kanda have mainly ordained rules of conduct conducive to social welfare and applicable according to the diversities of time, place and persons. The Puranas have taken up the truths imbedded in the Vedanta and have explained them in detail in the course of describing the exalted life and deeds of *Avatars* and others. They have each emphasised, besides, some out of the infinite aspects of the Divine Lord to teach men about them.

But when by the process of time, fallen from the true ideals and rules of conduct and devoid of the spirit of renunciation, addicted only to blind usages and degraded in intellect, the descendants of the Aryans failed to appreciate even the spirit of these Puranas which taught men of ordinary intelligence the abstruse truths of the Vedanta in concrete form and diffuse language and appeared antagonistic to one another on the surface, because of each inculcating with special emphasis only particular aspects of the Spiritual Ideal,

and when, as a consequence, they reduced India, the fair land of religion, to a scene of almost infernal confusion by breaking up piecemeal the one Eternal Religion of the Vedas (*Sanatana Dharma*), the grand synthesis of all the aspects of the Spiritual Ideal, into conflicting sects and by seeking to sacrifice each other in the flames of sectarian hatred and intolerance,

then it was that Sri Bhagavan Ramakrishna incarnated himself in India

—to demonstrate what the true religion of the Aryan race is,

—to show where amidst all its many divisions and offshoots, scattered over the land in the course of its immemorial history, lies the true unity of the Hindu religion, which by its overwhelming number of sects discordant to superficial view, quarrelling constantly with each other and abounding in customs divergent in every way, has constituted itself a misleading enigma for our countrymen and the butt of contempt for foreigners,

—and, above all, to hold up before men, for their lasting welfare and as a living embodiment of the *Sanatana Dharma*, his own wonderful life into which he infused the universal spirit and character of the *Dharma*, so long cast into oblivion by the process of time.

In order to show how the Vedic truths,—eternally existent as the instrument with the Creator in his work of creation, preservation and dissolution—reveal themselves spontaneously in the mind of the Rishis purified from all impressions of worldly attachment, and because such verification and confirmation of the scriptural truths will help the revival, re-establishment and spread of Religion, the Lord, though the very embodiment of the Vedas, in this his new incarnation has thoroughly discarded all external forms of learning.

That the Lord incarnates again and again in human form for the protection of the Vedas, the true religion, and of Brahminhood or the ministry of that religion—is a doctrine well-established in the Puranas.

The waters of a river falling in a cataract acquire greater velocity, the rising wave after a hollow swells higher ; so after every spell of decline the Aryan society recovering from all the evils by the merciful dispensation of Providence has risen the more glorious and powerful ;—such is the testimony of history.

After rising from every fall our revived society is expressing more and more its innate eternal perfection and so also the omnipresent Lord in each successive incarnation is manifesting himself more and more.

Again and again our Bharatvarsha has fallen into swoon, as it were, and again and again has India's Lord by the manifestation of himself revived her.

But greater than the present deep night of gloom, now almost over, no pall of darkness had ever before enveloped this holy land of ours. And compared to the depth of this fall all previous falls appear like the hollow made by the cow's foot.

Therefore before the effulgence of this new awakening, the glory of all past revivals in her history will pale like stars before the rising sun and compared to this mighty manifestation of renewed strength all the many past epochs of such restoration will be as child's play.

The various constituent ideals of the one Sanatan Dharma (or, Eternal Religion) during its present state of decline have been lying scattered here and there for want of competent men to realise them,—some being preserved partially amongst small sects and some completely lost.

But strong in the strength of this new spiritual renaissance, men, after reorganising these scattered and disconnected spiritual ideals, will be able to comprehend and practise them in their own

lives and also to recover from oblivion those that are lost. And as the sure pledge of this glorious future, the all-merciful Lord has manifested, as said above, in the present age, an incarnation which in point of completeness in revelation, in point of its synthetic harmonising of all ideals and in point of its promoting every sphere of spiritual culture surpasses the manifestations of all past ages.

So at the very dawn of this momentous epoch, the reconciliation of all aspects and ideals of religious thought and worship is being proclaimed ; this boundless, all-embracing Idea had been lying inherent, but so long concealed, in the Religion Eternal, and its scriptures, and now rediscovered, it is being declared to humanity in lofty tones.

This new dispensation of the age is the source of great good to the whole world, specially to India ; and the inspirer of this dispensation, Sri Bhagavan Ramakrishna is the reformed and remodelled manifestation of all the previous epoch-makers in religion. Oh ! man, have faith in this, and lay it to heart.

The dead does not return, Oh ! man, the past night does not reappear, a spent-up wave of emotion does not rise anew in its former intensity, neither does man inhabit the same body over again. So from the worship of the dead past, we invite you to the worship of the living present, from the regretful brooding over by-gones, we invite you to the activities of the present, from all the waste of energy in retracing lost and demolished pathways, we call you back to new-laid paths which lie broad and near. He that is wise, let him understand.

Of that power which at the very first impulse has roused distant echoes from all the four quarters of the globe, conceive in your mind the manifestation in its fulness ! and discarding all idle misgivings, weaknesses and the jealousies characteristic of enslaved peoples, come and help in the turning of the wheel of this new dispensation.

With the conviction firmly rooted in your heart that we are the servants of the Lord, his children, factors in the fulfilment of his purposes, enter the field of work.

THE SIVANANDA LAHARI.

(Continued from page 271.)

The speciality of Bhakti in such association is that the sixfold enemy of man, consisting of Desire, Anger, Covetousness, Delusion, Pride and Envy, is not radically destroyed but converted into a friend. This has been beautifully taught by the Divine Ramakrishna and is amply illustrated by the poetical utterances of great Bhaktas, such as we find in this poem.

In other words, there is this difference between the pure *gnani* and the *bhakta*. The former intends to destroy all passion and replace it by philosophical equanimity. The latter uses it as a means to union by love, which by itself is competent to bring about a complete change of personal character. But he is determined on one thing, that all his mental processes should have but one direction, namely God, the only Beloved. By dint of constantly turning all his emotions into this new channel, he sets up a new mind in place of his old one.

Thus the Bhakta cherishes the feelings of love and hate, of covetousness and pride. But he loves God, hates his own imperfections, is covetous of Bhakti alone and is proud that he is a child of God.

Loving God, he wants to feel God always near him and to serve Him and give all he can to Him. Aye, he wants not merely to have Him near, but quite at the core of his being, namely his heart. So utterly does the Bhakta want his consummation that he sometimes resorts to what may be regarded as a kind of special pleading. Thus in the forty-third verse of the Sivananda Lahari, we have something in the following strain :—

“Oh native of the mountain-heights of perfection and truth, I am yearning for Thee and cannot live without Thee and Thou neglectest me. But I can give Thee a hint or two which will teach Thee that after all Thou canst not do better than make Thy abode inside my heart. Thou art by profession a hunter, Thou art rightly called the *Adi Kirata*, the earliest Hunter and Thy true delight is in hunting. And the sort of game that is meet for Thy hunting, Thou canst find just in my heart, viz., the wild beasts known as lust, anger, pride and so forth. They are justly regarded as wild beasts because they cause great havoc in my heart. Thou wouldst be delighted therefore to come and live for ever therein,

for Thou canst hunt these mad passions and thus, while conferring a benefit on me, satisfy Thy craving for the chase.”

Again in another part of this poem we find thus.

“Oh Lord of Gauri, tender as are Thy feet, what hard work they have to get through. There was the God of death whom Thou hadst to kick on the breast, because He sought to interrupt Thy Bhakta while He was engaged in worshipping Thee, Mrikandu's wonderful child, who had such a pure mind that He could love Thee, knowing that He had to die, prematurely. Then there was the monster (*Apasmara*) created by magic rites by the rishis of the *Daruka* forest, and sent by them against Thee, and Thou hadst to tread him under foot. Then Thou hast to live on the mountains whose surfaces are hard, and to add to it, there are hosts of Gods who are coming to worship and whose jewelled crowns must pain Thy feet when they prostrate. Why canst Thou not provide Thyself with a pair of strong sandals? Here is my mind, a sufficiently hard, even as hard as adamant and Thou canst make out of it a pair of good ones.” Again the poet says in another place :—

“Siva, for attendance upon Thee and the mountain-maid, I shall provide a faithful servant, my mind, which is endowed with many qualities. Therefore abide Thou in my heart, Oh Thou who art the Kinsman of all, and the ocean of Truth, Consciousness and Bliss.”

The Bhakta's feeling of repulsion is spent on a suitable object, viz., his lower mind. He knows himself to be apart from it and looks upon it as the chief obstacle to the consummation of his Love. So long as there is mind, there cannot be perfect union with God. The mind in its impure state is a serious drag on the progress of the Bhakta and Bhakti is the only means for its purification. In Bhakti there is a frequent dwelling in thought on the Ideal of all being, viz., the infinite perfection of God, and this tends gradually but surely to know out all evil tendencies and to build into the mind new ones of an exalted character. Bhakti tends to efface the lower mind and even the higher, but when there is awareness of the lower mind, the Bhakta contemplates it with profound disgust and at such times his prayer to the Lord is for subjugation of it. Thus in the 20th verse the following thoughts are expressed :—

“Oh Infinite perfection whom sages have delighted to contemplate in the form of a Bhikshu because Thou carest not for possessions, and canst not be induced to love sense-delights, is it right for Thee to let me live in torment, Thyself revelling in pure Bliss? Thou art not subject to delusions, because Thou art not

burdened with a mind. Thy state is wonderful to think of. Thou art not frightened by deadly snakes, nor art Thou pleased by the lovely moon-crescent on Thy *jala*. Thou art not tainted by the garlands of skulls that Thou wearest nor can the holy Ganga impart any additional purity to Thee. Thou seest no discomfort in wearing a coat of cremation-ashes, nor does the embrace of Gauri add to Thy Bliss. Thou art self-sustained and self-enjoying, and hence Thou art even in all things good and evil. But see how it is with me. I have got what is called a mind. No; what I mean is that the thing called mind has got hold of me. It would take no rest nor would it give me any. Caprice and love of mischief, these are its names. Its wants are legion. The objects of its seeking are in number infinite as Thy creation. Small and shallow as it seems to be, it approximates to infinity in the swiftness of its motion. It cannot attend to more than one thing at a time, but it makes up for this by a quick succession of pursuits and preoccupations. Its sportive freaks are therefore marvellous. Deluded by its fulsome promises and hoping that it might bring me happiness somewhere out of all the many things it sought, I bore with all its pranks. But now I know, to my cost, it is a senseless thing unfit to be trusted with the great concerns of life. This restless principle is never content with one thing gained, is quickly satiated with it, and hence as quickly plunges into newer quests. I often feel that so long as this mind continues to be what it is, it is hopelessly difficult to think of Thee, much less to love Thee. But how to curb this turbulent ally? Yet how urgent is the need to quell it! How it wastes precious energy in vain experimenting! It sees not the Bliss that is ever present, waiting at the door, as it were, the Bliss that all can have, from the beggar to the Emperor. If I believe what it says, I never am, but always going to be, happy—say, because I am now to deny myself rest and contemplative peace, or congenial, healthful occupation, and thereby achieve some great enterprise, an “enviable” position in a money-making profession, or an astounding work of labour and genius which will bring me “everlasting” fame! So, it is now one thing, now another, never the same thing for any considerable time, and never in harbour. Thus trusting my affairs to this incompetent servant, I have gone from bad to worse from day to day, till I can get no farther worse. No good reasoning with this brute, for it is a mere creature of habit, and will go its own way. It is just like a machine, all wrongly made, and needing to be unmade and remade. If it were of the right sort, helpful to me in all that elevates and refines, then could I do something. As it is, it makes me weak and impotent to do anything worth doing; least of all could I set about the task of reforming it, the cause of all my weakness.

But Thou, Oh Lord, Gayatri's theme, hast this unique glory over all creation, that even a reprobate heart cannot withstand Thee. With love Thou canst bind any mind unto Thy feet, for loveliness in infinite perfection is Thine. Thy love is soul-satisfying, and having once tasted it, who will thereafter care for the foul-smelling pleasures of this world? Hence, Blissful One, come Thou, sublime and beautiful, into my heart, and bind it with the bonds of Bhakti, and make it Thine own. Inspire it with the madness of Thy love.”

And then as a worldly man, covets the so-called means of happiness, so does the Bhakta covet Bhakti and seek to possess more and more of it. Of every good thing it is said “Ask and it shall be given.” Whoever earnestly desires a thing gets it without fail. This is the law of nature. Hence Bhakti must be intensely desired, in order that one may finally have the fullest measure of it. Hence in a poem devoted to Bhakti it would be reasonable to expect much light on the supreme Blissfulness of Bhakti, and the deeprooted desire of the true Bhakta to get more of it. Now even a cursory examination of this poem will show that the chief theme is the loveliness and glory of Bhakti.

In one place the poet seems to answer the question, what can Bhakti do?

“Oh Lord, I covet Thy love, for I know that it is the highest state. It is like a loving mother, who would make a veritable child of me. She would thrill the frame with ecstasies, unknown to the life of worldliness, making the tears flow from excess of emotion. Thus the age-long thirst for pleasure is sated to the full. And then, other pleasures cease to satisfy and are quickly discarded and an unassailable purity comes then. Bhakti like a careful mother provides this purity like a garment, to protect her child from evil. Then she nourishes him with the milk of Thy glory and loveliness, Thy wonderful attributes and Thy infinite grace, conveyed, if need be, in the conch-shell of vach, the inimitable poetic utterances of great Bhaktas. Then mother Bhakti safeguards him from evil influences by means of *rudrakshas* and ashes, sacred because they keep alive in the heart, by association of ideas, the image of Thy sublime Vairagya form. And the consummation of all this loving care is when she puts the Bhakta into the indescribable Rest that comes with the realisation of Thy Self in Samadhi.

Or again—

“Oh Lord of Bhavani, what is there that Thy love can confer on Thy Bhakta? First fear leaves him. Even Death, the

dreadful deity of body's loss, is afraid to approach him. He, the god of death, still bears on his breast the smart of chastisement that Thou gavest him when he presumed to approach Thy Bhakta the only son of Mrikandu. Thus Thy Bhakta fears not Death. And he is above coveting any position in the universe, even that of the high Gods who administer Thy creation. For they, the immortals, are proud to prostrate themselves at the feet of one who has Bhakti, and hence he comes to know that Bhakti is the highest. And the highest, the really highest position that any soul can attain, namely *mukti*, like an eager bride, comes of her own accord, unsought, to clasp him in her close embrace. What more is there to wish for?"

The feeling of elation, which in a worldly man would be called pride, is but faintly perceptible in the Bhakta. For the greater the Bhakti, the less can there be of self assertion. Bhakti is a process of gradual wearing out of egoism and hence the pronounced egoism of ordinary humanity is conspicuous by its absence among Bhaktas. They may on occasion put on an appearance of pride, but the feeling is not deeprooted. But egoism is not utterly lost. Like a thin line of division between the Lord and the Self, an attenuated egoism continues to animate the Bhakta occasionally. The form of this feeling again has total reference to the Lord alone and not to individuality. The Bhakta renders everything to the Lord, and retains for himself only the capacity to participate in his infinite Bliss.

Hence the Bhakta's mood of elation is beautiful, thus—

"In my heart is enthroned the King of Kings, who is more to me than all the seven worlds. I am free to worship Him when I please and how I please. In secret or in public, I can sing His name and thus participate in His blissful nature. I have no fear, for His grace is assured for ever. I cannot hereafter fall away from Him, and He cannot desert me. And no wants can arise to hinder my happiness, for He is bountiful beyond all human conception."

Of His own accord, the Lord endows the Bhakta with manifold perfection, making him finally one with Himself. The Bhakta has not got to bear the burden of his own salvation. Bhakti stimulates into spontaneous growth all there is of good in the human heart, and perfection of character as well as of intellect come unsought as a result of pure Love for One who is the Sum-Total of Perfection, the Ideal of the daring man.

This grand truth is expressed in many verses of this Upanishadic poem. One of them is as follows :

"When the adorable One, the King of Kings, whose service is the true freedom, is gracious enough to manifest His blissful presence in my heart, what wonderful perfection do I not attain? All things are possible with Him. First, when His image is in the heart, virtue becomes natural. It is impossible to be otherwise than kind and loving as well as just to all creatures, human beings as well as brutes. Then no regrets or heartburning can arise. Nothing seems to be of moment, so that its loss could be felt. The one thing that is worth having is just this Inner Presence. Nothing else matters. Bliss in an unending succession swallows up Time. And all the while the crop of True knowledge, which is also the Bliss of inseparable union with the Lord, gets matured by His gracious Presence, safe from the havoc of those wild beasts, lust, anger, and the rest, and yields the harvest of the True Self, the One indivisible Unity that is both the Lord and His devotee."

Thus the flowery path of love is illustrated in this lovely hymn. It is not to be understood by the casual study of a busy worldly man but by the ardent and sustained attention of one who appreciates its work and its value as soul-medicine. The words do not speak, but the heart of the poet it is that speaks. And it speaks only to the heart that is alive, throbbing with eagerness for the lotus-feet of Him who alone can be loved for His own sake.

To us, human beings, who are poor in that strength which is so absolutely necessary for the onward march to the goal of life this is a source of daily strength. First solace from the unkindnesses of worldly life, and then an indescribable foretaste of the Final Bliss, and finally the allegiance to the source of all Strength which will surely lead the seeker on the path over all obstacles and pitfalls, these are the fruits of a daily study of this and similar poems of Bhakti. There is no dearth of means. *Salsanga* is the means, *Sanga* with the holy ones whose hearts are accessible through their preserved utterances, pregnant with the life giving history of their own heart-life as they themselves lived and profited by. May we not waste the opportunity! May He, who is ever on the alert to save and bless, give us the heart to appreciate and hold fast to all that is good!

Om Shantih! Shantih!! Shantih!!!

CHIT-SHAKTI.*

(THE SPIRIT ASPECT OF THE UNIVERSE)

BY

Sir John Woodroffe.

Chit-Shakti is Chit as Shakti that is as power, or that aspect of Chit in which it is, through its associated Mâyâ Shakti, operative to create the universe. It is a commonly accepted doctrine that the ultimate Reality is Samvid, Chaitanya or Chit.

But what is Chit? There is no word in the English language which adequately describes it. It is not mind : for mind is a limited instrument through which Chit is manifested. It is that which is behind the mind and by which the mind itself is thought that is created. The Brahman is mindless (Amanah). If we exclude mind we also exclude all forms of mental process, conception, perception, thought, reason, will, memory, particular sensation and the like. We are then left with three available words, namely, Consciousness, Feeling, Experience. To the first term there are several objections. For if we use an English word we must understand it according to its generally received meaning. Generally by "Consciousness" is meant self-consciousness or at least something particular, having direction and form which is concrete and conditioned ; an evolved product marking the higher stages of Evolution. According to some, it is a mere function of experience, an epiphenomenon, a mere accident of mental process. In this sense it belongs only to the highly developed organism and involves a subject attending to an object of which, as of itself, it is conscious. We are thus said to have most consciousness when we are awake (Jâgrat avasthâ) and have full experience of all objects presented to us ; less so when dreaming (Svapna avasthâ) and deep anaesthesia in true dreamless sleep (Sushupti). I may here observe that recent researches show that this last state is not so common as is generally supposed. That is complete dreamlessness is rare ; there being generally some trace of dream. In the last state it is commonly said that consciousness has disappeared, and so of course it has if we first define consciousness in terms of the waking state and of knowledge of objects. According to Indian notions there is a form of conscious experience in the deepest sleep expressed in the well-known phrase "Happily I slept, I knew nothing." The sleeper recollects on waking that his state has been one of happiness. And he cannot recollect unless there has been a previous experience (anubhava) which is the subject-matter of memory. In ordinary parlance we do not regard some animal forms, plants, or minerals as "conscious." It is true that now in the west there is

(due to the spread of ideas long current in India) growing up a wider use of the term "consciousness" in connection not only with animal but vegetable and mineral life but it cannot be said that the term "consciousness" has yet generally acquired this wide signification. If then we use (as for convenience we do) the term "consciousness" for Chit, we must give it a content different from that which is attributed to the term in ordinary English parlance. Nextly, it is to be remembered that what in either view we understand by consciousness is something manifested and therefore limited and derived from our finite experience. The Brahman as Chit is the infinite substratum of that. Chit in itself (Svarûpa) is not particular, nor conditioned and concrete. Particularity is that aspect in which it manifests as and through Mâyâ-Shakti. Chit manifests as Jnâna-Shakti which, when used otherwise than as a loose synonym for Chit, means knowledge of objects. Chit-Svarûpa is neither knowledge of objects nor self-consciousness in the phenomenal sense. Waking, dreaming and dreamless slumber are all phenomenal states in which experience varies ; such variance being due not to Chit but to the operation or cessation of particular operation of the vehicles of mind (Antahkarana) and sense (Indriya). But Chit never disappears nor varies in either of the three states but remains one and the same through all. Though Chit-Svarûpa is not a knowledge of objects in the phenomenal sense it is not, according to Shaiva Shakti views (I refer always to Advaita Shaiva-darshana) a mere abstract knowing (Jnâna) wholly devoid of content. It contains within itself the Vimarsha-Shakti which is the cause of phenomenal objects then existing in the form of Chit (Chidrûpini). The Self then knows the Self. Still less can we speak of mere "awareness" as the equivalent of Chit. A worm or meaner form of animal may be said to be vaguely aware. In fact mere "awareness" (as we understood that term) is a state of Chit in which it is seemingly overwhelmed by obscuring Mâyâ-Shakti in the form of Tamoguna. Unless therefore we give to "awareness", as to consciousness, a content, other than that with which our experience furnishes us, both terms are unsuitable. In some respects Chit can be more closely described by Feeling which seems to have been the most ancient meaning of the term Chit. Feeling is more primary in that it is only after we have been first affected by something that we become conscious of it. Thus, in Sangkhya the Gunas are said to be in the nature of happiness (Sukha), sorrow (Dukha) and illusion (Moha) as they are experienced by the purusha-Consciousness. And in Vedanta Chit and Ananda or Bliss or Love are one. For consciousness then is not consciousness of being (Sat) but Being-consciousness (Sat-Chit); nor a Being which is conscious of Bliss (Ananda) but Being-Consciousness-bliss (Sachchidananda). Further "feeling" has this advantage that it is associated with all forms of organic existence even according to popular usage and may scientifically be aptly applied to inorganic matter. Thus whilst most consider it to be an

* A lecture delivered before the Vivekananda Society, Calcutta.

unusual and strained use of language to speak of the consciousness of a plant or stone, we can and do speak of the feeling or sentiency of a plant. Further the response which inorganic matter makes to stimuli is evidence of the existence therein of that vital germ of life and sentiency (and therefore Chit) which expands into the sentiency of plants, and the feelings and emotions of animals and men. It is possible for any form of unintelligent being to feel however obscurely. And it must do so if its ultimate basis is Chit and Ananda, however vested by Mâyâ-Shakti these may be. The response which inorganic matter makes to stimuli is the manifestation of Chit through the Sattva-guna of Mâyâ-Shakti in its form as Prakriti-Shakti. The manifestation is slight and apparently mechanical because of the extreme predominance of the Tamoguna in the same Prakriti-Shakti. Because of the limited and extremely regulated character of the movement which seems to exclude all volitional process as known to us, it is currently assumed that we have merely to deal with what is an unconscious mechanical energy. Because vitality is so circumscribed and seemingly identified with the apparent mechanical process we are apt to assume mere unconscious mechanism. But as a fact this latter is but the form assumed by the conscious Vital Power which is in and works in all matter whatever it be. To the eye, however, unassisted by scientific instruments, which extend our capacity for experience, establishing artificial organs for the gaining thereof, the matter appears Jada (or unconscious); and so both in common English and Indian parlance we call that alone living or Jîva which, as organised matter, is endowed with body and senses. Philosophically, however, as well as scientifically, all is Jîvâtma which is not Paramâtma: everything in fact with form, whether the form exists as the simple molecule of matter or as the combination of these simple forms into cells and greater organism. The response of metallic matter is a form of sentiency—its germinal form—a manifestation of Chit intensely obscured by the Tamoguna of Prakriti-Shakti.

In plants Chit is less obscured and there is the sentient life which gradually expands in animals and men according as Chit gains freedom of manifestation through the increased operation of Sattva-guna in the vehicles of Chit; which vehicles are the mind and senses and the more elaborate organisation of the bodily particles. What is thus mere incipient or germinal sentiency, simulating unconscious mechanical movement in inorganic matter, expands by degrees into feeling akin, though at first remotely, to our own, and into all the other psychic functions of consciousness, perception, reasoning, memory and will. The matter has been very clearly put in a Paper on "The four cosmic elements" by C. G. Sander which, (subject to certain reservations stated) aptly describes the Indian views on the subject in hand. He rightly says that sentiency is an integrant constituent of all existence, physical as well as metaphysical, and its

manifestation can be traced throughout the mineral and chemical as well as vegetable and animal worlds. It essentially comprises the functions of relationship to environment, response to stimuli, and atomic memory in the lower or inorganic plane. Whilst in the higher or inorganic planes it includes all the psychic functions such as consciousness, perception, thought, reason, volition and individual memory. Inorganic matter through the inherent element of sentiency is endowed with aesthesia or capacity of feeling and response to physical and chemical stimuli such as light, temperature, sound, electricity, magnetism and the action of chemicals. All such phenomena are examples of the faculty of perception and response to outside stimuli of matter. We must here include chemical sentiency and memory; that is the atom's and molecule's remembrance of its own identity and behavior therewith. Atomic memory does not, of course, imply self-consciousness but only inherent group-spirit which responds in a characteristic way to given outside stimuli. We may call it atomic or physical consciousness. The consciousness of plants is only trance-like (what the Hindu books call 'Comatose') though some of the higher aspects of sentiency (and we may here use the word 'consciousness') of the vegetable world are highly interesting; such as the turning of flowers to the sun; the opening and shutting of leaves and petals at certain times sensitiveness to the temperature and the obvious signs of consciousness shown by the sensitive and insectivorous plants, such as the Sundew, the Venus, Fly trap and others. The sentiency of micro organisms which dwell on the border land between the vegetable and animal worlds have no sense organs, but are only endowed with tactile irritability yet they are possessed of psychic life, sentiency, and inclination whereby they perceive their environment and position, approach, attack and devour food, flee from harmful substances and reproduce by division. Their movements appear to be positive not reflex. Every cell both vegetable and animal possesses a biological or vegetative consciousness which in health is polarised or subordinate to the Government of the total organism of which it forms an integral part; but which is locally impaired in disease and ceases altogether at the death of the organism. In plants, however, (unlike animals) the cellular consciousness is diffused or distributed amongst the tissues or fibres; there being apparently no special conducting or centralizing organs of consciousness such as we find in higher evolutionary forms. Animal consciousness in its highest modes becomes self-consciousness. The psychology of the lower animals is still the field of much controversy; some regarding these as cartesian machines and others ascribing to them a high degree of psychic development. In the animals there is an endeavour at centralization of consciousness which reaches its most complex stage in man, the possessor of the most highly organised system of consciousness, consisting of the nervous system and its centres and functions such as the brain and solar plexus the site of

Ajñā and upper centres and of the Manipūra Chakra. Sentientcy or feeling is a constituent of all existence. We may call it consciousness however if we understand (with the author cited) the term "consciousness" to include atomic or physical consciousness, the trans consciousness of plant life, animal consciousness and man's completed self consciousness.

The term Sentientcy or Feeling as the equivalent of manifested Chit has, however, this disadvantage :—whereas intelligence and consciousness are terms for the highest attributes of man's nature, mere sentientcy, though more inclusive and common to all, is that which we share with the lowest manifestations. In the case of both terms, however, it is necessary to remember that they do not represent the Chit Svarūpa or Chit as It is in itself. The term Svarūpa corresponds with the Platonic "Idea" and Aristotelean "Form." That which constitutes anything what it is was called by Plato its "Idea." Aristotle sought to convey the same meaning by a term which the Schoolmen rendered "Form." They adopted the word "Form" in this sense and the corresponding word Svarūpa (own form) is employed to convey the notion of what constitutes anything what it is namely, its true nature as it is in itself. Thus, though the Brahman or Shiva manifests in the form of the world as Māyā-Shakti, its Svarūpa is pure Chit.

Neither sentientcy nor consciousness as known to us are Chit-svarūpa. They are only limited manifestations of Chit just as reason, will, emotion and memory, their modes, are. Chit is the back-ground of all forms of experience which are its modes that is Chit veiled by Māyā-Shakti. Chit-Svarūpa is never to be confounded with, or limited to, its particular modes. Nor is it their totality, for whilst it manifests in these modes It yet in Its own nature infinitely transcends them. Neither sentientcy, consciousness, nor any other term borrowed from a limited and dual universe adequately describe what Chit is in Itself (Svarūpa). Vitality, mind, matter are its limited manifestations in form. These forms are ceaselessly changing but the homogeneous substratum of which they are particularised modes is changeless. That eternal, changeless, substratum is Chit, which may thus be defined as the *changeless principle of all our changing experience*. All is Chit clothing itself in forms by its own Power of Chit-Shakti and Māyā-Shakti : and that Power is not different from Itself. Chit is not the subject of knowledge or speech. For as the Varāha Upanishad (Chap. IV) says it is "The Reality which remains after all thoughts are given up." What it is in Itself is unknown but to those who become It. It is fully realised only in the highest state of Ecstasy (Samādhi) and in bodiless liberation (Videha Mukti) when Spirit is freed of its vehicles of mind and matter. A Modern Indian Philosopher has (See "Approaches to Truth" and the "Patent Wonder" by Professor Pramathanath Mukhopādhyāya) very admirably analysed

the notion of the universal Ether of Consciousness (Chidākasha) and the particular Stress formed in it by the action of Māyā-Shakti. In the first place, he points out that logical thought is inherently dualistic and therefore presupposes a subject and object. Therefore to the pragmatic eye of the western, viewing the only experience known to him, consciousness is always particular having a particular form and direction. Hence where no direction or form is discernible they have been apt to imagine that consciousness as such has also ceased. Thus if it were conceded that in profound sleep there were no dreams, or if in perfect anaesthesia it were granted that nothing particular was felt, it was thereby considered to be conceded that consciousness may sometimes cease to exist in us. What does in fact cease is the consciousness of objects which we have in the waking and dreaming states. Consciousness as such is neither subjective nor objective and is not identical with intelligence or understanding—that is with directed or informed consciousness. Any form of unintelligent being which feels, however chaotically it may be, is yet, though obscurely so in the sense here meant) conscious. Pure consciousness that is consciousness as such is the back ground of every form of experience.

In practical life and in Science and Philosophy when swayed by pragmatic ends, formless experience has no interest, but only certain forms and tones of life and consciousness. Where these are missed we are apt to fancy that we miss life and feeling consciousness also. Hence the essential basis of existence or Chit has been commonly looked upon as a very much specialised and peculiar manifestation in nature.

On the contrary, Chit is the one and only true Being or Reality itself. Chit as such is identical with Being as such. The Brahman is both Chit and Sat. Though in ordinary experience Being and Feeling Consciousness are essentially bound up together, they still seem to diverge from each other. Man by his very constitution inveterately believes in an objective existence beyond and independent of his self. And this is so, so long as he is subject to the veil (Māyā-Shakti). But in that ultimate basis of experience which is the Paramātmā the divergence has gone ; for the same boundless substratum which is the continuous mass of experience is also that which is experienced. The self is its own object. To the exalted Yogi the whole universe is not different from himself as Atmā. This is the path of the "upward-going" Kundalī (Urddhva Kundalī).

Further there has been a tendency in fact to look upon consciousness as a mere function of experience ; and the Philosophy of unconscious ideas and mind-stuff would even go so far as to regard it as a mere accident of mental process. This is to reverse the actual facts.

Consciousness should rather be taken as an original datum than as a later development and peculiar manifestation. We should begin with it in its lowest forms, and explain its apparent pulse-life by extending the principle of veiling (Mâyâ-Shakti) which is ceaselessly working in man, reducing his life to an apparent series of pulses also. An explanation which does not start with this primordial extensivity of experience cannot expect to end with it. For if it be not positive at the beginning, it cannot be derived at the end.

But what, it may be asked, is the proof of such pure experience? Psychology which only knows changing states does not tell us of it. This is so. Yet from those states some of which approach homogeneity inferences may be drawn, and experience is not limited to such states for it may transcend them.

It is true that ordinarily we do not meet with a condition of consciousness which is without a direction or form; but tests drawn from the incidents of ordinary normal life are insufficient, he has argued, to prove that there is no consciousness at all when this direction and form are supposed to have gone. Though a logical intuition will not tell its own story, we can make reflection on intuition render us some sort of account, so that the intuitive fact appears in review, when it will appear that consciousness is the basis of, indeed existence itself, and not merely an attendant circumstance. But the only proof of pure consciousness is an instance of it. This cannot be established by mere reflection. The bare consciousness of this or that, the experience of just going to sleep and just waking, and even the consciousness of being as such, are but approximations to the state of consciousness as such that is pure consciousness, but are not identical with it. Then, what evidence, it may be asked, have we of the fact that pure consciousness is an actual state of existence? In normal life as well as in abnormal pathological states, we have occasional stretches of experience in which simplicity of feature or determination has advanced near to homogeneity, in which experience has become almost structureless. But the limit of pure homogeneous experience is not there reached. On the other hand, there is no conclusive proof that we have ever had a real lapse of consciousness in our life, and the extinction of consciousness as such is inconceivable in any case. The claim, however, that consciousness as such exists rests not so much on logical argument as on intuitive grounds, on revelation (Shruti) and spiritual *experience* of the truth of that revelation.

According to Indian Monism, a Pure Principle of Experience not only exists, but is the one and only ultimate permanent existence or reality. It does not regard Chit as a mere function, accident, or epiphenomenon, but holds it to be the ever existing *plenum* which sustains and vitalises all phenomenal existence, and is the very *basis* on which all forms of multiple experience, whether of sensation,

instinct, will, understanding, or reason rest. It is, in short, the unity and unchanging Reality behind all these various changing forms which, by the veil or Mâyâ-Shakti, Jiva assumes.

The Chit-Svarûpa inadequately described as mere blissful awareness of feeling exists as the basis and appears in the form of, that is clothed with, mind; a term which in its general sense is not used merely in the sense of the purely mental function of reason but in the sense of all the forms in which consciousness is displayed as distinguished from Chit Itself which is the unity behind all these forms whether reason, sensation, emotion, instinct or will. All these are modes wherein the plastic unformed clay of life is determined. For every conception or volition is essentially an apparent circumscription or limitation of that Sat which is the basis of phenomenal life.

Professor P. N. Mukhopādhyāya has described pure consciousness to be an infinitude of "awareness," lacking name and form and every kind of determination, or which is a state of complete quiescence where the potential is zero or infinity—a condition without strain or tension which is at once introduced when the slightest construction is put upon it, resulting in a consciousness of bare "this" and "that." It is not a consciousness of anything. It is an experience of nothing *in particular*. But this must not be confounded with *no* experience. The former is taken to be the latter because life is pragmatic, interest being shown in particular modes of awareness. To man's life, which is little else than a system of partialities, pure experience in which there is nothing to observe or shun, love or hate seems practically to be no experience at all. Pure Consciousness is impartial. There is no difference (Bheda) so far as pure Awareness is concerned. Pure Consciousness is a kind of experience which stands above all antithesis of motion and rest. It does not know Itself either as changing or statical, since it is awareness *as such* without any determinations or mode whatever. To know itself as changing or permanent, it must conceal its alogical and unspeakable nature in a veil. (Mâyâ). Every determination or form makes experience a directive magnitude. Consciousness then assumes a direction or special reference. It is not possible to direct and refer in a special way without inducing such a feeling of strain or tension, whether the conditions be physiological or psychological. Pure consciousness has, thus, been compared to an equipotential surface of electrical distribution. There is no difference of potentials between any two points A and B over this surface. It is a stretch of consciousness in which there is, apparently, no sensible diversity of features, no preference, no differential incidence of subjective regard. Like the equipotential surface, such consciousness is also quiescent. To secure a flow on it, there must be a difference of potentials between any two points. Similarly, to have a reference, a direction, a movement of attention, there must be a determination in the total experience of the moment

in the given mass of consciousness. Absolute quiescence is a state of consciousness which is pure existence, with no special subjective direction, and reference; with no difference of level and potential between one part of the experience and another. Experience will show special subjective direction and reference if it assumes the least form or determination such as "this" or "that"; to have no difference of level or potential, experience must be strictly homogeneous—that is to say, must not involve the least ideal or representative structure. Absolute quiescence exists only with that Consciousness which is pure Being, or Paramātmā.

With regard however, to all descriptions of the state, it must be borne in mind that they only negatively correspond with their subject matter by the elimination of characteristics which are peculiar to, and constitute the human consciousness of, the Jīva and are therefore alien to the Supreme Consciousness. They give us no positive information as to the nature of pure Chit, for this is only known in Yoga by the removal of the veil of ignorance (Avidyā) under which all logical thinking and speaking is done. This "ignorance" is nothing but a term for those limitations which make the creature what he is. It is a common place in Indian religion and philosophy that the Brahman as It exists in Itself is beyond all thought and words, and is known only by the Samādhi of Yoga. As the Mahānirvāṇa Tantra says (III., V. 6 *et. seq.*): "The Brahman is known in two ways: from His manifestations which are the object of Sādhana or as it is in Itself in Samādhiyoga"; for, as Ch. XIV., V. 135 *Ibid.*, says, Atmājñāna is the one means of liberation in which Its nature is realised. It is, perhaps, in part at least, because the merely negative and imperfect character of such description is not sufficiently noted that pure consciousness, as the author cited points out, has in general awakened no serious interest in the practical West; though it has been the crown of glory for some of, what have been said to be, the stateliest forms of Eastern thought, which asserts itself to be in possession of an *experimental* method by which the condition of pure consciousness may be realised. The question is, thus, not one of mere speculation, but of *demonstration*. This state, again, is believed by the East to be not a dull and dreary condition, a dry abstraction or *reductio ad absurdum* of all which imparts to our living its worth and significance. Not at all; since It is the first principle from which all existence and interest in existence proceeds. It is reasonable, therefore, it is contended, to assume that all which life possesses of real worth exists in the Source of life itself. Life is only a *mode* of infinite existence, and the joy of life is but a faint reflection of infinite beatitude, which is pure Being and Consciousness in all its metaphysical grandeur, an absolutely understandable condition which no imagination can depict and no categories can reach and possess.

Owing to the necessarily negative character of some of the descriptions of the Supreme Brahman we find such questions "How can it differ from a nullity?" ("Dialogues on Hindu Philosophy," 259 by Rev. K. M. Banerjee); and the statement of the English Orientalist Colonel Jacob (whose views are akin to those of others) that Nirvāṇa is an unconscious (*sic*) and stone-like (*sic*) existence." Such a misconception is the more extraordinary in that it occurs in the work of an author who was engaged in the translation of a Vedantic treatise. These and many similar statements seem to establish that it is possible to make a special study of Vedānta and yet to misunderstand its primary concepts. It is true that the Brahman is unconscious in the sense that It has not our consciousness; for if so, It would be Jīva and not Paramātmā. But this is only to say that it has not our limitations. It is unlimited Chit. A stone represents its most veiled existence. In its Self it is all light and self-illuminating (Svaprakāsha). As Shruti says (Katha Up. 5-15). "All things shed lustre by His lustre. All things shine because He shines." All things depend on It: but It has not to depend on any thing else for Its manifestation. It is therefore better to say with the Haṅsa Upanishad and the Christian Gospel that It is the peace beyond all understanding. It has been drily remarked that "The idea that Yoga means a dull state is due, perhaps, to the misunderstanding of Patanjali's definition of it."

Man, however, ordinarily and by his nature craves for modes and forms (Bhāumānanda); and though all enjoyment comes from the pure Supreme Consciousness, it is supposed that dualistic variety and polarity are necessary for enjoyment. What, thus, in its plenitude belongs to the sustaining spirit of all life is transferred to life alone. All knowledge and existence are identified with variety, change, polarity. Whilst skimming over the chequered surface of the sea, we thus, it is said, ignore the unfathomed depths which are in repose and which nothing stirs, wherein is the Supreme Peace (Shānta) and Bliss (Paramānanda).

The Brihadāranyaka Upanishad says "Other beings live on a fraction of this great Bliss." The Bliss of Shiva and Shakti are one for they are inseparable. Hence she is called (Trishati II. 82) Ekabhogā: for Eka = Ishvara and Bhoga = Svasvarūpānanda.

Nyāya and Sāṅkhya say that the chief end of man is the absolute cessation of pain, but Vedāntins, going beyond this negative definition, say that, all pain having surceased on unity with the Supreme, the chief end is that positive Bliss which is of its essence. The Devī Kalyāṇī, the Mother of all, is Herself Bliss—that is, all bliss from earthly bliss (Bhāumānanda) to Brahman-bliss (Brahmānanda). As the Commentator Śaṅkara in his commentary on the Trishati says citing Shruti: "Who else can make us breathe, who else can make us live, if this blissful Ether were not?"

If, further, it be asked *what* is this pure Experience which manifests itself in all these diverse forms, it must be said that from Its very definition pure Chit or the Supreme Brahman (Parabrahman) is that about which nothing in particular can be predicated: for predication is possible only in relation to *determinations* or modes in consciousness. And in this sense the Yogatattva Upanishad says that those who seek a knowledge of it in Shāstras are deluded: "How can that which is self-shining be illuminated by the Shāstras? Not even the Devas can describe that indescribable state." The Mandukya Upanishad, speaking of the fourth aspect (Pāda) of Atmā, says that it is the non-dual Shiva which is not an object which can be sensed, used, taken, determined (by any marks) or of which an account can be given, but is unthinkable and knowable only by the realisation of Atmā. Negative predication may, however, clear away improper notions. It is really an inscrutable condition of existence upon which no category can be fastened. This must always be borne in mind in any attempted definition of this transcendent state. It is a condition of self-existent (Nirādhāra), unending (Nitya), changeless (Avikāri), undifferentiated (Abhinna), spaceless (Pūrṇa), timeless (Shāsvata), all-pervading (Sarvatrāvastha), self-illuminating (Svayam-jyotiḥ), pure (Shuddha) experience. As the Kularṇava Tantra says (I—6, 7): "Shiva is the impartite Supreme Brahman, the all knowing Creator of all. He is the stainless One and the Lord of all. He is one without a second (Advaya). He is light itself. He changes not and, is without beginning or end. He is without attribute and above the highest. He is existence (Sat), Consciousness (Chit), and Bliss (Ananda)." As Sat It is unity of being beyond the opposites of "this" and "that," "here and there," "then and now." As Chit It is an experiencing beyond the opposites of worldly knowledge and ignorance. As Supreme Ananda It is the Bliss which is known upon the dissolution of that dualistic state which fluctuates between, and is composed of, happiness and sorrow; for created happiness is only an impermanent change of state (Vikāra) or Becoming, but the Supreme Bliss (Paramananda) endures. Bliss is the very nature (Svarūpa) of this Supreme Consciousness, and not, as with the creature, a mere changing attribute of some form of Becoming. Supreme Being (Sat) is a unity without parts (Nishkala). Supreme Feeling-Consciousness (Chit) is immediacy of experience. In the Jiva, Consciousness of Self is set over against the not-self; for logical thought establishes a polarity of subject and object. Thus the undifferentiated Supreme Consciousness transcends, and the Supreme Bliss (Paramananda) is beyond the changing feelings of happiness and sorrow. It is the great Peace (Shanta) which, in the words of the Haṅgṣopanishad, (V. 12, Ed. Aanandashrama, XXIX, p. 593) as of the New Testament, passes all worldly understanding. Sachchidananda, or Pure Being, persists in all the states of Becoming which are its manifestation as Shakti. It is a continuous, partless, homogeneous Unity universally pervading the

manifested world like ether or space, as opposed to the limited, discontinuous, discrete character of the forms of "matter" which are the products of its power or Shakti. It is a state of quiescence free of all motion (Nihspanda), and of that vibration (Spandana) which, operating as the Primordial Energy, evolves the phenomenal world of names and forms. It is, in short, the innermost Self in every being—a changeless Reality of the nature of a purely experiencing principle (Chaitanyam Atmā) as distinguished from whatever may assume the form of either the experienced or of the means of experience. This Chit in bodies or Chaitanya underlies as their innermost Self all beings. The Chit or Atma as the underlying Reality in all is, according to Vedānta, one, and the same in all: undivided and unlimited by any of them, however much they may be separated in time and space. It is not only all-pervading, but all-transcending. It has thus a two-fold aspect: an immanent aspect as Shakti (Power), in which It pervades the universe (Saguna Brahman); and a transcendental aspect, in which It exists beyond all Its worldly manifestations, (Nirguna Brahman). Chit as it is in itself is spaceless and timeless, extending beyond all limitations of time and space and all other categories of existence. We live *in* the Infinite. All limits exist *in* Chit. But these limits are also another aspect of Himself that is Shakti. It is a boundless tranquil ocean on the surface of which countless varied modes like waves are rising, tossing and sinking. Though It is the one Cause of the universe of relations, in itself It is neither a relation nor a totality of relations, but a completely relationless Self-identity unknowable by any logical process whatever.

Chit is the boundless permanent *plenium* which sustains and vitalises everything. It is the universal Spirit all-pervading like the Ether which is, sustains, and illumines all experience and all process in the *continuum* of experience. In it the universe is born, grows and dies. This *plenium* or *continuum* is as such all-pervading, eternal, unproduced, and indestructible: for production and destruction involve the existence and bringing together and separation of parts which in an absolute partless *continuum* is impossible. It is necessarily in itself that is, as Chit motionless, for no parts of an all-filling *continuum* can move from one place to another. Nor can such a *continuum* have any other form of motion, such as expansion, contraction, or undulation, since all these phenomena involve the existence of parts and their displacement. Chit is one homogeneous, partless, all-pervading, eternal, spiritual substance. In Sanskrit, this *plenium* is called Chidakasha; that is, just as all material things exist in the all-pervading physical Ether, so do they and the latter exist in the infinitely extending Spiritual "Ether" which is Chit. The Supreme Consciousness is thought of as a kind of permanent spiritual "Space" (Chidakasha) which makes room for and contains all varieties and forms appearing and disappearing. Space itself is an aspect of spiritual substance. It is a special posture of that stress in life which takes place in unchanging

consciousness (P. Mukhopādhyāya "The Patent Wonder," 21—24). In this Ocean of Being-Consciousness we live, move and have our being. Consciousness as such, (that is, as distinguished from the products of Its power or Shakti), is never finite. Like space, it cannot be limited, though through the operation of its power of self-negation or *Māyā-Shakti* it may appear as determined. But such apparent determinations do not ever for us express or exhaust the whole Consciousness, any more than space is exhausted by the objects in it. Experience is taken to be limited because the Experiencer is swayed by a pragmatic interest which draws his attention only to particular features in the *continuum*. Though what is thus experienced is a part of the whole experience, the latter is felt to be an infinite expanse of consciousness or awareness in which is distinguished a definite mass of especially determined feeling.

As Chit is the infinite *plenum*, all limited being exists *in* it, and it exists in all such beings as the Spirit or innermost and true Self and as Shakti it is their mind and body. When the existence of anything is affirmed, the Brahman is affirmed, for the Brahman is existence itself. This pure Consciousness, or Chit is the *Paramātmā Nirguna Shiva* who is Being Consciousness-Bliss (*Suchchhidānāna*). Consciousness is Being. *Paramātmā*, according to Advaita Vedānta, is not a consciousness of being, but Being Consciousness. Nor is it consciousness of Bliss, but it is Bliss. All these are one in pure Consciousness. That which is the nature of *Paramātmā* never changes, notwithstanding the creative ideation (*Srishtikulpana*) which is the manifestation of Shakti as Chit-Shakti and *Māyā-Shakti*. It is this latter Shakti which, according to the Shākta Tantra, evolves. To adopt a European analogy which is yet not complete, *Paramātmā* is God-head (*Brahmatva*). Shakti, or *Saguna Atmā*, is God (*Īshvara*). Each of the three systems *Sāṅkhya*, *Māyāvāda*, Vedānta, and Tantrik monism agrees in holding the reality of pure consciousness (Chit). The question upon which they differ is as to whether unconsciousness is a second independent reality, as *Sāṅkhya* alleges; and, if not, how the admitted appearance of unconsciousness is to be explained consistently with the unity of the Brahman.

Such then is Chit, truly known as it is in Itself only in Yoga and Moksha; known only through Its manifestations in our ordinary experience just as to use the simile of the *Kaivalya Kālīka Tantra* we realise the presence of Rāhu or Bhūchchhāyā by his actions on the sun and moon. The Eclipse is seen but not the cause of it. Chit-Shakti is a name for the same changeless Chit when associated in creation with its operating *Māyā-Shakti*. The Supreme Chit is called *Parasamvit* in the scheme of the Thirty-six *Tattvas* which is adopted by both the Shaiva and Shākta Agamas.

(To be continued.)

VEDANTA AND THE THREE POLICIES.

BY

N. Subramanya Aiyar, M.A.

Vedānta is an Indian word and means "the end or finale of knowledge." That finale is of course the correct regulation of life. The Vedānta philosophy means in effect then the correct theory of life. It is only by having a correct theory that we can have a correct practice.

Now, what does Vedānta teach? It teaches us that the self or ego is really neither more nor less than the knower of all that is known or knowable in the Universe, and that the Universe is but self appearing as nonself through the reflection of the mind mirror or *māyā*. Everything being one therefore, Vedānta enjoins on us to establish a harmless connection among all units in the Universe, if we should live in happiness and peace. There should be no living one on another. We should live on each other's help rendered through its respective functions. Such a connection between the sexes is called family relationship. Between family and family, it is called social compact which, in India, is called caste or *Varnasrama Dharma*. And between nation and nation, it is what is known as international federation. And harmless connection between all parts of the universe is "cosmos" or nature's order. For this purpose, every unit, human or non-human, must have a name, a form, a place, and also of course a function. These must be jealously preserved against disturbance. While sex-distinctiveness and the universality of the marriage-tie ensure the family compact, caste or class distinctiveness but with responsible exchange of each other's labour means the ensuring of the social compact. We may and must proceed further and establish a similar compact, through exchange between nation and nation. It is this exchange of labour that builds up the individuals, classes or nations that so exchange into an indivisible whole. Man and woman exchange each other's labour and make up the family unit or domestic organism. Class and class exchange each other's labour and create the social organism. Nation and nation likewise, should by establishing an exchange, a connection in respect of certain necessary labours, evolve an international organism, as sure and as abiding. To say the converse, *not to exchange i.e., not to buy each other's labour is*

nothing less than *destroying* all this edifice. To repeat, without marrying or exchange of sex-labour, there is no family. Without exchange of vocational labours in a society, there is no society, but only a crowd of people ; and so on. In India, her ancients constructed society on these lines. They did it in their own way, *i.e.*, through religion and socio-religious ordinance. The moderns are engaged, under the influence of false imitation, in destroying that society through irresponsible individualism, exerted in all domains of social life. But, generally speaking if mankind can guard against all these dangers and learn to live without harm to any man or nation, strong or weak, wise or ignorant, we can soon reach a stage when we shall live without harm even to animals, and even again to vegetables. Then alone will this differentiated universe be capable of realization as being one in substance. Further, harmless connection is not only happiness in this world but also in the next. For, harmfulness is alone sin and sin alone is unhappiness in the next world. This is how Vedanta guides to happiness in this world as well as in the next.

Let us view, in the light of the above, the three main policies by one or other of which every human being or nation must live in this world. They are :—

- (i) each living at the risk of every other or struggle for individual or national life. This is the “competition” or “nutrition” policy of nature.
- (ii) Each living in concert with every other, or struggle for individual or national life *and* for the life of other individuals and nations. This is the “co-operation” or “concert” policy.
- (iii) Each sacrificing himself or itself for every other, or struggle for other's life. This may be called the “production or the mother policy” in nature.

The *first* or the “nutrition” policy creates struggle for existence among human beings and among nations. It is assisting the negative forces of Nature, *viz.*, rivalry and selection. It disturbs Universal and Social cosmos and changes it into chaos. It makes people think that the family, social and universal compacts are only intended for creature comforts, but not for the sake of Self extending through the Universe. Under such a policy neither man nor nation can be safe for ever. Nations *must* rise and fall, and misery and happiness *must* be the lot of all human beings and nations.

The *second* or the “concert” policy is assisting the co-operative or positive forces of nature, *viz.*, love and mutual responsibility. It widens the circle of family to national love, and then to love of the whole human family, and ultimately to love of the entire animate and in-animate world. But in view to this consummation, we have to go on step by step without halting. There was first, let us say, the pre-family stage in which every individual human being struggled to exist as against every other individual. Afterwards, it was a case of one family struggling against other families. This struggle too would cease with the organisation of societies. In fact, the test of organisation is the ending of all struggle and strife for oneself or for one's family. It is then a case of struggling for every other. And once a society gets so organised, it must lead up to the organisation of the *whole* human family. But this has not been reached in the history of the race, nor is it even aimed at except by fits and starts. The struggle, open or veiled, direct or indirect is still allowed to go between societies, *i.e.*, nations, though such a struggle *must* react on the weaker of the societies engaged in it and re-create individual struggle among the latter, *i.e.*, dis-organise them once more. And when, as now, intelligent nations struggle as one unit against the lesser intelligent ones, individual struggle has re-appeared among the latter. The death of the weaker must re-act on the stronger. The present war among the strong and “civilised” nations is obviously an illustration of that re-action. This has to be guarded against in all solemnity. The need for struggle for one's own existence must be abolished, not only between families and classes, but between nations as well. Not only must this be done within the human family ; but we must go on till we have abolished all struggle, with either the animate, or the in-animate world, *i.e.*, animal, plant, or mineral in successive order. If we stop half way and leave any part of the universe to continue to struggle with the other parts, large or small, *that* struggle will re-act on the whole, and we shall get back to the savage or individual-struggle-stage once more. For this purpose, therefore, man must keep in view social and universal rights, duties and concessions and should never be guilty of ignorance, contempt or neglect in respect of them. These rights, duties, and concessions, all hinge on un-harmful connection between part and part in the universe.

The *third* or the “re-production” policy is the policy of self-sacrifice for others' sake. Applied to international relations, it produces the same result as the second, provided each nation makes the sacrifice knowingly and willingly. But such sacrifice of self is

ordinarily not possible. It is possible only when man develops to the condition of Divine nature. If, however, a nation with full knowledge of the social and universal rights and duties, sacrifices itself for the sake of other nations, it can ultimately bring all of them under its own influence. But the sacrifice must be a conscious sacrifice. If, on the other hand, a nation sacrifices itself *ignorantly* as the weaker nations are doing, it must tumble down first to a state of individual struggle and then disappear altogether before those other nations. As conscious self-sacrifice is rare, this, the third policy, cannot ordinarily be thought of. But each man can safely follow the "concert" policy. It can work for itself and for others at the same time. This policy is, therefore, the one suited to the constitution of the world and must be the ideal and the goal of man.

The writer of this note looks upon the system of national guilds advocated by the "New Age" of London, as the embodiment of this "concert" policy. The monopoly of labour that is to be secured under that system to each guild of workers will prevent all unholy and irresponsible competition. But the difference between it and "caste" or the Indian system of national guilds is that, in the latter, state aid is not sought certainly not to the same extent. Each occupational caste or guild has its own social structure in the form of customs, manners, etc., in which is involved the obligation and the right to do a particular labour to society and a similar obligation and right *not* to do any other. And as long as society, both by itself and through its executive, the Government, fulfils its duty of protecting, *i.e.*, keeping up the demand for the various labours in which its people are engaged, the quantity and quality of out-put are both ensured quite as much as it would be under the proposed "national guilds". Function then naturally descends from father to son without any effort or exertion, skill increases with each generation of workers; there is no struggle to get work or workers in any department of labour; there are no trespassers nor sloths; and the social organism leads a happy, un-eventful life. The extension of this kind of connection to all the nations in the family of humankind secures a like un-eventfulness for the race as a whole.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S CONTRIBUTION TO MODERN INDIA*

BY

A. Krishnaswami Iyer, B.A., B.L.

It is impossible to estimate the work of Swami Vivekananda without a brief survey of the situation in India in the years that immediately preceded and followed the advent of British rule in this country. National awakening in India has ever been associated with the great religious teachers. Even the political confederacies of later days were not a little influenced by religious thought. The great Nanak was as much a religious reformer as a political regenerator of Sikh Society. Rajaput heroism has had behind it back the Hindu idea of *Abhi* or strength and fearlessness. Sivaji, the founder of the Mahratta kingdom, was permeated by religious fervour and was a great devotee of Siva. The foundations of the glorious empire of Vijayanagar were laid by Vidyaranya or Madhava Charya as he is better known. It may be that after the Muhammedan conquest the history of our country has revealed to us the disrupting influence in Hindu polity. But even during this period of dynastic rule and the internecine discord, the Hindu society showed real signs of life. The test of a society being an organism and not a mere automaton is its contribution to the world's thought and manifestation of some sign of true vitality. We do not judge of the Society's organic existence merely with reference to the conveniences and comforts which it is able to afford to its component parts. It does not matter how the life manifests itself. It may be by an outburst of religious enthusiasm; it may be by the formation of political confederacies; it may be by the pursuit of science; it may be by originality in art; or it may be by real search after the Unknown. It may even be that these signs of life were manifesting themselves in isolated parts of the country but still ample proof there was that the society was pulsating with life. Some of our greatest religious teachers flourished and exerted their influence during the days of Muhammedan Rule. Sanskrit poetry and literature claimed the attention of earnest students. The Hindu society had its poets and philosophers as late as the 14th and 15th centuries. The Mahratta confederacy was in full swing in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Sikh political institutions survived to the early part of the 19th century.

* Lecture delivered during the 56th Birth-day celebration of the Swamiji, at Madras, on the 10th February 1917.

But now let us examine the condition of things in the 19th century. Under the benign influence of British rule, we have had progress of a kind. The railways, telegraph, and electricity have afforded us conveniences which were possibly not dreamt of by our ancestors. Our political ambitions have been stirred by contact with the West. The *Rajasic* qualities of the West have to some extent taken hold of us. For the first time after the Buddhistic days, the whole of India has been brought under a single rule. But with all this the verdict of history will be against us in so far as any real sign of life is concerned. With a few notable exceptions in recent times, we cannot boast of any real contribution to the thought of the world in the realms of science, art, literature, or philosophy. We cannot with pride point our finger to the growth of any indigenous institutions. We cannot refer to any religious or social confederacies which have worked for the regeneration of Hindu society and the uplift of man. Reform societies there have been. Solitary individuals have been found working in isolation for the alleviation of suffering and the spread of knowledge. Mushroom organisations have been started here and there but they have not touched the heart of India. A question may be asked, why? The simple answer is that society is not a machine. It is an organism; it has life and it has a soul just as an individual. If anything great and good is to be expected of any society, if a real regeneration is to be effected of it, we have to appeal to its spirit just as you have to appeal to the spirit of the individual if he is to achieve anything great in this world.

The radical defect of the existing system has been that our society has unlearned the lesson of strength inculcated in the Gita and the Upanishads. "Our system of education is not a man-building and character-building one." "We have learnt to chew the cud of other people's thoughts." The real explanation for Hindu society having been for sometime past an inert mass is that its religious consciousness was not roused. Our reformers, our educationists and our social service propagandists have forgotten that Indian upheaval is not possible without an awakening of this religious consciousness of the people. Every improvement in India, social, political or intellectual requires the stimulus of religion and has been based upon it. You cannot have material advancement without it. You cannot have social readjustment without it. You cannot have political amelioration without it. You cannot have nation building without it. "Your nerves will have to vibrate through the backbone of your religion." "National union in India" in the words of the Swamiji, "must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces." The Hindu society must be

a union of those whose hearts beat to the same spiritual time. Even in the British days the only tangible good that has been done is due to such institutions as the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj and to men like Dayanand Saraswati and Ram Mohan Roy.

With this brief survey of Hindu society let us try to estimate Swami Vivekananda's contribution to the making of modern India. There are three notes in the life and teachings of the Swamiji which appeal to us more than any other. The *first* is each nation has a destiny to fulfil, a message to deliver, a mission to accomplish. Each nation represents as it were a wonderful dynamo for the storage and distribution of a particular species of energy and amongst all other possessions that particular property shines forth as the special characteristic of that race. The glorious destiny of India is to regenerate man the brute into man the God. India has to spread the gospel of real strength and the gospel of renunciation enunciated in the Upanishads. "We must spread over the world" says the Swamiji "with our spiritual ideas." "Conquest of Europe and of America shall be our supreme Mantram at present." "England we shall conquer, England we shall possess through the power of spirituality."

The *second* note in his teaching is the essential unity of the Hindu religion. Sects there may be in Hinduism, but sectarianism is not a necessary feature of Hinduism. There are certain great principles in which all Hindus are one, whether Vaishnavas, Saivas, Saktas or Ganapathyas, whether belonging to the ancient Vedantists or the modern ones, whether belonging to the old religious sects or the modern reform ones. If the question is put to us wherein lies the unity of Hinduism, the answer is furnished by the Swamiji in these words, "All Hindus believe the Vedas to be the eternal teachings of the secrets of religion, (2) all Hindus believe in a marvellous infinite power as the source of human energy, (3) unlike the other races of the world we do not believe that this world was created only so many thousand years ago and is going to be destroyed eternally on a certain day. We believe in a continuous evolution. (4) Lastly we all hold in India that the soul is by its nature pure and perfect, infinite in power and blessed."

The *third* note in the teaching of the Swamiji is that Vedantism is not a mere matter for the recluse. It must pulsate in every department of life. "The conception of the Vedanta," says the immortal Swami, "must remain not only in the forest and not only in the cave but they must come out to work at the bar and bench, in the pulpit, in the cottage of the poorman, with the fishermen that are

catching the fish and with the students that are studying. Religion ought to be dynamic, not static, it ought to be positive and not negative.

The importance of these three vital teachings of the Swamiji cannot be overrated at the present day. The Indian atmosphere is charged with the ideas of nationality, of political reform and constitutional development. The nation has to assert itself and you cannot expect the nation to assert itself unless it believes that it has a destiny to fulfil. It has been too long hypnotised into the belief that it is weak. The sleeping Leviathan of Hindu society has to be roused and awakened to a sense of its greatness and power. In the inimitable language of our scriptures we have to proclaim **उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्यवर्णान् निबोधत** arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached. If the German is intoxicated with the ideas of his culture and feels that the world exists for the German and not he for the world, if the Anglo Saxon feels proud of his own Governmental institutions, and if the Frenchman boasts of his early contributions to the field of science and human welfare the Hindu has a right to feel and must feel proud that his society has placed before the world the gospel of spiritual strength and renunciation. In the language of Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, we might be in a position to tell the world 'Do not destroy the self by self; he who sees the supreme Lord dwelling alike in all beings, the imperishable in things that perish he sees indeed.' If only the European nations were in a position to listen to the message of spirituality from India, International Law would not have shared the same fate as it did before the outbreak of the present war and Lord Buckmaster's 'League of Nations' would long ago have become an accomplished fact.

We cannot again afford to lose sight of the second aspect of the Swamiji's teaching which I have already referred to, namely, the essential unity of Hindu religion. We are often treated by westerners to the differences among the Hindu sects and to the sharp distinctions that are supposed to exist between the different communities. The hollowness of these criticisms will be apparent from a real study of Hinduism in the light of the exposition of the same by Swami Vivekananda. The Swamiji in eloquent terms has pointed out how the social readjustment of Hindu society can take place without abuse of our ancestors and without the stirring up of class or caste hatred. We have only to bear in mind the Upanishadic teaching **न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन त्यागे नैके अमृतत्वमानयुः** "Not by work, Nor by wealth, nor by progeny, but by renunciation alone Immortality is reached."

To the caste Brahmin he says "arise and show your manhood by raising the other classes not in the spirit of a master, not with the rotten cancer of egotism but in the spirit of a servant," to the non-brahmin, his advice is "Don't spend your energy in kindling the fire of caste hatred to which every non-Hindu is only too glad to throw a load of fuel." In another place the Swamiji remarks "the days for privileges and exclusive claims are gone. The duty of every aristocracy is to dig its own grave and the sooner it does so the better."

The Swamiji in more than one place points out that the failure of the social reform movement in India has been not a little due to the want of perspective on the part of those who lead the movement in forgetting the essential genius of the race. Unreasonable denunciation of the past and inconsiderate imitation of western means and methods of work have in the main been the causes of the failure. Sri Ramanuja was able to make Alvars out of Pariahs. Why is it that the social reformer has failed. The answer is that you cannot effect any social reform in India except through the medium of her higher religious consciousness.

The ideal should be growth, expansion, development on national lines. The teaching should be "you have done well only try to do better." People must be made to realise more the Vedantic ideal of the solidarity of man and his inborn divine nature. From the highest man to the lowest pariah, everyone in this country has to try and become the ideal Brahmin. Humanity must be slowly and gently raised towards the realisation of this great ideal of the spiritual man.

I now proceed to deal with the third aspect of Swamiji's teachings. It was given to Swami Vivekananda to retrieve the charge levelled by westerners against the Hindu religion that it is a religion of repose and quiescence—not a religion which makes for the social man. He has shown to the world that our religion is a religion of strength and not of weakness, it is a religion of renunciation and not of the proverbial monk's selfish soul—a religion where the dedicated life is the example and not the life of selfishness. This is what the Swamiji means by saying that our religion is really dynamic, not static and that it is positive and not negative. The Swamiji quotes incessantly the saying of the Bhagavad Gita that to work for, and only for the good of others is life. "Then where is peace? If all through life I am to work like a cart horse and die in harness, what am I here for? Says Sri Krishna; yes you will find peace. Flying from work is never the way to find peace." The importance which the Swamiji has attached to this

aspect of our religion, will be apparent in all his discussions on the burning topics of the present day. No one has emphasised more than the Swamiji the need for social service in India. Social service based on the Divine theory of Man—says he in one place—“O India, with the slander of others, with the base imitation of others, with the dependence on others, the slavish weakness, the vile detestable cruelty which exists at present, wouldst thou scale the highest pinnacle of civilisation and greatness? Forget not that the God, thou worshippest is the great ascetic of ascetics, the all renouncing Sankara, the Lord of Uma. Forget not that thou art born as a sacrifice to the mother's altar. Forget not that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood and thy brothers. Be bold, take courage, be proud that thou art an Indian and proudly proclaim I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother? Say, the ignorant Indian, the poor and destitute Indian, the Brahmin Indian, the Pariah Indian is my brother. Say brother, that the soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good and repeat and pray day and night. O thou Lord of Gowri, O thou mother of Universe, vouchsafe manliness unto me, O thou mother of strength take away my weakness, take away my unmanliness and make me a man.”

No one was more righteously indignant than the Swami at the lot of our poor fellow countrymen. Says he in one place, “the poor in the west are devils, compared to them ours are angels. The only service to be done to our poorer classes is to give them education and to develop their lost individuality.” The Swamiji's wrath knew no bounds when he thought of this—that the poor Pariah is not allowed to go through the same street as the high caste man. But if he changed his name to a hodge podge English name it is alright. Can a man,” the Swamiji explains, “degrade his brother and himself escape degradation?” His head was ever full of schemes for the advancement and regeneration of the Indian humanity. “How to elevate the masses,” says he, “it is by education and education alone.” Education not in the sense of making them learn the letters of the alphabet. He would send our missionaries to every part of the country to impart spiritual and intellectual education. He would make every man realise the Brahman in him. He would give them ideas, “our duty is to put the chemicals together and the crystallisation will take care of itself.” He has demonstrated to us that in spite of the later degradation of Hindu society, the ideal of social service is an essential part of our educational system. The importance which the Swamiji attached to religion as a factor in the

daily life of every man and in every vocation is apparent from his treatment of the subject of National Education. The “New India” has devoted the whole of this week to the subject of National Education and it is as well you remember what our great Swamiji has to say on the matter. The Education that we are now getting says he, “has some good points. But it has a tremendous disadvantage which is so great that the good things are all weighed down. In the first place it is not a man making education. It is merely and entirely a negative education. A negative education or any training given to negation is worse than death. The child is taken to school. The first thing he learns is that his father is a fool, the second thing his grandfather is a lunatic, the third thing that all his teachers are hypocrites, the fourth that all the sacred books are lies. By the time he is 16, he is a mass of negation lifeless. And the result is that 50 years of such education has not produced one original man in the three Presidencies. Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brains and runs riot there undigested all your life. We must have life building man making character making assimilation of ideas. If you have assimilated ideas and made them part of you life and character, you have more education than any man who has got by heart a whole library. If education is identical with information, the libraries are the great sages in the world, and the cyclopeadias are the rishis. The ideal therefore is that we must have the whole education of our country spiritual and secular in our own hands. It must be on national lines through national methods as far as it is practicable.”

The Swamiji could not contemplate the possibility of the development of Indian manhood without the co-operation of Indian womanhood. He always appealed to the idea of a glorious mother. He always referred to India more as the India of Sita, Savitri and Damayanti than as the India of Sri Ramachandra, of Manu and Mandhata. He would send out Indian women for the spiritual conquest of England and America.

The Swamiji was keenly alive to the importance of self-government as a powerful instrument for fulfilling India's mission of the future. He has demonstrated how self-government was a normal feature of religious institutions in this country as early as the Buddhist period. He has drawn attention to the fact that federal leagues and confederations were a part of governmental machinery in India and he has often adverted to the efficiency of the village Panchayat as a self-governing institution. He has shown to us how each one of these institutions is inextricably

mixed up with religion. "The people may be looked after with paternal care by their rulers," says he, "but the hand of him who is always fed by another gradually loses the power of taking the food to his mouth. His power of self-preservation can never become fully manifest who is always protected in every respect by another. Even the strongest youth remains but a child if he is always looked after as a child by its parent." I wish the British public would bear in mind the lessons inculcated by the Swamiji who was not a politician of the ordinary type but who was still a patriot of patriots.

"Whenever virtue subsides and vice prevails I come down to help mankind" declared Sri Krishna in the Gita. It is not every now and again that we have amidst us Saints like Sri Ramakrishna or Teachers like Swami Vivekananda. But their teachings are an abiding possession with us. The worker may pass away from us but the work must go on. The Indian Nation is demanding its birth-right to be a self-governing unit in the British Empire what in the language of the Premier is a Commonwealth of autonomous right. There is a new national awakening in India. India feels that it has a message of spirituality to give to the world. To achieve this purpose and end, the component parts of the Indian nation must each receive its full development. The Hindu must become the better Hindu, the Mussalman a better Mussalman and the Christian the better Christian. Strength is what we want. We have to be permeated every day by the spirit of the Gita, and of the Upanishads.

నైనందింపఁజేసి నైనదహతిపాపః ।

నైనసంక్లీడియంత్యాపా నశోషయతిమారుతి ।

అచ్చేద్యోయం అదాప్యోయం అక్లేద్యోకోవ్య ఏవచనిత్యస్సర్వతః ।

స్థానారచలోయంసనాతనః॥

BY THE WAY.

There are people with very superficial knowledge of men and things, but think themselves to be too wise and run to favour others with unsought advice. Here is an example. Count Okuma says :

"A nation is entitled to talk of independence only after it has entirely abolished its own evil customs, ennobled its own evil character and attained the same qualifications as any other powerful or rising nation. Neither the evolution theory nor any modern advanced thought admits that the evils consequent on the Hindu caste system and religious superstition should have a place in any civilised nation."

Then he gives us the way out of them.

"The first step to be taken by the native races on Indian soil, situated as they are now, is to avail themselves of the examples of the best peoples on earth and to improve the social conditions of their own country."

When we hear any foreigner thrusting advice on us, it is rather difficult for us to take it seriously. Those who are quite ignorant of Indian culture and civilisation and specially who are under the spell of Western ideals can only see numerous evils in the present day condition of India and weeping crocodile tears over her fate assert, with a vehemence, born of ignorance and presumption, that the only high road to salvation lies in the adoption of the various superficial remedies which one hears *ad nauseam* repeated by political and social reforming babies which the wholly artificial and unnatural system of English education have brought about in plenty.

It may be that we have much to improve in our own modern social customs and usages as having strayed away from the original path and so missed the purpose of the Rishis, but evils can never be remedied by trumpeting the diseases in the organism. India does not stand in need of any self-humiliation. She has had enough of that. Decrying India's past and her ideals which has almost become a fashion among certain class of reformers, at best serves no useful purpose and it is high time that the energy wasted on this profitless and mischievous task be utilised to a better and

more useful purpose. Moreover, as Swami Vivekananda has pointed out 'evils are plentiful in our society, but so are there evils in every society. Here, the earth is soaked sometimes with widow's tears ; there, in the west, the air is rent with the sigh of the unmarried. Here, poverty is the great bane of life, there, the life-weariness of luxury is the great bane that is upon the race.'

* * * *

What we want is, the awakening of manly self-awareness and this has to be done by asserting and realising the indomitable power which lies in religion and in its practice. Go back to the sources of life and seek the strength within yourselves. Know the *past* and revive it for the purposes of the *future*. Our *past* dates before the founding of any civilisation and our *present* rests on the firm ground of the strength *within* born of *Shraddha* in the *Guru* and *Shastras*. Come out of your little holes and jump into the higher, broader, deeper life, which is the goal of all humanity and wherein lies the salvation of India and of other nations in the world. .

Some twenty-five years ago, one wandering monk, alone and helpless who did not know whence his next meal would come, told his countrymen that he was going to conquer the World. His was not a vain attempt, for Swami Vivekananda represented the national consciousness of India. India's contribution is the contribution of religion and philosophy, wisdom and spirituality. 'Like the gentle dew that falls unseen and unheard, and yet brings into blossom the fairest of roses, so has been the contribution of India to the thought of the world.' Swami Vivekananda leaves it to the posterity to judge how he fought and won his battle.

* * * *

And he has left his countrymen as his legacy to carry out the work he has left for them. So, we tell our youngmen, in whom Swamiji had the greatest hopes,— you cannot comprehend these ideals, still less can you fulfil them if you allow your minds to be moulded wholly by European ideas or look at life purely from the material stand-point. Materially you may not be much but spiritually you are the highest. It is only the Indian who is ever full of hopes, dares everything, sacrifices everything. First therefore become Indians. Recover the patrimony of your fore-fathers. Recover the Aryan character, the Aryan life. Recover the Vedanta, the Gita, the Yoga. Recover them not only in intellect or sentiment but, in your lives. 'Being and becoming' is our Religion. Know that you are spirit free. Nothing can have any hold upon you.

First realise within yourselves and then with trumpet voice proclaim the truth before the world. Your country cries for it ; your nation demands it ; the world has long been waiting for it."

* * * *

The *Karnataka* of Bangalore in its columns speaking about the message of Swami Vivekananda writes :—It is a duty laid upon us by the whole history of our past,—a call made to us by the growing spiritual unrest of the whole human race ; it is the supreme mission that India has to fulfil in the life of the world. It was given to that great child of the Rishis, Swami Vivekananda, to first discover that mission for his countrymen, and to hold before their eye the vision of an India more glorious than the one that the world has yet known. India's destiny is not to be for ever a dependent, humbly playing the second fiddle to this nation or that. She is fitted to perform a high function—the highest perhaps that the world cares for ; and to that international role she must aspire to rise—not for her own sake only, but for the sake of humanity and for the propitiation of the Great Father of all Nations."

* * * *

It was Swami Vivekananda who first tried to rouse the national spiritual consciousness of India ; from him the country learnt, perhaps for the first time, that India is not a new nation raw from the workshop created by modern circumstances but the oldest race with the deepest, highest, profoundest problems solved in her bosom and living and waiting to fulfil a mission in the world. "To adopt the language of one of the master-figures of human history, the Swami led the genius of India on a pilgrimage among the peoples of the earth—therein committing his countrymen to the responsibility, the unique and proud responsibility, of cherishing that genius and facilitating its intercourse with the cultures and civilisations that can appreciate its value."

The *Karnatak* further says, "what is far more regrettable, the South has recently become the scene of a movement of Hindu disintegration which is an open rebellion against the ideals of the Swami and the whole tenor of his teaching. Not the least of the Swamiji's achievements is the upheaval of the lower classes of the Hindu Society in the South, which were touched by his personality and were inspired by his teaching ; and the platform that he created should be the meeting point and the harmonising centre of all castes and sects that flourish around the banner of Hinduism."

* * * *

Yes, if Swamiji's heart ached for anybody, it was for the masses of India. If Swamiji ever proposed any scheme for the uplift of India it was by the elevation of the masses. And the solution is not by bringing down the higher but by raising the lower up to the level of the higher. Says Swami Vivekananda "The ideal man of our ancestors was the Brahman. The command is the same to you all, that you must make progress without stopping, and that, from the highest man to the lowest Pariah, everyone in this country has to try and become the ideal *Brahmana*."

* * * *

And who is a Brahmana? The reply given by the Bajra Suchikopanishad is as follows.

There are four castes—the Brahmana, the Kshatriya, the Vaisya and the Sudra. Of these, the Brahmana is the highest according to the words of the Vedas, and even the Smritis declare so. Then the question remains, what is meant by the Brahmana? Is it the Jiva, or the body or the class or is it *Jnanam* or is it Karma or is it the doer of virtuous deeds?

To begin with, is *Jiva* the Brahmana? No. Since, the *Jiva* is the same in its many past and future bodies and also because it is the same in all the bodies which it obtains due to its different Karmas. Hence Jiva cannot be the Brahmana.

Is *body* then the Brahmana? No. Since the body as being made up of five elements, is the same for all people down to Chandalas; and since old age, death, *dharma*, *adharma* are similarly to be found in every body; and because then the law that the Brahmana is white-coloured, the Kshatriya red, the Vaisya yellow and the Sudra is dark-coloured, gets contradicted and there is the chance of the son acquiring the sin of the murder of a Brahmana etc., in burning the corpse of his father. Therefore the body is not the Brahmana.

Is a *class* then the Brahmana. No. Since there are many great seers born of many different classes and born of beings different from the category of a class. Rishyashringa was born of deer, Kausika of Kusa grass; Jambuka of a jackal; Valmiki of an ant-hill; Vyasa of a fisherman's daughter; Gautama of the back of a hare; Vasishtha of Urbreshi; and Agastya was born of a water-jug—so they say. Of these again there are many Rishis, who have acquired knowledge before any class was formed. Hence, the class is not the Brahmana.

Is *Jnana* then the Brahmana? No. Since there were many Kshatriyas and others well-versed in the knowledge of divine truth. Hence, *Jnana* also cannot be the Brahmana.

Then is *Karma* the Brahmana? No. Since, there can be found similarly, *Prarabdha*, *Sanchita*, and *Agami* Karmas in all beings and also because people perform works being impelled by their *Karmas*. So, *Karma* is not the Brahmana.

Is a doer of virtuous deeds then the Brahmana? No. For, there are many Kshatriyas and others who are givers of gold. Hence the doer of virtuous deeds also is not the Brahmana.

Who indeed then is the Brahmana?

Whoever he may be, he who has directly realised like the myrobalan in his palm, his atman that is one without a second, devoid of class, qualities or actions, that is free from all faults of the six stains and the six changes, that has for its nature truth, knowledge, bliss and eternity, that has no differentiation, that is the substratum of all the Kalpas, that exists pervading all beings, that pervades within and without like the *Akasha*, that is of the nature of unbroken bliss, that cannot be limited, and that can only be known by direct cognition; whose wishes having been fulfilled, is free from the faults of desires or attachments, who is the possessor of tranquility and has controlled his senses, who is free from emotion, malice, desire, delusion, etc., whose mind is free from pride, egotism, etc.,—who possesses all these qualities—is the Brahmana—so is said in the Shruti, Smriti, Purana, and Itihasa. Otherwise Brahminhood cannot be obtained.

Hence, one should meditate on his self as existence, knowledge, bliss-absolute.

THE SAINT DURGACHARAN NAG.

THIRD CHAPTER.

His Remarriage and Medical Practice.

In respect of marriage Nagmahasaya used to say "Marriage with the pure desire for progeny does not defile a man. But only saints and sages of yore were fit for such marriages. Having observed austere Bramacharya (celebacy) for a long time they took wives for the purpose of progeny; and having begot sons like Vyasa, Sukdeva, Sanak and Sanatkumar they retired finally to the forest to lead the life of a recluse. But it cannot be so in this iron age. Now-a-days there is not that deep meditation and stringent self-restraint (tapas) and so, as a natural consequence children born of lust develop into

all sorts of wickedness and immorality." Anent his second marriage he said, "what could I do? It was my father's command!; I had to embrace it although it was venom itself."

The father and the son reached their native village five or six days before the marriage. The auspicious day approached in due course. Dinadayal with all the fondness of a father's heart took the bridegroom in procession to the bride's house which was not very far off in the same village and the holy ceremonies of the wedding were gone through with great joy and merriment. But with it withered the long cherished hope of Nagmahasaya to lead the life of spirituality without entering into the turmoils of the family life. Moreover, with the thought of the responsibility of married life it occurred to Nagmahasaya that henceforth he also must acquire money for the maintenance of the family. When through the will of Providence he was hurled into this life he must bear it up manfully and shirk no duty. But he had an inborn hatred for service, and so he chose the independent profession of a doctor.

After the marriage both the father and the son returned to Calcutta. Nagmahasaya set up his practice of medicine in right earnest. From this time forward, Nagmahasaya began to accept fees from the patients for their treatment. Thereafter for seven years the smooth life of Nagmahasaya was gliding on uneventfully in the joy of study, of nursing the sick, of the company of his noble friend and in meditation. All on a sudden a cloud appeared in the clean sky—a letter came bearing the news of his aunt's illness. She was old and infirm and suffering from dysentery. The news caused some anxiety in Nagmahasaya's mind and he started at once for his native village. As soon as his aunt saw him she exclaimed in delight "My boy! I deem it my great luck that I shall be able to die in your presence." All attempts of Nagmahasaya to save her life were of no avail. Before she expired she called Nagmahasaya and asked him whether all the inmates of her house had taken their meals. Even fifteen minutes before her death the old lady, sitting upon the verandah of the house was repeating the name of God, saying "My time is up"; she beckoned Nagmahasaya, to come near her; placing her hand upon his head she blessed him saying "Let your mind always dwell in God"—these were the last words the affectionate aunt spoke to Nagmahasaya; she was initiated in Ramamantra and her last breath came out with the sound 'Ra'; Nagmahasaya heard it distinctly.

Before this mishap, Nagmahasaya never knew what a bereavement was. He had no attachment for his wife and did not feel the loss of his first wife in the least. His mother died in his infancy but in her stead he found another mother in his aunt. Her unbounded love and affection for him never made him feel the loss of his mother. Now that very aunt left him for ever. Oh! unbearable was

the woe. Even to remain in that house became impossible to him. He used to often run to the ground where his aunt was cremated and pass the whole night there. Sometimes he would repair into a jungle and spend the silent hours of the night within its dark solitude. Referring to this period of Nagmahasaya's life, his youngest sister Sarada remarked, "This incident drove my brother almost mad. He had to be urged often and often to take his bath and meal. Sometimes I used to find him lying quite prostrate on the ground behind our house. So we had to get down our father from Calcutta."

The funeral rites of the aunt being over Nagmahasaya came back to Calcutta with his father. Time, that greatest healer assuaged no doubt, the intensity of his frantic grief, but in its place another thought appeared in his mental horizon and raised a storm not less convulsive than the former grief. His mind began to be haunted day and night by the thoughts 'Why does man come into this world and why does he die? What becomes of him after death? What has become of my aunt? To what region has she been transferred? The aunt who would give up her life to spare me from even a scratch on my body is no longer paying heed to my heart-rending sorrow and wailing cry. Well! if all relationship ceases with death then why all this bother with the fill of 'me' and 'mine.' Oh! why have we strayed into this world of miseries and bondage—this vale of tears and woe? Having come here, what is the primary duty of life?' How to free our agonizing soul from the dire grip of the mortal life?' Such questions began to agitate his mind constantly and his soul got fully absorbed in their solution.

Though Nagmahasaya accepted fees from his patients yet he himself would not demand anything from any one. He gladly accepted whatever was offered to him out of love and gratitude and so his practice began to increase day by day. He had no outward show in his profession. He would go mostly walking to his patients even to distant places. Once Dindayal got for him a suit of fine dress thinking that it would count much in enhancing his practice. But the son had no idea of the kind and he complained, "What need have I of this dress? You would have done a good thing had you spent the money in the service of the poor." Dindayal replied with a deep sigh "I had a great hope in you, but alas! now I see it is doomed to frustration; you are about to become a mendicant." But that was not all. All his ways were strange and not be fitting the man of the world!

He found to his great amazement that much of his son's time was spent in helping out the diseased and the destitute of the neighbourhood and that he would not take even a drop of water without carrying relief to them. Very often he would not only give medicine free to the poor but also helped them with money to obtain proper

food. If he happened to meet any destitute sufferer deserted in the street uncared and unnoticed he would take him to his place and nurse him with the tenderest care. Sometimes he would offer his own dishes to the hungry beggar choosing himself to starve. All these appeared to Dindayal as quite strange and unpromising for the future of his son.

One day Nagmahasaya went on a visit to a poor man's house and there he found the condition of the patient most deplorable. He at once set himself to nursing and remained by the side of the patient consoling him with soothing words, looking to his other needs and so on. In the night he came to see him again. It was winter. The old tiled roof of the room of the patient with its thousand holes and creaks was no barrier to the chill of the wintry night, and as if that was not enough, he found further the patient destitute of clothing to cover his shivering body. Nagmahasaya thought within himself that the case of the patient was very serious and that if he were allowed to remain exposed any longer he could not be saved by any means. He had a pair of thick woollen shawl on his person; he quietly spread it over the patient and slipped away. The patient called him repeatedly but he did not return. He only replied from outside the house, "Don't be afraid, to-morrow I shall come to see you again." Next morning when he visited, the patient, the patient began to express very feelingly his deep gratitude, to him. Nagmahasaya merely remarked that there was nothing extraordinary in the matter that he had felt his need of warm clothing more imperative than his own: so he had left the pair with the patient. Not finding the shawl on the person of his son Dindayal asked him about it. Having heard of what had happened Dindayal began to scold the son severely and made a row about it. And as a natural consequence of it, that day both the father and the son went without food. Next day Dindayal got another woollen wrapper and gave it to his son. But that act of generosity left such a deep impression on the mind of the patient that after his recovery he never missed an opportunity to show his life long gratitude and respect to Nagmahasaya.

Another day when Nagmahasaya went to treat a poor man he found the patient lying on the bare floor of his room. The sight was unbearable to him. There was an extra bedstead in Nagmahasaya's house: at once he took it away to the patient's place and first laid him on it and then commenced his treatment. But these were not at all after Dindayal's liking.

On another occasion a little boy of a certain family was attacked with cholera, Nagmahasaya was called in and he treated the boy with utmost care for a whole day, but nothing was of any avail; the patient collapsed in the evening. His friend Suresh thought that Nagmahasaya would get a handsome fee that day but in the evening he was

found to return with an empty purse deeply lamenting "Alas! it was the only child of the family. All attempts to save it became futile! A gloom and void has now usurped their whole house!" So keenly did he feel for the child that he could not take even a drop of water that night."

Gradually his practice began to increase immensely. Messrs. Pals appointed him as their family physician. For that reason even to day Nagmahasaya is referred to as 'Doctor' by the Pals. "There was not a single premature death in their family as long as Nagmahasaya had been their family physician," so testifies Babu Haralal Pal. Once a female relation of Messrs. Pals was attacked with cholera. Nagmahasaya began to treat her. But the case soon took a very bad turn in spite of his careful treatment. Nagmahasaya got nervous and asked them to send for Dr. Bhaduri. Upon his arrival Dr. Bhaduri was informed of the medicines administered to the patient: he was perfectly satisfied with the prescription and remarked that he had nothing to add. The Pals urged him notwithstanding to make some change that he thought fit, but Dr. Bhaduri not only refrained from prescribing any other medicine but also requested them not to place the patient under the treatment of anyone else. Gradually the patient recovered under the treatment of Nagmahasaya. From that day forward Pals' faith in the physician increased and they never called any other doctor to their family: they trusted even most difficult cases to his treatment. When the lady had recovered perfectly Messrs. Pals brought one day a silver box filled with rupees and presented it to him. Nagmahasaya never used to take any fees directly from their hands as they were his benefactors. He used to say "Whatever you have to give me, please give that to my father." So he neither accepted the silver box nor the money. The Pals thought that he was unwilling to accept it perhaps because the remuneration was not equal to his expectation, so they brought fifty rupees more and pressed him hard to accept the whole money. But Nagmahasaya exclaimed with a touch of pathos in his tone, "Sir, the price of the medicine and the whole amount of my fees cannot be more than rupees twenty" but upon further insistence he only accepted the said sum of rupees twenty from the money and went away. Consequently Messrs. Pals put the remaining money as a donation in aid of the performance of Durga Puja. When the matter was reported to Dindayal he could not contain himself. He had been still drudging on here for a petty salary even at that old age, in the service, and his thoughtless son would refuse to accept his just remuneration. 'How foolish, how absurd, how suicidal!' he thought. But both rebuke and advice had no avail. The son observed 'It is you, father who always instructs me to tread the path of righteousness. With all conscience how could I demand more money? I know for certain that the price of the medicines given will at the most be rupees six, and my fees for these seven days

cannot be more than rupees fourteen. Considering all these I have taken rupees twenty in all. To take more than this would be a sin. I beseech you, father, therefore, not to take any more money on this account."

Dindayal remarked "If the balance be given to you by the Pals as a present with love and satisfaction would you not accept it? You will never progress, I tell you, in your profession, if you go on in this manner."

Nagmahasaya said "If it be so, let it be I cannot help it! What I shall think not right cannot be done by me, even, at the sacrifice of my life. God is truth. False conduct brings ruin."

The reply indicated in a clear manner to Dindayal's mind the future of his son. He understood that his son could never prosper in the world. On the other hand, the son reflected within himself. "Good God! such is the world! Truly it is the veritable 'wilderness of a world where life is in tangled mazes lost.' If you can acquire money, no matter by whatever means fair or foul then only you will get name, fame and power in this world. Fie! let me have nothing to do with this sort of world! It is thousand times better to maintain oneself by begging and leading an honest and pious life, than to enjoy oneself with money earned by unrighteous means."

The practice of Nagmahasaya increased so much that had he been wise he would have earned much and could have made a fortune. He did not demand any fee from anybody. He accepted whatever was offered to him with great cheerfulness. Cunning fellows always tried their best to cheat him. Some would not pay their fees after being treated by him while others would take loans from him and never care to repay. Suresh used to say "When my uncle would return from his round I often saw some four or five persons waiting for him at his house to take loan from him. He was never wont to say 'nay' whenever anything was asked of him. That is why all his earnings were mostly spent away in giving loans and charities, so much so that some days he used to have nothing left for his own meal. He was obliged to pass such days by having only a few handfuls of puffed rice for his dinner, although he might have earned those very days eight or ten rupees."

No one cared to repay the loan taken from him. Moreover some of them would even remark, "you need not be anxious of anything, my friend. God will provide you with all you require." Nagmahasaya never saved even a pie for his own sake. Whatever surplus money he had he gave to his father Dindayal. If he happened to require anything for his dress etc., which was always very frugal and scanty he would ask his father for it. While speaking of savings he used to say: "It is certain that God supplies the real want of all. There is no good in being anxious over it. Complete

self-surrender to God can secure one's well being here and hereafter. Whatever we endeavour to do prompted by our own egotism always defeats its own end—this is my personal experience."

Nagmahasaya could never brook any unseemly irreligious conduct and hypocrisy. One day a *Vaishnava* mendicant accompanied by a young *Vaishnavi* came to his place for alms. Nagmahasaya was then absorbed in meditation. He came out of his house as soon as he heard the cry of 'Radha, Radha' from outside. But when he saw the couple in false *Vaishnava* garb, he cried with all indignation "you won't get anything if you say 'Radha, Radha' like that in hollow insincere tone. If you can utter it from the bottom of your heart you shall then get something. The *Vaishnava* couple went away silently without saying anything further. Nagmahasaya thought, "Alas, here is the Iron-age come to destroy the world! Here have I seen to-day with my own eyes the veritable Kali."

Nagmahasaya thought "Man is liable to fall into such a deplorable condition if he has no good teacher; not only does he ruin himself but he brings ruin upon others also." Referring to these religious charlatans he often used to remark: "One might be forgiven if one commits a mistake unwittingly. But there is no salvation even to the end of this cycle for those hypocrites who practise immorality under the garb of religion."

VARNASHRAMA DHARMA IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN THOUGHT.

BY

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

It requires but little clear-sightedness to realise that a great wave of new and vitalising thought and energy is now sweeping our land from end to end. The re-assertion of the Indian spirit which was long supposed to be moribund is due to a heightened racial self-consciousness. The preservation and perfection of the special features of our racial consciousness are thus the indispensable prerequisites of our continued and crescent vitality. Nay, the world awaits in eager and anxious expectation such a wonderful and desired consummation, because *India has her own special contribution to make towards the sum of man's intellectual and spiritual happiness.* Further, in national as in individual life the measure of our selfless work for increasing the happiness of others is the measure of our life as well. Intense selfishness brings about rottenness in communal as well as in individual life, and the potentialities of service and help and uplift determine the actualities

of verile and long and radiant life. Hence each great race must keep its special elements of service and uplift of humanity alive and in vigorous action so that its measure of helpfulness and its vitally and intimately connected measure of life may be full and perfect.

Much has been written and said in books and on platforms about the elements of beauty and solace contained in the Indian religion. *Religion is only the fruit of the tree of life. The trunk of the tree is the social system* and it has not been adequately realised as yet that *the perfection of the Hindu religion is not an accident in human evolution but is in intimate and vital connection with the social ideals of our race.* Various modern forces—especially the education imparted in our Schools and Colleges—have been in the way of our having a true and adequate idea of such social ideals and this defect is sure to tell in course of time upon the spiritual insight of our race till at last the Hindu religion will cease to be a light in the hearts of men however much it may dwell on their lips and thus one of the rarest and most wonderful things of beauty “will pass into nothingness” if we do not cherish and preserve it.

Fortunately for us and for the world there are still luminous and encouraging signs of vitality in our conception of social duties in relation to the ultimate salvation and liberation of the human soul. The Ramakrishna movement in Bengal, the Rishikula and the Bharata Dharma Mahamandal movements, the Hindu University Movement at Benares, and the Varnashrama Movement in the south of India show that our loyalty to our social and spiritual ideals is still unshaken. These will surely help us to preserve our distinctiveness and greatness (our *swabhava*), the importance of which has been sufficiently emphasised by me. Let us remember in this connection the wise words of Dr. A. K. Koomaraswami who says: “The character built up in solving its own problems, in the experience of its own happiness and of its own misfortunes is itself a gift which each race offers to the world. . . . The essential contribution of India, then is simply her Indianness; her greatest humiliation will be to substitute or to have substituted for this own character (*swabhava*) a cosmopolitan veneer, for then she must come before the world empty-handed.”

The discovery and preservation of unifying and common platforms of work and service are the most powerful and glorious manifestations of the spirit of achieving unity in diversity which is the life-sustainer in every society and is particularly so in our society. We must get over the spirit of self-laudation which makes us think that our age has discovered this truth for the first time in

the history of civilised humanity. The innumerable shrines and other holy places of India, the institution of pilgrimages, the wandering sannyasins who have been carrying into the multifarious, disuniting, and distracting pettinesses of life the breath of a diviner air and the *kathakas* and *bhagavathars* are some among the many forces that draw the bonds of union and love tight as against the forces of selfishness and hatred that tended to pull apart the atoms of humanity in this land. It is our duty to preserve all of them and to add to them new forces of union which are required in the presence of new circumstances, new environments, and new difficulties demanding new readjustments. In this great scheme of readjustment and uplift no common platform is of greater importance and significance and value than the *Varnashrama Dharma platform*. *It is as wide as life and as deep as the divine foundation of things and over it shines the eternal bliss of Sri Krishna's gracious and compassionate love.*

Other common platforms in this country have done great work and are doing great work for national uplift and regeneration. But they address themselves primarily to *Artha* and *Kama* (wealth and enjoyment, while this addresses itself primarily to *Dharma* and *Moksha*, being at the same time in full relation to life by teaching righteous acquisition and righteous enjoyment.

Let us never forget that *it is the purposive ordering of individual life and the purposive organisation of social life that are the real crown and glory of our scheme of life.* Dr. Coomaraswami says: “what nevertheless remains as the most conspicuous special character of the Indian culture is its purposive organisation of society in harmony with a definite conception of the meaning and ultimate purpose of life.” *The illuminating conception of the Purusharthas lifts our life above the petty round of unremitting and unmitigated daily toil beginning nowhere and ending nowhere relates it to what is before and after”, lifts it into the upper regions of a diviner life and irradiates our thoughts, words, and acts with the splendour that streams from the central Sun of God's grace and preserves, vivifies, and sweetens our life on earth.*

The chief inner difficulties that disincline modern Indian minds to accept this auspicious path of Varnashrama Dharma leading to the auspicious goal of god-realisation seem to be a sense of its antiquity and an apprehension of its opposition to patriotism, unity and progress. I have tried often to dispel these illusions and hallucinations and I shall refer to them very briefly here. The duration and health of social and national life in a race and the ethical and spiritual value of its social and religious ideals

are not more easy of prediction or control than the duration and health of our individual life and the ethical and spiritual value of our personal efforts. If in regard to the latter the declarations of an inspired soul two-thousand years ago in the Sermon on the mount are not felt to be valueless and out of date, I fail to see why the modern minds should be shocked by being unable to accept an earlier solution of the social and religious problems affecting our racial life. The fact is that from a cultural point of view there is no guarantee that the march of ages necessarily leads us to higher and higher attitudes of attainment. Mr. J. M. Kennedy says: "But even those among us who do not profess to be very ardent students of the classics, will be the first to admit that we have not developed in a cultural or philosophical sense beyond where the ancient Greeks left off; we have, it is true, made great strides in purely material things but in spiritual affairs we are little wiser than Plato, Heraclitus, or Pythagoras." Our belief is that the eternal has given us the eternal law which if followed will lead us unto Him and dower us "with the peace that passeth all understanding." As Arjuna says in the *Gita* (11th Chapter).

स्वमय्यः शाश्वतधर्मोऽगोप्ता ।

सनातनसर्वं पुरुषो मतो मे ॥

(I know Thee as the Eternal Lord who is the protector of the Eternal Dharma.)

A close study of Indian history and Indian ideals of life shows to us that the Hindu conception of Dharma has never been inimical to patriotism, progress, or unity. Here was proclaimed that golden verse which says.

జననీజన్మభూమిశ్చ సర్వధావహిరహిణి ।

जननीजन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरियसी ।

(The mother and the motherland are greater than heaven.)

The Hindu never fled away from life but was always "true to the kindred points of heaven and home." Further, the caste system was never during any of the great epochs of Indian history a foe of unity or of the democratic spirit. As Sir Edwin Arnold says: "For all that strong survival of caste the Hindus are a democratic and easy-going people."

We can confidently affirm that the *Varnashrama Dharma* can well stand the test of modern thought and is in consonance with the great principles of life accepted by modern civilised nations. Liberty, equality and fraternity are the very corner-stones of modern life

and we must certainly realise the connection that exists between them and the principle of individual and social life embodied in *Varnashrama Dharma*. Manu says:

“सर्वं परवशं दुःखं सर्वमात्मवशं सुखं ।

एतद्विद्यात्मसासेन तद्वशं सुखदुःखयोः ॥

సర్వం పరవశం దుఃఖం సర్వమాత్మవశం సుఖం ॥

ఏతద్విద్యాత్మసాసేన తదవశం సుఖదుఃఖయోః ॥

Dependence on others is misery. Self-poise is happiness. this is the vital distinction between misery and happiness.

While the Hindu genius realised that the will of the people should always be respected and further co-ordinated (local self-government and a strong central government) thus combining democratic and federal principles in a practical and admirable manner, it organised life on the basis of duty. Mr. E. B. Havell says: "It is true that Indo-Aryan liberty was not of the crude western type represented by the formula 'Liberte, Egalitie, Fraternitie.' It was liberty for every man, whether king or peasant, to follow his own Dharma—the Dharma being that which long tradition and the wisest of Aryan lawgivers, who knew Indian history, and the Indian people had taught every man within the Aryan pale to regard as his duty to God, to state, his household and himself." So far as equality is concerned, the Hindu scheme of life recognises the initial inequalities of life due to time, place past karma, inherited aptitudes, and environment but seeks to equalise inequality by assiduously filling up the glaring gaps of life with an outflow of love and a passion of service to all. It does not dally with the serious things of life by dangling before the world the bauble of theoretical equality as if the manhood of the world were a baby to be pacified by giving a glittering gewgaw.

(To be continued).

AN INTERVIEW WITH SWAMI ABHEDANANDA.

In an interview which the Herald representative had with the Swami Abhedananda, that great teacher said:

"I am a teacher of philosophy, the Vedanta philosophy, or religion, as you choose to call it. The fundamental principle of this school of thought is a belief in the immortality of the soul. After the death of the body the soul continues to live but for some

time it goes neither to heaven nor to hell. It gravitates. Take the souls of the soldiers who die on the battle-fields. For the most part these men are so suddenly killed that they are not conscious of their corporeal non-existence. For a time their souls remain on different planes of the spiritual world. Then, according to the worth that each man displayed on earth, his soul is dealt with. The worthy are rewarded, the unworthy punished. But there is no eternal damnation. We consider such ideas foolish. Not only shall we all be saved, but eventually we shall all, like God, be perfect.

"It is our idea that one's present existence on earth is an expression of the past lives that we have led. We believe that there is an indefinite series of births and re-births; that through this process enlightenment comes to us.

"What is the Vedanta theory of the transmigration of the soul? Let me say first that we believe that the souls of the departed take up the new life in human bodies, as opposed to the Platonic view that the soul sometimes takes up the new existence in the body of an animal.

"The Indian version of transmigration is that each soul is bound to receive its body as a natural consequence of its former deeds and misdeeds, and not to have free choice of its lot. This is the law of cause and effect. The universal law of cause and effect, let me add, was discovered by the great thinkers of India. They gave it the Sanskrit term 'Karma.' This Law of Karma has become one of the fundamental truths of modern science. Scientists give it different names. They variously term it the law of causation, the law of compensation, the law of action and reaction, etc. But they all have the same idea in mind, namely that every cause is productive of a corresponding result, that every action is productive of a corresponding reaction.

"The Law of Karma controls our birth and re-birth. Our belief is that the parents do not create the souls. They are merely the channels through which the migrating souls receive their material forms. The souls come with their desires.

"When death comes the soul does not manifest itself until the surroundings become favorable for a manifestation.

"A noted professor has said of the theory of transmigration: 'None but hasty thinkers will reject it on the ground of inherent absurdity. Like the doctrine of evolution itself that of transmigration has its roots in the world of reality.'

"India has always made everything stand on the rock of spiritual law. All laws that are man-made are but temporary. Man-made laws are commercial, and any civilization that is based upon commercialism must fall.

Meaning of Vedanta.

"Vedanta does not prescribe one special path by which to reach the ultimate goal of every religion. It recognizes varying tendencies of different minds and guides each in the way best suited to it. It classifies human tendencies under four different heads, which, with their sub-divisions, cover all kinds and classes of people. It provides for the needs of each type.

"A Vedantist need not belong to any particular sect, creed or denomination. He may attend a church, a mosque or a temple. It is this broadness that caused Prof. Max Muller to say, 'Vedanta has room for almost every religion; nay, it embraces them all.'

"Why should we be moral? Vedanta says that we should be moral not because the scriptures tell us to, but because of the spiritual oneness of the world. If you are wicked you not only do harm to yourself but to others.

"The religion of Vedanta accepts the teachings of all the great spiritual teachers of the world. It recognizes them as incarnations of the Divine Spirit and leaves room for those who are yet to come for the good of humanity.

"Vedantism is not built around any particular personality. Any religion or philosophy that depends for its authority on a specific personality can never serve as an universal religion. In order to make a system of philosophy or religion universal, it is essential that it be absolutely impersonal. However great the man may have been, a religion is always limited by the personality of the founder. This we find to be true in the cases of Christianity, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, etc. The followers of each of these great religions, forgetting the principle, become attached to the personality of the founder and refuse to recognize any other; this results in the discord, conflict and persecution with which the pages of religious history are filled.

"Vedanta is both a religion and a philosophy. It does not ask anybody to accept anything which does not appeal to reason and is not in disharmony with the laws of science, philosophy and logic. In India it must be remembered that religion has never been separated from science, logic or philosophy.

VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

At the Ramakrishna Math, Madras.

On Sunday, the 10th of February, the Birthday Anniversary of Srimat Swami Vivekananda was publicly commemorated at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, in the premises of its new building, with great *eclat*. A large portrait of Swamiji was placed in the hall in front of the shrine and tastefully decorated with ferns and flowers. From early morning until late at night, the people from all parts of the town poured in and joined in the various functions of the day. The programme began with *Bhajana* in the morning. As usual, the poor were fed. At noon, there was *Harikatha Kalakshepam* by Mr. K. Thathachariar, B.A. It was inspiring. He spoke on *Bhakti*; how one requires intense-longing and has to become mad after Him, before one can be blessed with God-vision. The public lecture began at 3-30. Mr. A. Krishnaswami Aiyar, B.A., B.L., read his learned paper on "Swami Vivekananda's contribution to the making of Modern India." We publish elsewhere his whole address. Mr. M. O. Parthasarathi Aiyengar presided. The day's function came to a close with a vote of thanks to the chair by Mr. C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer.

On the preceding Sunday the Swamiji's birthday tithipuja ceremonies were celebrated by his disciples, friends and admirers and amongst other services *homa* was performed.

At Belur Math.

The Fifty-sixth Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda came off on the 3rd of February last, when, as usual, the Belur Math held its celebration in the midst of a very large concourse of the Swamis, Bhaktas and admirers of all sects and creeds. This year the two different celebrations, that of the "Tithi-puja" and the public festivity both fell on the same day and the conjoint glory of the occasion was therefore by no means the lesser than when severally performed.

The Math premises, the Thakur's temple and the little 'Samadhi' temple of the Swamiji wore their gala appearance on this day, with flags and banners floating in the wind and the floral adornments inside each, all very deftly executed and made charming to look upon. The spacious courtyard was canopied over and on the south side of it was placed a big portrait of the Swamiji, in his mendicant garb, the whole thing being embowered in the midst of a very artistic setting of moss, flowers and creepers of all kinds. At the very dawn of the day, there was the 'usha-kirtan,' the chant which took all hearts captive by the simplicity of the whole choir and its cue was caught up and

sustained throughout the day by various manner of songs and musical performances, now the rapturous melody of the Vaishnava lyrics and now again, the 'Mother-chants,' the 'Kali-kirtan' which has of late years grown to be quite a favourite with the Math members themselves and is as universally liked by the laity of all classes. The 'Kirtan' of the Madras Bhaktas, all in its native style, was quite a novel feature and attracted huge interest. The visitors of the day were past enumeration and it was towards the after-noon that the crowd reached to its zenith. A good part of the Math grounds was taken over with equipages of all kinds and the river-front practically swarmed over with boats, from sunrise to sundown.

The rich and the poor alike were sumptuously treated, the never-failing courtesy and the pleasing address of the Swamis and the volunteers for the occasion, acting as a leaven to the bread of charity and good-will so generously and religiously distributed as the order of the day. The proceedings were throughout graced by the august presence of the Swami Brahmananda this year. Everybody keenly felt, however, the absence of the Swami Premananda (now convalescent) whose sweet, saintly personality was wont to lend an added charm to the Math Utsavas every year.

At Benares.

The Fifty-sixth Birthday Anniversary of Swamiji was celebrated publicly on the 10th February, 1918, when the following programme was observed :—

1. The feeding of the poor, 1-4 P.M.
2. A lecture in English on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda by Professor Jadu Nath Sarkar, M.A., P.R.S. (Benares Hindu University), 4-5 P.M.
3. Bhajana with music, 5-7 P.M.
4. Distribution of Prasada.

The Tithipuja had been performed with imposing solemnity on the 3rd February. On the 10th, before the appointed time people began to muster in crowds. The platform was nicely decorated with flowers and bunting, as suited the occasion. At 4 P.M., after an opening song by one of the Bhaktas, Professor Jadu Nath Sarkar delivered his attractive speech, to the following effect :—

Gentlemen, India has been full of eminent sages throughout the ages; and I am sure you would ask for reasons why we should select one out of the large number of our sages for celebration. What special teaching and what special principles did the great Swami give us? These questions require to be answered when we have met together to celebrate the Fifty-sixth Birthday of Swami Vivekananda. I will try to give a brief account of his life but there are many whom Vivekananda has left in India and Europe who can explain his teachings in more eloquent words from

narrated from his personal knowledge several incidents of the life of the great Swami, who was his guest at Lahore. He said that the Swami combined the East and the West, and as the European journalist Goodwin said, "Here is a sign of both working together."

The meeting came to a close at about 7 P.M.

At Bangalore.

The Fifty-sixth Birthday of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated with becoming grandeur in the Sri Ramakrishna Mutt, Bangalore, on the 10th February. As usual, Swamiji's picture was escorted in procession to the Mutt by Swamiji's numerous admirers. The poor were sumptuously fed and there was an appropriate Harikatha performance.

At 5-30 P.M. Mr. N. Venkatesa Iyengar commenced his lecture on the life and teachings of the Swamiji in Kannada. He dwelt feelingly on the various qualities of the Swamiji that made him known all the world over. He appealed to the people to rise above pettiness, holding the Swamiji as a great example.

Mr. K. H. Ramiah, B.A., Bar-at-law, next spoke on the same subject in English. He ably dwelt on the greatness of Swami Vivekananda as an illustrious teacher of mankind. He spoke on the personal qualities of head and heart of the Swamiji, of the great work he did as an interpreter of the East to the West, of his struggles and troubles, of his prophetic observations on social, educational and spiritual matters. He urged the importance of physical culture, of having a strong and vigorous body before expecting to possess a strong and sound mind, and exhorted the audience to become manly in thought, word and deed. Finally, he quoted passages from the speeches of the Swamiji bearing on social reform, education of the masses, sectarian disputes and the absorbing topic of the Brahmin and non-Brahmin, etc. Swamiji's advice that Brahmins should come forward to elevate the non-Brahmins was listened to with approval and applause.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION.

At the Ramakrishna Math Madras.

The Eighty-third Birthday of Baghavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was celebrated on the 17th March in the Ramakrishna Mutt at Mylapore with great eclat.

There was *Bhajana* in the Mutt in the morning and a large number of poor people were fed in the course of the day. In the afternoon a Harikatha was performed by Mr. Tnathachariar, B.A.,

of the Secretariat. The graduate Baghavathar with his usual facility of exposition and richness of allusions kept the enlightened audience spell bound.

A public meeting was held at 5-30 P.M., when Mr. B. V. Kameswara Iyer of Puducotta read a very thoughtful and interesting paper on the Life and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. We shall subsequently publish the full report of his address. Prof. K. Sundarama Iyer presided.

The Chairman in his concluding remarks said that the intellectual and spiritual discourse, they had all listened to, had amply justified his expectations. Monseur Rennon, the greatest French Scholar of his day had summed up all history in three words Milieu, moment and race, (*i.e.*,) Physical environments, time spirit and race. He (speaker) would speak of them in the order of physical environments, race and moment. With regard to India there were certain peculiarities regarding physical environment. They called their motherland "Punjabhumi." The Jews also regarded their country as a holy land. The Indian conception of his mothercountry as a Punjabhumi was different from that of the Jews. There is one sacred spot in India known as Kasi. They should not suppose that it existed in the physical environment alone. It was in every man and animal. If a man born in this land did not make use of its spiritual knowledge he did deceive his soul for an indefinitely long period.

When Sri Ramakrishna taught religion was a matter of practical realisation nobody could understand him. Many people who were brought under the influence of modern education had serious scepticism regarding spiritual realisation of the "atman." If they had proper Gurus and if they had devoted sometime they would surely realise that religion is a process of practical realisation. Such a process of realisation was not the monopoly of the Brahmins who drew their inspiration from the Vedas. Those other than Brahmins could attain that realisation by drawing their inspiration from Puranas and Itihasas. To any one who sought religion earnestly it was bound to be a matter of practical realisation.

One of the greatest men of modern times Lord Beaconsfield had said that the words 'progress' and 'reaction' were words to mystify the millions. There were some people who were bent upon creating some disturbance or other and they made much of the fancied distinction between the Aryan race and the Dravidian race. The distinction between them was a myth. The myth of the Dravidian race had been exposed frequently and would be further exposed in the paper which he had recently begun editing.

one common destiny and that is dissolution into that Supreme Being again. Here Brahman is indicated as the material and efficient cause of the universe. But this is the relative or Saguna aspect of Brahman.]

दिव्यो अमूर्तः पुरुषः सबाह्यन्तरो अजः ।

अप्राणो अमनाः शुद्धो अक्षरात्परतः परः ॥ २ ॥

पुरुषः (that) Being दिव्यः verily दिव्यः effulgent अमूर्तः formless सबाह्यन्तरो existing both within and without, अजः uncreated अप्राणः without Prana, अमनाः without mind, शुद्धः pure. परतः the Supreme अक्षरात् the imperishable परः beyond, higher.

(But) that effulgent Being is verily formless, existing both within and without, uncreated, without Prana or mind, pure, and is beyond even the Supreme Imperishable,

[Note.—Here the Sruti speaks of the Nirguna or the transcendental absolute aspect of the Brahman. In the previous mantra the Saguna or creative Brahman has been spoken of as the common origin of all life and existence. But lest that might be taken as the last word about Life and Existence, the absolute state of spirit is described here, as superior to and beyond the Saguna aspect of Brahman. Cf. I. i. 7.

The Supreme Imperishable.—i.e., the Saguna Brahman spoken of in the previous mantra. Sankara takes *Akshara* here to mean the Prakriti.]

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. IV.]

APRIL, 1918.

[No. 12.]

MEDITATION AND REALISATION.

Whatever we think we think with our mind and the mind being limited cannot think of anything that is unlimited or infinite. So it is but natural that man thinks of God as a Personal Being, different from himself. Being afflicted with the miseries of this world, when man finds it impossible to come out of them, except by depending on a Being, who can take him beyond them, he wants a Person in whom he can take shelter. But in fact he unknowingly surrenders himself to the Omnipresent All-blissful *atman*. For, the ultimate truth is that *atman* and *atman* alone exists. He is not conscious of this at the first stage. But as he progresses in his meditation and acquires the power of discrimination, *Vairagya*, etc., he gradually realises it. And it is certain that whoever follows whichever path, he is but trying to remove the mist of ignorance that covers the self-illuminating Atman. Now, the *alambanas* (aids) of meditation may be different according to the different temperaments of mind. If a man has firm faith in a Personal God let him try to progress with His help. As he goes on he will acquire deep concentration in course of time and *Brahman* will become revealed to him. Knowledge of *Brahman* is the one goal of humanity; and there are various paths to reach the goal.

* Adapted from the Swami Vivekananda's conversations in Bengali with a disciple.

Jiva is not anything separate or different from Brahman. He is really Brahman Itself. But so long there is the super-imposition of mind in Him and the idea of an individual ego is present, he feels he is happy, he is miserable, and so on. And consciously or unconsciously all beings beginning from Brahma down to the lowest creature, each and everyone is moving on towards the realisation of that real nature, Satchidananda. The round of births and deaths will not stop until and unless he realises the truth that "I am Brahman." Being born a human being the highest realisation is possible if he has a strong desire for attaining freedom and be fortunate enough to meet a real Guru. A man who is strongly attached to wife, son, wealth, name or fame can never think or meditate on God. How can his mind go towards Him? He cannot even struggle. He who is ready to renounce everything, and is not affected by happiness or misery, can have a real struggle, and he only can tear to pieces the net of Maya.

Think always that this body is material, is but an instrument. The Purusha that is dwelling within it is you. The super-imposition of mind is the first inner subtle covering of Him and the body is the outer gross covering. The self-luminous Purusha, is verily Satchidananda (existence, knowledge, bliss-absolute) and this real nature of Him remains unmanifested before you, being covered by these sheaths. So turn the mind in meditation towards that Purusha. Don't allow it to run towards the objects of enjoyment. This super-imposition of mind has at last to be killed. The body is gross matter; it dissolves into the fine elements. But the mind, which is a bundle of Samskaras, does not die easily. It remains in the form of a seed for some time, and then grows into a tree, takes up another body and so on and on until the knowledge of Atman is attained. Hence through discrimination, Vairagya and meditation drown the mind in the ocean of Satchidananda. When the mind is gone then you have realised the state.

It may be hard at the very beginning. But go on practising, go on struggling. There can be nothing impossible for a hero. वीराणामेव कर्तव्यता मुक्तिः न पुनः कापुरुषाणाम्. Through practice and Vairagya control the mind and do not give up the struggle until you have won.

Chitta can be compared to a transparent lake. The waves in it are caused by the contact of the senses with the external objects. Hence the nature of mind is described as Samkalpavikalpatmaka. Desires arise due to Samkalpas and Vikalpas. These desires again becoming intensified in it, the mind works through the instrumentality of the gross body. As work is infinite, so are the fruits of work.

Thus the mind is always moving in the waves of fruits of action. The functioning of the mind has to be stopped. It has to be transformed into a transparent lake, without any wave in it. Then the Brahman will be reflected on it.

Should there be then no object to meditate upon? Why? The Self is the object of meditation. "I am that Omnipresent Atman"—Think and meditate on it. "I am not this body, not this mind, not the intellect, I am neither fat nor thin, not this, not that,"—In this way think and meditate on the *Protyakchaitanya*, on the real nature of your Self. Try again and again until the mind is killed altogether, lost in the *Atman*. Then will come the knowledge of Self, then will come the state where one lives in the splendour of Self. There will remain no division between the object of meditation and one who meditates. The knower and the object of knowledge become one. *Adhyasa* will vanish away. There exists no relative knowledge at that state. When the self only exists as the knower, how can one know the self. This self is knowledge, this self is consciousness and this is existence, knowledge and bliss. Through the wonderful power of *Maya* which is *Anirvachaniya*, which can neither be said to be existing, nor to be non-existing, has come all this relativity of knowledge in Brahman in His Jiva aspect. Ordinarily we call that to be a conscious state. And where all relativity has stopped, there is one without a second, which has been spoken of in the Shastras as the super-conscious state or *Samadhi*; and has been described as स्तिमित सखिलराशी प्रख्यमाख्या विहीनम्.

Shastras, philosophies, sciences etc., can speak of relative knowledge only. No idea or language can express that which is beyond all relativity. Philosophies, Sciences, etc., can give us only a partial truth and cannot give the complete expression to the highest reality. From that highest stand-point everything else seems unreal. I am only existing and I am the Omnipresent self. I am the proof of my existence. Where can there be any room for other proofs to prove my existence when there is one without a second. In the Shastras this is described as *Nityamashmatprasadhan*.

CHIT-SHAKTI.*

(THE SPIRIT ASPECT OF THE UNIVERSE)

BY

Sir John Woodroffe.

(Continued from page 312).

According to Shankara, the Supreme Brahman is defined as pure Jnana without the slightest trace of either actual or potential objectivity. The Advaita Shaiva-Shaktas regard this matter differently in accordance with an essential principle of the Agamic School with which I now deal.

All occultism whether of East or West posits the principle that there is nothing in any one state or plane which is not in some other way actual or potential, in another state or plane. The Western Hermetic maxim runs "As above so below." This is not always understood. The saying does not mean that what exists in one plane exists *in that form* in another plane. Obviously if it did the planes would be the same and not different. If Ishvara thought and felt and saw objects, in the human way and if he was loving and wrathful, just as men are, He would not be Ishvara but Jiva. The saying cited means that a thing which exists on one plane exists on all other planes according either to the form of each plane if it be an intermediate causal body (Kāranāvantarasharīra) or ultimately as the mere potentiality of becoming which exist in Atmā in its aspect as Shakti. The Hermetic maxim is given in another form in the Vishvasāra Tantra "what is here is elsewhere. What is not here is nowhere." (Yad ihāsti tad anyatra Yannehāsti natat kvachit). Similarly the northern Shaiva Shāstra says that what appears *without* only so appears *because* it exists *within*. One can only take out of a bag what is first assumed to be within it. What is in us must in some form be in our cause. If we are living finite forms it is because that cause is infinite Being. If we have limited knowledge it is because our essential substance is Chit the Illuminator. If we have bliss (though united with sorrow,) it is because It is Supreme bliss. In short our experience must exist in germ in It. This is because in the Shākta Agama, there is a real creation and, therefore, a real nexus between the Brahman as cause and the world as effect. According to Shankara, there is not in any real sense any such nexus. The notion of creation by Brahman is as much Māyā as the notion of the world created.

Applying these principles we find in our dual experience an "I" (Aham or subject) which experiences as object a "This" (Idam): that

is the universe or any particular object of the collectivity which compose it. Now it is said that the duality of "I" and "This" come from the One which is in its essential nature (Svarūpa) an unitary experience without such conscious distinction. For Vedānta whether in its Māyāvāda or Shākta form agrees in holding that in the Supreme there is no consciousness of objects such as exists on this plane. The Supreme does not see objects outside Itself for it is the whole and the experience of the whole. It is Pūrṇa. How then, it may be asked, can a Supreme, unchanging, partless formless Consciousness produce from Itself something which is so different from Itself, something which is changing, with parts, form and so forth. Shankara's answer is that really, that is transcendently, it does not produce anything. The notion that it does is Māyā. What then is his Māyā? This I have more fully explained in my papers on "Māyā-Shakti" and on "Māyā and Shakti." I will only here say that this Māyā is an unexplainable (anirvachanīya) principle of unconsciousness which is not real, not unreal, and not partly either; which is an eternal falsity (mithya bhūtasatanāni) which though not Brahman is inseparably associated with It in Its aspect as Ishvara; which Māyā has Brahman for its support (Māyā-brahmāshutā); from which support it draws an appearance of reality which in truth it does not possess. The Parabrahman aspect of the One is not associated with Māyā.

According to the Shākta Tantrik exposition of Advaitavāda, Māyā is not an unconscious (jada) principle but a particular Shakti of Brahman. Being Shakti it is at base consciousness but as Māyā Shakti it is Consciousness veiling Itself. Shakti and Shaktimān are one and the same: that is, Power and Its Possessor (Shaktimān). Therefore Māyā Shakti is Shiva or Chit in that particular aspect which He assumes as the material cause (Upādāna Kāraṇa) in creation. Creation is real; that is there is a direct causal nexus between Shiva as Shakti (Chitshakti and Māyāshakti) and the universe. In short Shiva as Shakti is the cause of the universe and as Shakti in the form of Jiva (all manifested forms) He actually evolves. Comparing these two views;—Shankara says that there is in truth no creation and therefore there can be no question how it arose. This is because he views the problem from the transcendental (Paramārthika) standpoint of Siddhi. The Tantra Shāstra, on the other hand, being a practical Sādhana Shāstra views the matter from our, that is the Jiva, standpoint. To us the universe and ourselves are real. And Ishvara the Creator is real. Therefore there is a creation and Shiva as Shakti creates by evolving into the Universe and then appearing as all Jivas. This is the old Upanishadic doctrine of the spider actually evolving the web from itself the web being its substance in that form. A flower cannot be raised from seed unless the flower was in some way already there. Therefore as there is an "Aham" and "Idam" in our experience, in some way it is in the

supreme experience of Parashiva or Parāsamvit. But the Idam is not there as with us; otherwise It would be Jiva. Therefore it is said that there are two principles or aspects in the Brahman namely Prakāsha (or Chit aspect) and Vimarsha Shakti the potential Idam which in creation explicates into the Universe. But in the supreme experience or Amarsha, Vimarsha-Shakti (which has two states) exists in its supreme form. The subtler state is in the form of consciousness (Chidrūpinī); the gross state is in the form of the Universe (Vishvātmikā). The former is beyond the universe (Vishvottirṇā). But if Vimarsha Shakti is there in the form of consciousness (Chidrūpinī) it is one with Chit. Therefore it is said that the Aham and Idam without ceasing to be in the supreme experience are in supreme Shiva in undistinguishable union as Chit and Chidrūpinī. This is the Nirguna state of Shivashakti. As She is then in undistinguishable union with Shiva She is then also simple unmanifested Chit. She is then Chaitanyarūpā or Chidrūpinī: a subtle Sanskrit expression which denotes that She is the same as Chit and yet suggest that though in a present sense She is one with Him She is yet in a sense (with reference to His potentiality of future manifestation) different from Him. She is Sachchidānandamayī and He is Sachchidānanda. She is then the unmanifested universe in the form of undifferentiated Chit. The mutual relation whether in manifestation or beyond it, whether as the imperfect or Ideal universe is one of inseparable connection or inherence, (Avinabhāva Sambandha, Samanvaya) such as that between "I-ness" (Ahamtā) and "I" (Aham), existence and that which exists (Bhāva, Bhavat), an attribute and that in which it inheres (Dharma, Dharmin), sunshine and the sun and so forth. The Pancharātra School of the Vaishnava Āgama or Tantra speaking of the Mahāshakti Lakshmi says, that in Her supreme state She is undistinguishable from the "Windless Atmosphere (Vāsudeva) existing only as it were in the form of "darkness" and "emptiness" (that is of unmanifested formlessness). So the Mahānirvāna Tantra speaks of Her "dark formlessness." In the Kulachūdāmani Nigama Devī says (I. 16-24)—"I though in the form of Prakriti rest in consciousness bliss" (Ahaṅ prakritirūpā chet chidānanda parayanā). Rāghava Bhatta in his commentary on the Shāradā Tilaka (Ch. I) says "She who is eternal existed in a subtle (that is, unmanifested) state as it were Chaitanya during the final dissolution (Ya anādirūpā chaitanyādhyāsena mahā-pralaye sūkṣmā-sthitā). It would be simpler to say that she is then what She is (Svarūpa) namely consciousness but in creation that consciousness veils itself. These terms "formless," "subtle," "dark," "empty" all denote the same unmanifested state in which Shakti is in undistinguishable union with Shiva the formless consciousness. The Pancharātra (Ahibudhnya Samhitā, Ch. IV) in manner similar to that of the other Āgamas describe the supreme state of Shakti in the dissolution of the Universe as one in which manifested Shakti "returns to the condition of Brahman (Brahmabhāvam brajate).

"Owing to complete intensity of embrace" (Atisangkleshāt) the two all pervading ones Nārāyaṇa and His Shakti become as it were a single principle (Ekam tattvam iva). This return to the Brahman condition is said to take place in the same way as a conflagration when there is no more combustible matter, returns to the latent condition of fire (Vahni-bhāva). There is the same fire in both cases but in one case there is the activity of combustion and in the other there is not. It follows from this that the Supreme Brahman is not a mere knowing without trace of objectivity. In It the Aham is the Self as Chit and the Idam is the Self as Chidrūpinī. There is Ātmārāma in which the Self knows and enjoys the Self not in the form of external objects but as that aspect of consciousness whose projection all objects are. Shakti is always the object of the self and one with it. For the object is always the self since there is nothing but the self. But in the supreme the object is experience as one in nature with Shiva being Chaitanya-rūpa; in the universe the object seems to the Jīva, the creation of and subject to Māyā and Avidyā Shakti, to be different from the Self as mind and matter.

The next point is the nature of creation or rather emanation (Abhāsa) for the former term is associated with dualistic notions of an extra-Cosmic God who produces a world which is as separate from Himself as is the pot from the potter. According to this doctrine there is an Evolution of Consciousness or Chit-Shakti associated with Māyā-Shakti into certain forms. This is not to say that the Brahman is wholly transformed into its emanations that is exhausted by them. The Brahman is infinite and can never, therefore, be wholly held in this sense in any form or in the universe as a whole. It always transcends the universe. Therefore when Consciousness evolves, it nevertheless does not cease to be what it was, is, and will be. The Supreme Chit becomes as Shakti the universe but still remains supreme Chit. In the same way every stage of the emanation-process prior to the real evolution (Parināma of Prakriti) remains what it is whilst giving birth to a new Evolution. In Parināma or Evolution as known to us on this plane, when one thing is evolved into another it ceases to be what it was. Thus when milk is changed into curd, it ceases to be milk. The Evolution from Shiva-Shakti of the Pure Tattvas is not of this kind. It is an Abhāsa or "shining forth," adopting the simile of the sun which shines without (it was supposed) change in, or diminution of, its light. This unaffectedness in spite of its being the material cause is called in Pancharātra by the term Viryya condition which, the Vaishnava Lakshmi Tantra says, is not found in the world "where milk quickly loses its nature when curds appear." It is a process in which one flame springs from another flame. Hence it is called "Flame to Flame." There is a second Flame but the first from which it comes is unexhausted and still there. The cause remains what it was and yet appears differently in the effect. God is never "emptied" as it is said wholly into the world,

Brahman is ever changeless in one aspect; in another it changes, such change being as it were a mere point of stress in the infinite Ether of Chit. This *Ābhāsa*, therefore, is a form of *Vivartta* distinguishable however from the *Vivartta* of *Māyāvāda* because in the *Āgama*, whether *Vaiṣṇava*, *Śaiva*, or *Śākta*, the effect is regarded as real whereas according to *Shankara*, it is unreal. Hence the latter system is called *Sat-kāraṇa-vāda* or the doctrine of the reality of the original source or basis of things and not also of the apparent effects of the cause. This *Ābhāsa* has been called *Sadrishā Parināma* (Introduction to Principles of Tantra, Vol. II) a term borrowed from the *Sāṅkhya* but which is not altogether appropriate. In the latter Philosophy the term is used in connection with the state of the *Gunas* of *Prakṛiti* in dissolution when nothing is produced. Here on the contrary we are dealing with creation and an evolving Power-Consciousness. It is only appropriate to this extent that as in *Sadrishā Parināma* there is no real evolution or objectivity, so also there is none in the evolution of the *tattvas* until *Māyā* intervenes and *Prakṛiti* really evolves the objective universe.

This being the nature of the Supreme *Shiva* and of the evolution of consciousness, this doctrine assumes, with all others, a transcendent and a creative or immanent aspect of Brahman. The first is *Niskala Shiva*; the second *Sakala Shiva*; or *Nirguna*, *Saguna*; *Parama*, *Apara* (in *Shankara's* parlance); *Paramātmā*, *Ishvara*; and *Paramabrahman*, *Shabdabrahman*. From the second or changing aspect the universe is born. Birth means 'manifestation.' Manifestation to what? The answer is to consciousness. But there is nothing but *Chit*. Creation is then the evolution whereby the changeless *Chit* through the power of its *Māyā-Shakti* appears to Itself in the form of object. All is *Shiva* whether as subject or object.

This evolution of consciousness is described in the scheme of the Thirty-six *Tattvas*.

Shankara and *Sāṅkhya* speak of the 24 *Tattvas* from *Prakṛiti* to *Prithivī*. Both *Śaivas* and *Śāktas* speak of the Thirty-six *Tattvas*, showing by the extra number of *Tattvas* how *Purusha* and *Prakṛiti* themselves originated. The northern or *Advaita Śaiva Āgama* and the *Śākta Āgama* are allied, though all *Śaiva* Scripture adopt the same *Tattvas*. In all the *Āgamas* whether *Vaiṣṇava*, *Śaiva*, or *Śākta*, there are points of doctrine which are the same or similar. The *Vaiṣṇava Pancharātra*, however, moves in a different sphere of thought and its expression. It speaks in lieu of the *Ābhāsa* here described of four *Vyuha* or forms of *Nārāyaṇa*, viz., *Vāsudeva*, *Samkarshana*, *Pradyumna* and *Aniruddha*. The Thirty-six *Tattvas* are the 24 from *Prithivī* to *Prakṛiti* together with (proceeding upwards) *Purusha*, *Māyā* and the five *Kanchukas* (*Kālā*, *Kālā Niyatī*, *Vidyā*, *Rāga*) *Shuddhavidyā* (or *Sadvidyā*), *Ishvara*, *Sadākhyā* (or *Sadāshiva*), *Shakti*, *Shiva*. These are divided into three groups

signified by the terms *Shiva Tattva*, *Vidyā Tattva*, *Ātmā Tattva*, common in the ritual. *Shiva Tattva* is the *Tattvas* from and including *Shiva Tattva* to *Shuddhavidyā*.

These are known as the Pure *Tattvas* (*Shuddha-Tattva*). They are the *Tattvas* of the pure universe of Consciousness because they precede *Māyā Shakti* and all dualities. *Vidyā Tattva* includes *Māyā*, the five *Kanchukas* and *Purusha*. These are the pure-impure *Tattva* (*Shuddhāshuddha*) because they stand midway between the first and the last. *Ātmā Tattva* is the impure *Tattvas* (*Ashuddha tattva*) of the world of duality namely the 24 *Tattvas* from *Prakṛiti* to *Prithivī*.

It is the common doctrine of *Advaitavāda* that the One is of dual aspect; one static (*Shiva*) and the other kinetic (*Shakti*). This doctrine of aspects is a device whereby it is sought to reconcile the fact that there is changelessness and change. Philosophically it is an evasion of the problem and not a solution. The solution is to be found in revelation (*Veda*) and in direct Spiritual Experience (*Samādhi*). These states vary in different men and in different races and creeds. But in support of *Advaitavāda* reliance may be placed on the fact that *Samādhi* or ecstasy in all parts of the world and in all faiths tends towards some kind of unity, more or less complete. Pure *Advaitavāda* is complete unity. The scheme now outlined shows how that unitary experience, without ceasing to be what it is, assumes limited forms.

The reader is referred to the diagram.* Personally I always work with diagrams. I do not think a subject is understood until it can be represented (so far, of course, as in such matters it is possible) by diagrams.

Parashiva shown on the left of the Diagram is *Niskala Shiva* or the changeless Brahman aspect; and *Shiva-Shakti* is the aspect from which change comes and which is its products or changing forms. Both are *Shiva-Shakti*. When, however, *Shiva* is kinetic He is called *Shakti*. Regarding the matter from the *Shakti* aspect both are *Shakti*. Neither ever exist without the other though *Shakti* is in one aspect *Chidrūpinī*, and in the other in the form of the Universe (*Vishvātmikā*). In themselves and throughout they are one. The divergence takes place in consciousness after it has been subjected to the operation of *Māyā*, the effect of which is to polarize consciousness into an apparently separate "I" and "This." *Parāsamvit* is not accounted a *Tattva*, for it is beyond all *Tattvas* (*Tattvātīta*). *Shiva Tattva* and *Shakti Tattva* are counted separate though *Shakti Tattva* is merely the negative aspect of *Shiva Tattva*. *Shiva Tattva* and *Shakti Tattva* are not produced. They thus are even in dissolution. They are *Saguna-Brahman*; and *Parāsamvit* is the *Nirguna Brahman*. The first evolved *Tattva* is *Sadāshiva* or *Sadākhyā Tattva* of which the

* Shown at the lecture.

meaning is *Satākhyayatah* or that state in which there is the first notion of Being ; for here is the first incipency of the world-experience as the notion " I am this " which ultimately becomes a separate "I" and "This." In my " Studies in the Mantra-Shāstra " I have with more technical detail described the evolution of Jiva consciousness. Here I will only shortly summarise the process.

As already stated, the Aham and Idam exist in an unitary state which is indescribable in *Parāsamvit*. Shakti Tattva is called negative because negation is the function of Shakti (*Nishedha-vyapārārūpā Shaktih*). Negation of what ? The answer is negation of consciousness. The universe is thus a product of negation. Where there is pure experience there is no manifested universe. Shakti negates the pure experience or consciousness to the extent that it appears to itself limited. Shakti disengages the unified elements (Aham and Idam) which are latent in the Supreme Experience as an undistinguishable unity. How ? The answer is one of great subtlety.

Of the Shiva-Shakti Tattvas, Shiva represents the *Prakāsha* and Shakti the *Vimarsha* aspect which contains potentially within it the seed of the Universe to be. The result is that the *Prakāsha* aspect is left standing alone. The Shiva-tattva is *Prakāsha-mātra* that is, to use the imagery of our plane, an "I" without a "This." This is a state in which the unitary consciousness is broken up to this extent that it is no longer a Perfect Experience in which the Aham and Idam exist in undistinguishable union but there is one Supreme Aham Consciousness only which is the root of all limited subjectivity. To this Aham or Shiva Tattva, Shakti gradually unveils Herself as the Idam or *Vimarsha* aspect of consciousness. The result is that from Shiva and Shakti (in which the latter takes the playful part) there is evolved the first produced consciousness called *Sadākhyā Tattva*. There is then an Aham and Idam aspect of experience. But that experience is not like the Jiva's which arises at a later stage after the intervention of *Māyā Shakti*. In the Jiva consciousness (*Jīvātma*) the object (Idam) is seen as something outside and different from itself. In *Sadākhyā Tattva* and all the subsequent pure Tattvas that is *Ishvara Tattva* and *Shuddhavidyā Tattva* the "This" is experienced as part of the Self and not as separate from it. There is no outer and inner as shown in the Diagram. The circle which represents the one Consciousness is divided into "I" and "This" which are yet parts of the same figure. The "This" is at first only by degrees and hazily (*Dhyāmala prāyam*) presented to the Aham like a picture just forming itself (*unmilita-mātrā chitrākālpam*). For this reason it is said that there is emphasis on the Aham which is indicated in the diagram by the arrow-head. This is called the "Nimesha" or "closing of the eyes" of Shakti. It is so called because it is the last stage in dissolution before all effects are withdrawn into

their first cause. Being the last stage in dissolution it is the first in creation. Then the Idam side becomes clear in the next evolved *Ishvara Tattva* in which the emphasis is therefore said to be on the "This" which the Aham subjectifies. This is the "Unmesha" or "opening of the eyes" state of Shakti; for this is the state of consciousness when it is first fully equipped to create and does so. The result again of this is the evolved consciousness called *Shuddhavidyā Tattva* in which the emphasis is equal on the "I" and "This." Consciousness is now in the state in which the two halves of experience are ready to be broken up and experienced separately. It is at this state that *Māyā-Shakti* intervenes and does so through its power and the *Kanchukas* which are forms of it. *Māyā-Shakti* is thus defined as the sense of difference (*Bhedabuddhi*): that is the power by which things are seen as different from the Self in the dual manifested world. The *Kanchukas* which are evolved from, and are particular forms of, the operation of *Māyā* are limitations of the natural perfections of the Supreme Consciousness. These are *Kālā* which produce division (*Parichchheda*) in the partless and unlimited ; *Niyati* which affects independence (*Svatantratā*) ; *Rāga* which produces interest in, and then attachments to, objects in that which wanted nothing (*Pūrṇa*) , *Vidyā* which makes the Purusha a "little knower" in lieu of being all knower (*Sarvajñatā*) and *Kalā* which makes Purusha a "little doer," whereas the Supreme was in its *Kartr̥tva* almighty. The result of *Māyā* and its offshoots which are the *Kanchukas* is the production of the Purusha and *Prakriti Tattvas*. At this stage the Aham and Idam are completely severed. Each consciousness regards itself as a separate "I" looking upon the "This" whether its own body or that of others is outside its consciousness. Each Purusha (and they are numberless) is mutually exclusive, the one of the other. *Prakriti* is the collectivity of all Shaktis in contracted (*Sangkuchadrūpā*) undifferentiated form. She is Feeling in the form of the undifferentiated mass of *Buddhi*. She is Feeling in the form of the three *Gunas* in equilibrium. The Purusha or the rest and of the three *Gunas* in equilibrium. The Purusha or Self experiences Her as object. Then on the disturbance of the *Gunas* in *Prakriti* the latter evolves the *Vikritis* of mind and matter. The Purusha has at this stage the experience of the multiple world of the twenty-four impure Tattvas.

Thus from the supreme "I" (*Parahantā*) which is the creative Shiva-Shakti aspect of *Parāsamvit* which changelessly endures as *Sachchidananda*, Consciousness experiences itself as object (*Sadākhyā, Ishvara, Sadvidyā Tattvas*) and then through *Māyā* and the limitations or contractions which are the *Kanchukas* or *Samko-*chos it loses the knowledge that it is itself its own object. It sees the "other"; and the one Consciousness becomes the experiencers which are the multiple selves and their objects of the limited and dual universe. Shakti who in Herself (*Svarūpa*) is Feeling-Consciousness (*Chidrūpinī*) becomes more and more gross until physical energy assumes the form and becomes embedded in the "crust" of matter

vitalised by Herself as the Life-Principle of all things. Throughout all forms it is the same Shakti who works and appears as Chit-Shakti and Māyā-Shakti, the Spirit and Matter aspect of the Power of the Self-illuminating Chit.

VARNASHRAMA DHARMA IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN THOUGHT.

BY

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

(Continued from page 339.)

A famous Sanskrit verse says :

अयं निजः परोवेति गणना लघु चेतसा ।
उदार चरितानां तु वसुधैवकुटुम्बकं ॥

(This man is my kith and kin but that man is a stranger ;—such is the thought of the poor in spirit. But to them who are pure, noble in heart the whole world is their family).

The Padma Purana says :

अहिंसाप्रथमं पुष्पं पुष्पमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ।
सर्वभूतदया पुष्पं समापुष्पं विशेषतः ॥
ज्ञानं पुष्पं तपः पुष्पं ध्यानं पुष्पं तथैव च ॥
सत्यमष्टविधं पुष्पं विष्णोः प्रीतिकरो भवेत् ॥

(Non-killing is the sweetest of the flowers which God Vishnu loves. Self-control, love towards all, mercy, wisdom, austerity devotion, and truthfulness are along with harmlessness the eight flowers that the Lord loves and accepts).

In regard to fraternity our religion recognises that this follows from the truth of the fatherhood of God. पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य (Thou art the Father of the universe.) But it has understood that fraternity implies elder and younger brothers and hence it has insisted on the preservation of the elements of reverence in life. It has extended the principle also to the entire range of creation instead of confining it to the kingdom of man. It is thus abundantly clear that the Hindu scheme of life called Varnashrama Dharma is in entirely sane and right relation to the fundamental ideas of progressive modern life.

Thus the Varnashrama Dharma takes life at its full valuation without placing any undue emphasis on some elements of our nature

to the exclusion of the rest. The Hindu has always striven "to see life steadily and see it whole." To quote Dr. A. K. Coomaraswami again : "What I do suggest is that the Hindus grasped more firmly than others, the fundamental meaning and purpose of life and more deliberately than others, organised society with a view to the attainment of the fruits of life ; and this organisation was designed not for the advantage of a single class but to use a modern formula, to take from each according to his capacity and to give to each according to his needs. . . . Even with its imperfections, Hindu society as it survives will appear to many to be superior to any form of social organisation attained on a large scale anywhere else, and infinitely superior to the social order which we know as modern civilisation."

I wish to say a few words here in regard to three aspects of Varnashrama Dharma which have been picked out as indefensible in the light of modern thought. The first of them is the caste system. The idea that the Hindu system is the result of priestcraft and has been designed by scheming men to secure Brahmin domination is too absurd to need refutation. The caste system is proclaimed in the Gita as being of divine creation. It secures co-ordinated social endeavour and differentiation of functions and minimises the evil effects of dehumanising and reckless competition. The idea of the great sages of India seems to have been that individuals and groups of men should turn their gaze towards God who is the centre of all instead of trying to trip each other up and hurl the less fortunate into the bottomless pit of poverty and degradation. The caste system is no menace to unity or social love. Let us all remember the wise words of the late Mr. Booker Washington ; "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."

The second aspect is our marriage system. Let me say at once that there is no inherent superiority or inferiority in the various marriage systems prevalent in the world. The only question is, whether it is calculated to achieve the end in view according to the ideals of the society where it prevails. Marriage is everywhere a check on first impulses and hence has its justification in our higher nature and not in our lower nature. The womanhood of every race forms the true and god-given guardians of the emotional and spiritual ideals of the race and hence any tampering with the marriage ideals of the race must be viewed with grave disapprobation. The Ramayana discloses to us the Hindu ideals of marriage in a perfect form and we shall be traitors to Sri Rama if we give him mere lip adoration and fail to walk in his shining footsteps. The family is

him by way of pleasant and unpleasant things above, here, or below. The only companions that accompany us after death are our *Vasanas* and our *Karmas*. *विद्याकर्मणी समस्वारमेते पूर्वसजाय*.

There is no way to achieve our individual good and social good except by *Dharma* and *Dhyana* and the attainment of God's love. Let us remember the precious words of Tiruvalluvar.

“தனக்கு வலையில்லாதான்ருள் தேர்தார்த்தல்லான் மனக்கவலை மாற்றலரிது.”

(There is no other way of removing the sorrows of the mind except by attaining the lotus feet of Him who has no peer in the universe).

Some people feel shocked by being told that *Dharma* is *अतीन्द्रियः* (not verifiable by the senses) and is God's gift to us for our salvation. But are not all the precious and immortal things of life unverifiable by the senses? If the soul and God are so unverifiable, is it anything absurd to say that the bridge leading from life to God should be equally unverifiable. *अमृतमैसेतुः* (He is the bridge leading unto immortality). As a matter of fact the right use of pure reason makes us realise the value and blessedness of *Dharma* which is our true saviour here and hereafter.

The sacred *Dharma* of our land is our most precious inheritance. It is the duty of the Hindus to preserve it and keep it unimpaired for all time. Our abiding loyalties in life are those that are acquired early in our career and hence it is the duty of the present generation to train the next generation to walk in the blessed and auspicious path leading unto God. His grace has been always on this land and He will shower his choicest blessings on us if we love him and obey His will. Let us treasure up in our hearts the wise saying of Manu.

मंगलाचारयुक्तानां नित्यं च प्रयतात्मनां ।

जपतां ब्रह्मवतां चैव विनिपातो न विद्यते ॥

(No decadence will come to them who are wedded to auspicious *acharas*, who are always full of self-control, and who perform the *ṛāpas* and the *hom-as* enjoined by the holy *shastras*.)

(Concluded).

THE POWER OF SPIRIT.

(Class Lecture by Swami Ramakrishnananda).

In this world we no doubt see that a man who does not glorify the Lord may live a successful life. Often those who have no moral standard, who oppress the poor, who lord it over the good, appear to live happily; and in many ways wrong seems to prosper. But this material power wins the victory only for a few days. In the end God always comes out victorious. It is the spiritual power that endures. The power of a Napoleon or an Alexander the Great is nothing compared to the power that those men have who never shed a drop of human blood and never care to seek for power. I can prove this. What is man? Man is mind. When you can control your own mind, the art which shows you that, will show you how to control all other minds. If you can solve one problem by the rule of three, you can solve all other problems. The principle remains the same for all. So if you have learned to control the force working through your own mind, it is easy to control the same force elsewhere, for mind is everywhere alike. The teacher is one who has learned the art of controlling his own mind. The Great Ones like Christ or Buddha who have conquered the world did so because they had conquered themselves.

The power of Spirit is infinitely greater than the power of matter. But what is spirit and what is matter? Whatever can be felt, conceived, thought of, seen, or heard, is matter. It is the object, something that can be known. Spirit is not all this. Put a *not* to all these and that will define Spirit. Matter is heavy, Spirit is not heavy; matter is limited, Spirit is unlimited; matter is changeable, Spirit is not changeable. All that is not matter is Spirit; so by knowing what is not matter, we know Spirit indirectly. But what am I? We think that this “I” is the name of the body and we therefore identify ourselves with the body. But this “I” is something else. The body is destined to die, but this “I” shrinks from death; the body is dull and stupid, but this “I” is eager, hungry to learn; this body is unconscious, but this “I” is ever striving to be more and more conscious. So all the tendencies of this “I” are away from the body or matter; and if we have this spiritual tendency, we must have come from spirit. All the great teachers have taught us: “Do not think that you are this bundle of flesh and blood. This idea is the offspring of ignorance. You are not made to live on what the world can give you. You are self-existent. You are beginningless, endless Spirit. You are naturally conscious. Eternally you are existent. ‘Sword cannot

ierce you, fire cannot burn you, water cannot wet you, air cannot dry you.' This is your true nature."

Ask yourself whether you wish to live or whether you wish to die ; whether you wish to be ignorant, or whether you wish to be all-knowing. We all want to be all-knowing, therefore by nature we must be all knowing. We all want to be blissful, therefore we must be all blissful; and we must be eternal, because we never want to die. A fish taken out of water will not care for the greatest luxury or honor on land. You may lay him on a throne and offer him everything, but he will say : " Put me in dirty water even, but do not keep me on land." This is because water is his natural element. We judge of the nature of an animal by its likes and dislikes ; if in the same way we look to our own likes and dislikes, we can tell what is our real nature. Does not everyone like to be *Sat* or existent? No one wishes to die. Does not everyone long for unlimited knowledge? Does not every one desire unbroken happiness? So the great teachers have found out that the nature of man is *Sat-chit-anandam* (eternal life, knowledge and bliss). He is not the material body, he is not the subtle body, he is not all these *koshas* or sheaths ; but he is That which he is desiring. The more we think of ourselves in this way, the more our infinite nature will manifest itself.

It is not possible to know the Infinite if we are finite. We must first know that we are infinite. We wish to marry the Infinite, we must therefore belong to the same caste. A Brahmin boy can only marry a Brahmin girl ; so to win the hand of the Infinite we must prove and know that we are infinite. Matter is that which is limited and which limits. We now feel limited by coming in contact with matter. We must realize that we are not matter but Spirit, we must cease to identify ourselves with the body. We must convince ourselves that we are Spirit, by differentiating ourselves from matter. We must join ourselves to God. To do this we must conquer all egotism. This "I" is the greatest barrier between ourselves and God. It hides our God from us.

Do I belong to myself? Can I do what I wish? Or am I guided by a Higher Power? If I analyze my life, I shall find that I am a plaything in the hands of an Infinite Power. I am not my own master. If I were, I could get what I like. Who does not wish to have everything to gratify his desires? But no one succeeds in getting all that he wants. No matter how rich a man is, he always wants something. Do we find anyone who is perfectly happy? Go to the Emperor of Russia, go to any prince or king and ask if he is happy. They have power, they have wealth, they

have apparently everything ; and yet not one of them will say that he is truly happy. This is because no joy can be found in selfishness. It is only when we forget ourselves for some one else that we become happy, and lasting happiness is ours only when we have forgotten ourselves wholly for God.

It is the highest duty of a man to love God above all things, and this love must be incessant and disinterested. We must never cease to love Him, but not because He has powers to satisfy our desires. We must not love Him for what He gives—as people seek out a rich man, follow him about and flatter him ; then, being satisfied or disappointed, go away. Such time-servers are not real devotees. Their love is not for the Lord but for what they can get from Him. They are not God-worshippers but Mammon-worshippers. What is disinterested love? The little child loves his father. That father may be poor and wretched, yet the child will run and jump up in his lap with joy, but not in the lap of the rich man who comes with him. Such should be our love for God. And it must be unceasing. We must never forget Him for a moment. Then only will our higher nature be free to act. If we really love the Lord of the Universe, we shall no longer care for the temporary things of the world. When love for the Infinite One awakens within us, then all these small worldly satisfactions,—name, fame, property, position, will seem worthless to us. If a man can claim a millionaire for his father, he will be so proud and so secure in his father's wealth that he will fear nothing and ask nothing. So if we can once learn to regard the Lord of the Universe as our real father, then we shall lose all anxiety and greed.

We fear and desire because we do not know what we are. The light of the lamp above us, there, is brilliant ; but if the chimney that surrounds it were not transparent, the light would be obscured. So each of us is a great light, but that light has been obscured by our ignorance, because we identify ourselves with the body and are attracted by the things of this world. Incessant and disinterested love for God, however, will remove all these obstructions. When we have been able to give our whole heart to Him, a revelation will come to us which will make the little riches of the world, the little joys of the world, the little sorrows of the world seem as nothing. It is these narrow earthly attachments which have covered up the infinite nature of man and which make him think that he is this limited human being. When they are removed, then at once he will realize his own nature ; and when he realizes his own nature, he will know that he is the son of the Infinite and Eternal Lord of all.—*The Message of the East.*

temple alone. But was he intoxicated? He moved as if he had no consciousness of the external world. His mind was concentrated with all force on Mother. Going there he might certainly see his living Mother and could hear words from Her lips. For, Sri Ramakrishna never told a lie. He appeared before the Mother. Really She was *Chinmoyee*; really She was a living force, and the fountain-head of all love and beauty. His heart was filled with love and devotion for the Mother. He forgot himself in ecstasy; bowed down before Her again and again and muttered to himself "Mother, give me *Viveka* (discrimination), give me *Vairagya*; give me knowledge, give me devotion. Oh Mother, make me live in a state, so that I can always see you and feel your presence." A peculiar sensation passed through his body. The whole world vanished from his sight and Mother alone was there.

He came back to Sri Ramakrishna. Thakur asked him, "Did you pray to Mother to remove your worldly difficulties?" He was startled at the question. "No, Sir, I forgot altogether. What is to be done then?" "Go again," said Sri Ramakrishna "and ask of Mother." Again he went to the temple, and this time too forgot all about himself and bowing down many times prayed for *Jnana* and *Bhakti* only. Sri Ramakrishna smilingly asked, "Did you pray this time?" Startled again he replied "No Sir, as soon as I see mother, through some divine power, I forget everything and ask only for *Jnana* and *Bhakti*. What is to be done?" "What a fool you are," said Thakur "could not you hold yourself for a moment and pray for it at a breath? Go and try again and pray to Her to remove all your worldly difficulties." Again he went to try for the third time. But this time as soon as he entered the temple a peculiar feeling arose in his mind. He was ashamed of himself. What! he came to pray to Mother, the satisfier of all desires, and the fountain-head of all bliss for such trivialities! Was it not mere foolishness to beg for a gourd or a paltry thing from an Emperor after pleasing him? This was ridiculous indeed. Being ashamed of his conduct he bowed down again and again before Mother and prayed, "Mother, I do not want anything else, but give me pure knowledge and devotion to 'Thy feet.'" He then came out of the temple and thought, this was indeed all Sri Ramakrishna's play. Otherwise how was it that though he tried thrice, every time he failed to pray to Mother to remove his worldly difficulties. But Narendranath would not leave his Guru. He must do something so that there would be no difficulties for the maintenance of his mother and young brothers. Sri Ramakrishna said, "I can't pray to Mother like that for any body. Such prayers do not come out of my lips. What can I do? I told you, if you wanted anything that would

be granted to you the moment you asked for it from Mother. But you could not pray. Your fate is that; What can I do?" "That won't do, Sir," said Narendra, "you must pray for me. And I do believe that only if the words come out of your lips, there will be no difficulty on the way." Thus entreated by Narendra, Sri Ramakrishna at last said, "All right. There will be no difficulties for the bare maintenance of your family."

AGGRESSIVE HINDUISM.

From the very earliest times India has attracted the attention of foreigners of all climes and civilisation; some by her inexhaustible natural resources, some by her arts and architecture, others again by her unique achievements in the realm of thought, more particularly in religion. Numerous as has been the number of such persons there have been very few who were free from prejudices and predispositions which have not a little hampered their proper understanding of the real nature of the soul of India. In recent years there have not been wanting people who in their pride of wealth and achievements in material sciences and civilisation, have been deluding this ancient land with many strange recipes to cure her of her ills. The most pernicious consequence of this constant dinning into our ears of our weaknesses and defects is that our own people believe themselves to be in reality as weak as these interested foreigners, out of diverse motives, have represented us to be. But this could not continue for a long time. For, our holy land is the keeper and the guardian of the purest and highest lessons of spirituality and has therefore, in the divine order of things, the most sacred mission yet to fulfil. In the last part of the nineteenth century the thinking portion of the population of India was led astray by the glamour of western civilisation and other causes historical and political which need not be referred to here in detail. It was at this most critical juncture in the evolution of Indian thought that the God-man of Dakshineswar came to teach us our supreme duty and our legitimate destiny. The message of Sri Ramakrishna was carried to every corner of the world by his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda. We are already having the fruits of his work in the awakening of our national consciousness which is visible in every sphere of life,—and there are some dangers which we should particularly guard ourselves against, if we are to remain true to the peculiar genius of our race and thus fulfil the sacred trust imposed on us. Swami Vivekananda has already taught us

how to organise the national energy with respect to various departments of life. It is impossible to give even a bare outline of his varied teachings with respect to our national re-construction. But those interested in the subject might well begin the study with the little pamphlet entitled "Aggressive Hinduism" * by the late Sister Nivedita. For Nivedita by her long discipleship under the Swamiji and by her great humility of heart and earnestness of purpose and disinterested motive, was enabled to catch the inner vision of the Swamiji and portray it in her peculiar, illuminating and fascinating way of writing. The pamphlet brings out the essentials which should be borne in mind in devising any practical measure to further our national progress.

In the first article Sister Nivedita with a characteristic insight points out that our hope for the future must be found in the organisation of the education of the people on lines which are at once modern and take full account of the peculiar genius of the race. As she points out "the soil that has brought forth the mango and the palm ought not to be degraded to providing only gourds and vetches. And similarly, the land of the Vedas and of *Jnana* Yoga has no right to sink into the rôle of mere critic or imitator of European Letters." * * * "Aggression is to be the dominant characteristic of the India that is to-day in school and class-room,—aggression, and the thought and ideals of aggression. Instead of passivity, activity; for the standard of weakness, the standard of strength; in place of a steadily-yielding defence, the ringing cheer of the invading host." It is therefore essential that as in the West, in India also the teachers and guardians should strive to foster not quietness, docility, resignation and obedience but "strength, initiative, sense of responsibility and power of rebellion." "Temper and self-will are regarded by western educators" says Nivedita, "as a very precious power, which must by no means be crushed or destroyed, though they must undoubtedly be disciplined and subordinated to impersonal ends."

Speaking of the task before us Nivedita sums up thus: "Our task is to translate ancient knowledge into modern equivalents. We have to clothe the old strength in a new form. The new form without that old strength is nothing but a mockery; almost equally foolish is the savage anachronism of an old-time power without fit expression."

"The Indianising of India, the organising of our national thought, the laying out of our line of march, all this is to be done

* Aggressive Hinduism. [By Sister Nivedita and R.K.V. Published by the Udbodhan Office, Baghbar, Calcutta.]

by us, not by others, on our behalf. We accept no more programmes. Henceforth are we become the makers of programmes. We obey no more policies. Henceforth do we create policies. We refuse longer to call by the name of 'education' the apprenticeship necessary for a ten-rupee clerkship. We put such things in their true place. We ordain ourselves intellectually free."

The observations on the supreme importance of writing a true history of India by the Indians, the creation of great literatures in the vernaculars and effective education of women deserve the earnest attention of our leaders.

In short the pamphlet should be in the hands of everyone who wants to be of any service to his motherland, and especially in the hands of every student and young man. The Udbodhan Office deserves to be congratulated for bringing out the collection at such an opportune moment.

REVIEWS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

The Dream Problem, Vol. I—[Edited and compiled by Ram Narayan, L.M.S., Published by Editor, "Practical Medicine," Delhi (India)].

Of the various phenomena of the mind the subject of dreams has attracted the attention of philosophers from very early times and yet we are far from any definite theory and satisfactory explanation of various problems connected with it. The object of the publication before us is however ambitiously stated to be to arrive at the ultimate truth by the "analytical exposition of that phase of consciousness which we call the dream state." The volume consists mainly of the replies received from various gentlemen both in India and abroad in response to a query sent by the publisher inviting suggestions towards the solution of a definite dream. Besides these interesting replies the last part of the book deals among others with the Vedantic conception of creation and a dialogue between sage Vasishtha and the dreamer which are interesting. The second volume, the publishers state, will contain further dialogues between the dreamer and the sage relating to the ultimate truth and the methods of attainment together with many other solutions. The printing and get up leave nothing to be desired.

The Life of Swami Vivekananda.—[Compiled and translated into Marathi by Pandits Bhaskar Vishnu Phadake, B.A., and Ramakrishna Vasudev Barve. Published in parts by Pandit Bhaskar Vishnu

Phadake, B.A., Ramatirtha Karyalaya, 7, Sadashiv Street, Girgaon, Bombay. Each part—cloth bound. Re. 1-2 as; paper-bound; Annas 14].

The first four volumes of the series published till now, written as they are in chaste Mahratti and in an elegant style clearly prove that the translators are equal to the noble task they have undertaken, and we wish the enterprising publisher, who proposes to place before the Mahratti reading public translations of the works of Swami Vivekananda also, all success in turning out such useful books.

At present Indians are passing through a period of transition. When they are to assimilate what is good in the civilisation of the West, without giving up the spirituality and culture handed down to them by their forefathers, the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda will be of special value to those, who care to draw their inspiration from him, informing their character after the right model and in bringing home to them their duties to themselves and to the nation. We are indeed glad to find that the life of the Swamiji has been brought at a such a time, within the easy reach of a large number of our countrymen.

The get-up, printing and paper of the books are good.

Sri Krishna, the Soul of Humanity—[By A. S. Ramak. Price Re. 1. Published by the Kanara Press, Madras].

An ancient adage says that "those who talk most of religion have the least of it." And the truth of this gets a strong corroboration from the volume before us. Both the style and the contents of the book are of such a nature that it would be sheer waste of time and energy to take serious notice of them and in the interest of the author himself and of the country of which he seems to be a great lover, it would have been best if the book had remained without seeing the light of day. If this volume is a good specimen of the larger and more comprehensive book which we are promised we would earnestly appeal to the author to direct his energies in other channels.

Sandhyavandana.—[By B. V. Kamesvara Aiyar M.A., Pudukkottai].

A very interesting book containing the Mantras and translation. The notes and commentary on the Mantras are ably written and serve to give the reader, an accurate idea of the vedic teaching as a whole.

Srimad Ramayana, Part I, Balakanda—by J. S. R. Sarma, Point Pedro, Ceylon, published by G. C. Loganathan Bros., price

The book is written in such a way that the great truths embodied in the Epic may be well brought home to the minds of the spectators when staged.

Enquiry after God.—[By Kutbudin Sullan, Price Re. 1-4].

An interesting book based upon the well-known teachings of the Vedanta and the Persian Mystics.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA DAY CELEBRATIONS.

At the Belur Math.

The eighty-third birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva came off on the 14th March last, when seven members of the Math were formally initiated into Sannyasa and two others into Brahmacharya. About 500 people were assembled on that day and were sumptuously fed. The public celebration took place on the 17th instant, when as usual, three steamships of Messrs. Hoare Miller & Co. plied between the Ahiritola Ghat and the Math. A big portrait of Sri Ramakrishna was installed under a huge canopy, on the Math ground, duly set between a very artistic arrangement of flowers, creepers etc. There were also the usual decorations all about the Math premises. There were distributions of Prasadam, and cold drinks on a vast scale, and the men in charge, the volunteers and others were all attention to the guests of the day. The vast congregation amounted to nearly 50,000 people, of whom about 15,000 partook of the Prasadam. There were songs, 'Kali-kirtan,' fire-works and many such other interesting items in the programme of the day. Concert and Sankirtan parties of the locality as well as from the metropolis had gathered in groups to pay their respects to the memory of Bhagavan Ramakrishna Deva.

At Ranchi.

The 88rd birthday anniversary was celebrated at Hinu on the 21st March, 1918, with the following programme:—

Sankirtan—6 P.M. to 8 P.M. (30th March).

Next day:—1. Sankirtan in the morning. 2. Puja and Aratrika—at noon. 3. Distribution of Prasada—12 A.M. to 3 P.M. 4. Reading of Essays and Discourses on Religious subjects—4 to 6 P.M. 5. Kali-kirtan—6 to 7 P.M.

At Sylhet.

The 88rd birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated with great pomp under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Seva Samiti. A public meeting presided over by the District Judge, Mr. H. C. Liddell, I.C.S., was held on the 11th March in the Town Hall, which was attended by the elite of the town, including officials. The reading of the annual report of the Samiti was followed by lectures on social service, and on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. The President exhorted the audience to join the Samiti and wished it all success. On the 14th the Bhaktas performed the Tithi Puja. The public celebration came off on the 17th. There was Kirtan all through the day. In the morning the patients of the leper asylum were

served with sweets under the direction of the medical officer. In the evening about one thousand people including sweepers and other untouchables were fed.

At Benares.

The 88rd birthday was celebrated at the Rk. Advaita Ashrama on the 17th March when the following programme was observed :—

1. The feeding of Sadhus, at noon. 2. Sankirtan, 2 to 4 P.M.
3. A lecture in Hindi on the Life and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna by Babu Kali Prasanna Chatterji, late Editor, Tribune, 4 to 5 P.M.
4. Kali-kirtan with music, in the evening. 5. Distribution of Prasadam among the assembled gentry, about 800 in number.

The *tithi puja* had been performed on the 14th March with the usual ceremonies and entertainment of Bhaktas.

At Kankhal.

The 83rd birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated by the Rk. Sevashrama on 17th March. The programme was as follows :—

1. Music by Sm. Satyabala Devi 9 to 11 A.M. 2. Lecture on the Life and Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa by Pandit Yogindra Chandra Sarma, Sankhya Vedanta tirtha, 11 to 12 P.M. 3. Serving Sadhu Mahatmas with food, 12 A.M. to 2 P.M.
4. Bhajana 2 to 4 P.M.

At Kishenpur, Dehra Dun.

The 83rd birthday anniversary was celebrated on 17th March, at the Ramakrishna Ashrama. Many distinguished gentlemen from Dehra Dun attended the festival. After Puja and Bhajana there were religious discourses by Babu Baldeo Singh, Rai Saheb Ishan Ch. Dev, Mr. Chandi Prasad, M.A., B.L., and others. Prasadam was distributed among the assembled Bhaktas, nearly a thousand in number.

At Lucknow.

The 83rd birthday of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at the Rk. Sevashrama, Lucknow (18 Hewett Road) on the 17th March 1918. There was Nagar Sankirtan in the morning, which was followed by the feeding of some 1100 poor and infirm people. At about 6 p.m. under the presidency of the Hon'ble Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra, President of the Sevashrama, the general meeting was commenced with a prayer recited by the boys of the depressed class school attached to the Ashrama, after which songs were sung and the annual report was read. The president then distributed prizes to the deserving students of the depressed class school. After some formal business, Mr. A. P. Sen, Bar-at-Law delivered a nice speech in Bengali on "Sevadharma." The president then in an eloquent speech in Hindi explained the meaning of the word "Seva" and the

necessity of establishing institutions like the present one which has been named after the great Maharshi, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva, whose life was an inspiration to all his followers.

At Bangalore.

On Sunday the 17th instant, the *Jayanthi* of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva was celebrated with the usual enthusiasm at the Sri Ramakrishna Mutt, Basavangudi. Bhajana parties went out in the morning taking the portrait of the Paramahansa in procession. In the afternoon there was a fine Harikatha performance in Kannada which was much appreciated by the vast audience of devotees of both sexes. Among those present were Rao Bahadur Mr. K. Krishna Iyengar, Mr. N. S. Thirumala Iyengar, Mr. C. S. Doraiswamy Iyer, Mr. S. Vardaraja Iyengar and several other prominent gentlemen. The lecture in English commenced at 5-15 by Mr. V. C. Seshachariar, a well-known vakil of Madras, who had the privilege of knowing Swami Vivekananda personally. It was a lengthy address noted for its wealth of diction, and it touched upon the chief points of significance in the life and teaching of Paramahansa. Then Mr. T. Krishna Sastry, M.A., Lecturer in Sanskrit in the Central College, read an exceedingly well-written paper in Kannada on the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. It was much appreciated for its matter as well as for its manner. With *Manogalarathi* and distribution of Prasad, the sacred function came to a close.

The Feeding of the Poor

took place on Sunday the 24th instant. The feature of this year's celebration was the enthusiastic devotion shewn by the Panchamas. Some of them raised subscriptions among themselves for the purpose; and the feeding took place on a very large scale. It was a sight to see those people—men, women and children—who having taken a bath and put on clean clothing, had congregated in their Bhajana houses to sing prayers as on a holy festival. There were two rival parties among them; and the occasion was utilised to re-unite them in mutual amity and goodwill.

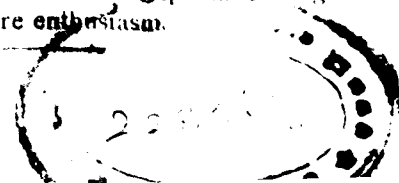
At Nellore.

An esteemed correspondent sends us the following report :—

The birth day festival of Sree Ramakrishna Deva is gradually becoming a national event. It was a day of triumph, Sunday the 3rd March 1918, when the public of Nellore started for the first time the celebration of the birth day festival of Bhagavan Sree Ramakrishna Deva under the auspices of the Sree Saraswathi Samajam, Mulapet, Nellore. His Holiness Swami Sharvanandaji of the Ramakrishna Mission, Madras, was invited for the occasion. About a mile from the Samajam in the temple of Hanuman on the banks of the river Pennaru was placed the beautifully decorated picture of Sree Ramakrishna on a Vimanam nicely adorned with flowers. After due

performance of prayer and Karpurabarathi, the procession started with Indian music followed by a large number of Bhaktas with the Swamiji in their midst. The procession was taken through the main street of Santhapet and the Bazaar street and all round Mulapet. All the way were heard shouts of 'Jai Sri Ramakrishnaki Jai,' 'Guru Maharajki Jai.' These enthusiastic shouts, the sound of music and above all the sight of the Holy spirit of the Swamiji all combined to thrill the soul of every one with unutterable joy and every one in the way was coming to worship with cocoanut, plantains, and burning of karpuram. The procession started at 8 A.M., and came to a close at about 9-30 A.M., and the Vimanam was placed in a big pandal in front of the Samajam decorated with thoranams of mango leaves. A lengthy paper in telugu on the life and teachings of the Bhagavan was read by Mr. Purugu Seetharama Sastri. After this the Puja was performed and plantains and sweets were distributed to the masses of Bhaktas of different creeds who attended to make the affair a success. In the evening between 2-30 to 4 P.M., there was seen a small gathering engaged with the Swamiji in asking questions and the Swami in his sweet and mild words satisfying every one of the enquirers. At 5-30 P.M., the public meeting was held at the Town Hall presided over by Mr. Sundaram Chettiar A.V.L., B.A., B.L., Sub-Judge, Nellore. As was previously arranged hymns were sung by Mr. K. Venkatesayya in praise of the All-Pervading Paramathma. The Swami then gave a stirring and inspiring lecture on the life and teachings of the great saint of Dakshineswar. In the course of the lecture the Swami explained the necessity of the time for the new force to come in and give the message to the world. The Swami gave out several incidents of the great life of the Avatar and impressed in every one that religion is 'being and becoming' as was observed in the life of the great saint and that we who are born in a land which gave birth to several Mahanmas like Sri Ramakrishna should always remember that life is not for waste and that every one should struggle to become free from the bondage of the materialistic world and know the truth that pervades throughout the Universe and attain the state of Sat-Chit-Ananda. After the Swami's lecture the President gave a short address which was very instructive. The meeting came to a close with a vote of thanks to the chairman and to the lecturer who in spite of his several important engagements readily consented to go over all the way from Madras and attend the occasion to elevate the condition of the public of Nellore. These occasions are of the greatest spiritual and moral value as they give us occasion to remember the life and teachings of the great men and enable us to revivify ourselves and kindle afresh the love of spirituality latent in every human being.

May God bless us to celebrate this important religious festival every year with more and more enthusiasm.



VEDANTA KESARI

out." Thus passed days after days, his mind trembling in the balance, now leaning towards this side, now towards that. Peace of mind was an impossibility to be attained and there was no relief to his family distress either.

Time is rolling on and on. It does not linger for anybody to show sympathy to us, poor mortals. Summer passed away and rains came in with all the usual rigour. And Narendranath was still wandering in the streets in search of some employment. Once he roamed about the whole day without having any meal and got completely wet; at night while he was coming back home, with tired feet, and still more troubled mind, he felt such uneasiness that it became impossible to move a step further. He lay on the verandah of a house, almost senseless for the night. How long he was in that condition he did not know. But this he remembered that various thoughts and different pictures appeared before his mind one after the other and again vanished away, while all the time he seemed to be a mere witness. Suddenly he realised that some divine power was working behind his mind, and, as it were, the curtains that covered his knowledge, began to be raised one after the other and he found the solutions of his doubts which troubled him so long: why there is evil in the creation of an all-merciful Being; how can there be any reconciliation between His justice and His grace; and such other doubts. A feeling of happiness enwrapped his whole frame. He got refreshed in body and his mind was enjoying the highest happiness.

From this time he became quite indifferent to the praises or blames of the world and he firmly believed that he was not born to live in the world and earn money and support the members of the family like all worldly people, but that he was born to realise his own Self and to do good to the world at large. **जगद्विनाश** was his birth. So he secretly prepared himself to leave the world. He settled everything, even the particular day and hour. And that very day Sri Ramakrishna came to Calcutta to a devotee's house. Narendranath came to know of it and went to see him and take leave of him. As soon as he saw Naren he told him, "You must come with me to Dakshineswar to-day." He pleaded excuses, but Sri Ramakrishna would not leave him. He could not but get into the carriage. No words passed between them on the way. They reached Dakshineswar. Many people were there sitting in the room. Suddenly Sri Ramakrishna fell into *Bhava Samadhi*. In that mood he came nearer to Narendranath, caught hold of his hands and with tears in his eyes began to sing a song. The purport of the song was that Radha, the consort of Sri Krishna had *Ahimsa-*

A PAGE FROM THE LIFE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

nam * for him. So Sri Krishna was pacifying her saying, "I am afraid to talk; afraid am I not to talk. I am always afraid lest I should miss you, Oh Radha."

Narendranath also could hold himself no longer. He was much moved, tears began to flow down his cheeks. Sri Ramakrishna knew the mind of his beloved disciple. All the people that were witnessing the scene were astonished at their strange behaviour. When Sri Ramakrishna came down to his ordinary plane of consciousness, they asked him the cause of his unusual attitude towards Naren. He smilingly replied, "That is something between ourselves." At night when all people went away he called Narendranath before him and said, "I know that you are born to do Mother's work; you can never live in the world. But so long I am here don't go away any where." So saying he began to shed tears of love. Who could understand the wonderful ways of this wonderful Guru and his like disciple?

Some days passed away, Narendranath could make as yet no arrangement for the support of his beloved mother and his brothers. One day he thought "God hears the prayers of Thakur. Why not I request him to pray to God that my mother and brothers will have no difficulty for their living. He is sure to concede to my request." Accordingly Narendranath went to Dakshineswar and said to Sri Ramakrishna, "you have to pray to Mother, so that there will be no difficulty as regards the sustenance of my old mother and young brothers." Thakur answered "you know, I can never tell Mother to remove physical discomforts. Why not you pray to Her. Because you have no faith in Mother, you suffer so greatly." Narendranath said, "I don't know Mother; you have to tell Her for me. I won't leave you otherwise." Thakur affectionately said, "You don't know how many times I have prayed to Mother, 'Oh Mother, remove all obstacles from the path of Naren;' but She does not hear me because you do not have faith in Her. Well, to-day is Tuesday. I say, to-night go to the temple of Mother and bow down before Her. Then whatever you ask for, she will give you. My Mother is *Chinnoyee*, and Shakti Herself. The whole universe is Her creation at will. What can she not do if She only wills."

Narendranath had firm faith in Thakur's words. When he had said like that, all his troubles must cease if he prayed. He passed the time in eager expectation for the night to come. It became dark. Oh, it was past ten. Sri Ramakrishna asked him to go to the Mother's temple. Narendranath got up. He was moving towards the

* A sort of state occasioned by Love