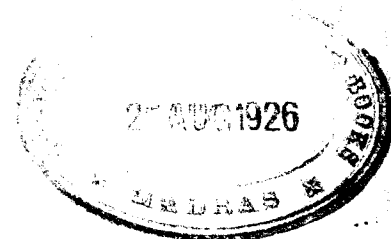


The Vedanta Kesari

"LET THE LION OF VEDANTA ROAR."



VOL. XIII, No. 2 : JUNE 1926

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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JUNE 1926

[NUMBER 2

P R A Y E R

भयानां भयं भीषणं भीषणानां गतिः प्राणिनां पावनं पावनानाम् ।
महोच्चैः पदानां नियन्तु त्वमेकं परेषां परं रक्षणं रक्षणानाम् ॥
परेश प्रभो सर्वरूपाविनाशिन् अनिर्देश्य सर्वेन्द्रियागम्य सत्य ।
अचिन्त्याक्षर व्यापकाव्यक्ततत्त्व जगद्भासकाधीश पायादपायात् ॥
तदेकं स्मरामो तदेकं भजामो तदेकं जगतसाक्षिरूपं नमामः ।
सदेकं निधानं निरालम्बमीशं भवाभ्युपनिषत् शरण्यं ब्रजामः ॥

O Lord ! Thou art the Dread of the dreadful, Terror of the terrible, Refuge of all beings, Purificator of all purificators. Thou alone art the ruler of even the high-placed ones. Thou art Supreme over the supreme, Protector of the protectors.

O Supreme Lord ! Thou art the Imperishable Being, yet appearest as all things. Thou art imperceptible by the senses, yet art the very Truth. Thou art incomprehensible and immutable. Thou art the all-pervading hidden Essence. Lord and Light of the Universe ! Save us from harm.

On that One alone we meditate, to that One alone we offer our worship. To that One alone—the Witness of the universe—we tender our salutations. Unto the One who is our sole Support—the Self-existent Lord, the Vessel of safety in the ocean of existence—we seek refuge.

—MAHANIRVANA TANTRA

SPIRITUAL TALKS WITH SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

[The Swami—who was looked upon by Sri Ramakrishna as his “spiritual son” and was the late President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission—visited Benares in January, 1921. Notes of some of his inspiring conversations held there were taken down by a monastic member in Bengali. They are presented here in translation to our readers.]

THE SWAMI—Is it all right with your religious practices?

S—No Maharaj. With all my efforts, I see there is no spiritual unfoldment. Hence I find no peace of mind. Evidently we are born with evil Samskaras (impressions). And these stand in the way of our spiritual progress.

THE SWAMI—My boy, you shouldn't think so. Practise Japam at the dead of night. If you cannot do it at that time, do it during the early hours of the morning. Perform Purascharana*. Don't be wasting your valuable time any more. Lose yourself in prayer and meditation. All inner truths will come out by themselves, if you practise Sadhana for some time.

The spiritual aspirant should not take much food at night. At first take three-fourths of your usual diet. Then reduce the quantity still further to half. In the beginning you may feel some weakness of the body. But the body will be all right after some time, and will remain active and in perfect order.

The Swami next referred to the days of Sadhana he practised in the company of his brother-disciples, and

*Usually implies regular Japam or the repetition of the name of the Deity a prescribed number of times, followed by Homa and other ceremonies. An additional number of Japam is also permissible in place of these ceremonies.

said, “We used to take only a single meal during the whole day and night.”

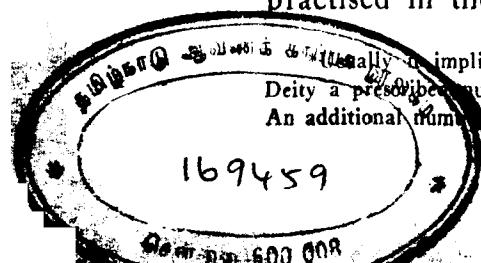
* * * *

THE SWAMI—A Sadhaka should first learn about the spiritual path from some great soul, and then follow it methodically. If he does it haphazardly he cannot achieve much success. Again if he gives it up once, he will have to put forth double the usual efforts in order to gain the desired result. But no endeavour is lost. Lust, anger, etc., slowly go away from him who leads the spiritual life.

Your mind is now covered over by Rajas (activity) and Tamas (inertia). It must be made pure and subtle, and raised to the state of Sattwa (equilibrium). Then you will find pleasure in religious practices and will also feel inclined to devote more and more time to them. Later on, when the mind will attain to perfect purity, you will naturally keep yourself engaged in spiritual culture all your time. The mind is at present on the gross plane. Consequently it leans towards gross things. But when it becomes awakened, it naturally inclines towards the spiritual. When it becomes subtle its capacity also increases. With its help the aspirant is able to understand the truths about God within a short time.

When you sit for meditation, first think of a blissful Divine form. This will have a soothing effect on your nerves and mind. Otherwise, meditation will become dry and tedious. Think of the form of your Ishtam as smiling and full of bliss.

Do not while away your time any more. Now the senses are strong and must be kept under control. This is no doubt a troublesome task. But practise Sadhana continuously for seven or eight years. You will realise the fruits of the practices yourself, and the peace and bliss thereof. Lady devotees have attained to spiritual illu-



mination. Should you not also strive for it? But women have greater faith than men. That is why they succeed in a comparatively short time. Believe me, the Lord is always with you. If you practise a little, He will extend His helping hand to you. It is He who is protecting us all from miseries and troubles. How unbounded is His grace! How can I describe it to you?

You have been hearing of all these spiritual things. Now realise them. You have done enough of study and reasoning. Now do some spiritual practice. First take up that aspect of God which appeals to you most. And follow your own path of Sadhana. When you realise God through it, you will feel the joy of realising Him also in other aspects and through other paths.

One should meditate on the form of the Ishtam along with Japam. Otherwise Japam does not become effective. If you cannot think of the whole form, think of only a part of it. Begin your meditation by thinking of the "lotus feet" of the Deity. You must try to do it even if you fail in the beginning. Why should you stop until you succeed? Succeed you must. Practice will make everything easy.

Is meditation an easy affair? Remember, it is next only to Samadhi.

Self-surrender and everything else will come from within through Sadhana. Try to leave everything unto the Lord. Resign yourself wholly unto Him.

EDITORIAL NOTES

THE HINDU-MOSLEM PROBLEM

"THERE exists a mountain-high barrier between the Hindu and the Mohammedan communities. They have lived together for the last so many centuries. But still the way of thinking and the doctrines and practices of the one have remained quite unintelligible to the other." Sri Ramakrishna made a bare statement of fact when he said this nearly four decades ago. Communal quarrels and dissensions, which are disturbing the peace of the land in modern times, were practically unknown in those days. The members of the two communities lived together in apparent peace and amity, as the vast majority still do in most towns and villages. They even visited each other's shrines and took part in each other's festivals and celebrations. The signs of a cultural synthesis were manifest more in the days of Sri Ramakrishna than they are at present. But this harmony was not based on secure foundations. There was practically no union of hearts beating to the same spiritual tune. Sri Ramakrishna, with the unerring vision of a prophet that he was, clearly detected the wide differences in views and temperaments between the followers of the two rival faiths. And not only this. He also showed in his own life how the obstacles can be removed and inter-communal union established on the bed-rock of cultural unity.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S LOVE FOR ISLAM

It was at the feet of his great Master that Swami Vivekananda learnt to understand and love Islam. "I love our Mohammedans," he said once to his disciple, Sister Nivedita. On being asked as to how he imbibed this feeling, the Swami gave the direct reply that it must have been due to the training he received under his Guru—Sri Ramakrishna—who had a unique method of his own. He wanted to attain to God-realisation through Islam. He took formal initiation from a Mussalman Fakir, dressed like a Mohammedan, repeated the holy name of Allah, said his prayers regularly, realised God by following the Islamic path of devotion, and proclaimed the truth that the same Eternal Being "is invoked by some as God, by some as Allah, by some as Hari and by

others as Brahman." But Swami Vivekananda loved the Mohammedans not only because his Master "became Christian and Mohammedan and Vaishnava by turns" but also because they were the dear children of his Motherland. The Mussalman invaders did not come to India in a body as freebooters to carry off her priceless treasures for enriching foreign lands. They came to make India their permanent home. Some of them were no doubt religious fanatics and tried to spread their faith by fire and sword, by persecutions and forcible conversions. But the majority of the new-comers, while they tenaciously retained their faith, also adapted themselves to the old Indian civilisation and accepted the administrative system of the land. They undoubtedly introduced an alien civilisation in India, but they enriched at the same time India's culture as a whole, and her art and architecture, music and literature in particular. They became children of the soil in every sense of the term. Very truly did Swami Vivekananda once remark to a disciple—"Shah Jehan would have turned in his grave to hear himself called a 'foreigner'."

VEDANTA BRAIN AND ISLAM BODY

Swami Vivekananda—the patriot-saint—always dreamt of a united, rejuvenated India. "For our own Motherland," he wrote to a Mohammedan admirer, "a junction of the two great systems, Hinduism and Islam—Vedanta brain and Islam body—is the only hope. I see in my mind's eye the future perfect India rising out of this chaos and strife, glorious and invincible, with Vedanta brain and Islam body." The unity which the Swami speaks of is to be based not on the material concerns of life but on the spiritual synthesis of Hinduism and Islam, of which his Master was a veritable embodiment. In the exchange and assimilation of mutual ideals and in the recognition of the common spiritual interests alone he saw the possibility of a Hindu-Moslem unity which is undoubtedly an essential factor in Indian national regeneration. "Nationalism in India," declared the Swami, "must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces." There cannot possibly be any other basis for a union of hearts in the case of the Indian people who, be they Hindu or Mohammedan, Christian or Zoroastrian, still look upon religion as the keynote of the music of their life, individual and collective. It is absolutely necessary for us to bear in mind that in all movements for unification greater stress should be laid on inner than on extraneous bonds, on positive and abiding than on negative and

changing points of contact. Love for common material interests and hatred for the common enemy standing in the way of their realisation may be all right as a cheap expediency in bringing about a temporary solidarity. But the motives themselves contain the seed of disruption, which may germinate any moment self-interest is hurt. Union to be permanent must under all circumstances be allied to the permanent values of life. It can be securely based only on the synthesis of religious culture which both the Hindu and Mohammedan communities hold nearest to their heart.

SYNTHESIS OF VEDANTA AND ISLAM

Swami Vivekananda was the apostle of the religion universal as realised and preached by his Master. As such he was a great admirer of the democratic spirit and vitalising powers of Islam. He rejoiced to see how the religion of the Prophet of Arabia approached the ideals of equality in the plane of workaday life and how it exalted the social rights of the low-born more than any other faith. He marvelled to see again how it succeeded, as Sister Nivedita puts it, "in conserving and developing, in too gentle a race, the ideals of organised struggle and resistance". But Islam, as he also noticed, usually lacks the higher idealism and catholicity and toleration of the Vedanta, and tries to limit human brotherhood within the four walls of its creed. The Swami was also fully conscious of the defects and merits of Hinduism. "No religion on earth", he remarked, "preaches the dignity of humanity in such a lofty strain as Hinduism, and no religion on earth treads upon the necks of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism." But the defect, as the Swami also pointed out, lay not in the grand ideals but in the want of their practical application. Our present-day Hinduism is very rigid in social matters, but in higher religious life it allows a freedom that cannot be even dreamt of by any other religion. It allows to some extent invidious distinctions among the members of its own fold but it is much more tolerant,—tolerant to a fault as some people say—towards aliens than any other faith. The strength of Islam lies in its practicality. The greatness of the Vedanta—the essence of Hinduism—lies in its spiritual idealism, in its Adwaitism which again in the words of Swami Vivekananda "is the last word of religion and thought and the only position from which one can look upon all religions and sects with love." The dream of the Swami was to combine the universal ideals as held by the

Vedanta with the democratic practices as realised by Islam. The Vedanta must be more practical. Islam should be more universal. This is what he means when he says—"Without the help of practical Islam, theories of Vedantism, however fine and wonderful they may be, are entirely valueless to the vast mass of mankind. We want to lead mankind to the place where there is neither the Vedas, nor the Bible, nor the Koran; yet this has to be done by harmonising the Vedas, the Bible and the Koran. Mankind ought to be taught that religions are but the varied expressions of the *religion* which is Oneness, so that each may choose the path that suits him best."

CULTURAL UNITY—THE SOLUTION

The real solution of our Hindu-Moslem problem lies in cultural unity. But this does not imply the fostering of a form of hybridism in religious life, or of a mere fanciful eclecticism which is likely to destroy the very soul as also the distinctive features of the two religions. It means on the other hand a proper understanding and appreciation of both the Aryan and Semitic cultures, and a harmonious blending of idealism and practicality, of extensity and intensity in both of them. Thus alone can be removed the "mountain-high barrier" which separates the Hindus from the Mussalmans. At present we are living in days when bigoted theologians are trying to prove the superiority of their own, to other peoples' faiths, traditions and customs. Narrow-minded political self-seekers are claiming for their respective communities special privileges which they want to deny to others. Fanatical preachers and scribes are poisoning the minds of the people by their inflammatory and rancorous speeches and writings. We certainly stand now in greater need than ever before of all beneficent agencies that can dispel the clouds of ignorance and suspicion rising in the minds of both the Hindus and Mussalmans, and can bring about a better understanding and more cordial relation between them. It is, however, a happy sign of the times that at least some thoughtful members of both the communities are realising this necessity. "Living close together, as they are, for centuries in India," observes a cultured Moslem writer—Mr. Wahed Hasain—in a recent number of the Modern Review, "it is rather strange that Hindus and Moslems should possess such an imperfect knowledge of what is contained in their respective scriptures. . . . The result of such ignorance is that each community fails to make a proper estimate of the grand universal

truth which the highest thinkers and the best minds of every nation have been striving to attain Beneath the surface of outward ceremonies and practices, lie embedded the gems of truth which, when discovered, shed eternal lustre and dispel doubt and darkness from the mind. But such gems must be found out and laid bare to the eyes before people can be asked to appreciate their real value."

GOD OF THE UPANISHAD AND KORAN

The sages of Upanishadic India realised the same Infinite, Incomprehensible, Supreme Being that was revealed to Mohammed and other Semitic seers of Truth. This the above-mentioned writer of "Cultural Unity—Ethical Teaching of the Quran and the Upanishads" clearly shows by means of apt quotations. The Upanishads declare—"God is indeed one and has no second. He is immortal and without form or figure, omnipresent, pervading external and internal objects, unborn, without breath or individual mind. The supreme Being, free from all stain, devoid of figure or form and entirely pure, the light of all lights, resides in the heart, his resplendently excellent seat. He is great and all-sustaining for on him rests all existence such as those that move, those that breathe, those that twinkle and those that do not. God being eternal existence, the universe and whatsoever exists, exists and proceeds from Him." The Koran too proclaims the same truth in much the same manner: "There is no deity except one Being—Allah. He is of pure essence, free from all impurities, free from all defects, self-sufficient, self-subsisting, self-effulgent, light of all lights, possessing splendour and glory, self-dependent and ever existing, an ever-living God, omniscient, omnipresent, imperishable even when all comes to nought. He is beyond all attributive description. He pervades the universe and His knowledge extends over all. He created at the beginning and He watches everything and keeps everything within knowledge." Men of realisation speak of very much the same experiences. Whether theologians interpret them from the standpoint of monotheism or monism is another matter.

KABIR'S AND NANAK'S MESSAGE OF HARMONY

The impact of Islam and Hinduism brought into existence a great religious movement which effected a grand spiritual synthesis of Hinduism and Islam. The great leaders of this

movement, particularly Kabir and Nanak, preached by their life and thought the fundamental unity of the two faiths. Kabir sang—

“O God, whether Allah or Ram, I live by Thy name,
O Lord, show kindness unto me.

Hari dwelleth in the south, Allah hath His place in
the west.

Search in Thy heart, search in the heart of hearts;
there is His peace and abode.”

Guru Nanak, too, proclaimed the same ideals of harmony and toleration—“He alone is a true Hindu whose heart is just, and he only is a good Mohammedan whose life is pure. Be true and thou shalt be free. . . . God will not ask man of what race he is. He will ask what he has done.” Again he says—“Love the saints of every faith. Put away your pride. Remember, the essence of religion is meekness and sympathy.” So far as the essentials are concerned, there is very little difference between religion and religion. Are not the five principles of Islam,—belief in God, in Divine revelation and in the life to come, prayer to God and charity,—the principles of Hinduism also? Are not the noble virtues—fearlessness, purity of heart, charity, uprightness and compassion to beings and non-covetousness—spoken of in the Bhagavat Gita as divine attributes, praised and prized by the pious Mussalmans also? Really, as Guru Nanak has said—“To him the delusion of whose heart is gone, Hindus and Mussalmans are the same.” Thus the real solution of our communal question lies in cultural unity, a fact strongly emphasised by our prophets and saints, ancient and modern.

DAWN OF CULTURAL UNITY

A new era of cultural unity is dawning upon the world. Everywhere there is being raised a protest against the perversion of religious truths by the narrow-minded Mulla and the bigoted Hindu priest. “The Mullas have done,” observes a writer in the Islamic World, “tremendous harm to the cause of Islam. They have invariably created difficulties in the path of reform. They have disfigured the beautiful teachings of the Holy Prophet, and made them disgusting. They have twisted the simple tenets of Islam to serve their selfish ends.” What is true of the fanatical Mulla is also true of the ignorant Hindu priest. Anyway, there is now an almost

universal demand for the liberal interpretation of religion. And theologians and missionaries are being forced to meet this demand, if not for the sake of truth, at least for the sake of the temporal considerations of life. The sledge-hammer blows of materialism are pulverising the encrustations of dead forms and ceremonies which threaten to kill the spirit of religion. People are no doubt losing to some extent the intense faith, sometimes verging on fanaticism, which their forefathers used to possess. What will be the result of this loss of faith?—Many ask this question. At least in the case of the majority of people, the words of Tolstoy will prove true—“The result will be. . . . that the religious wisdom of the whole world will become accessible and intelligible to them. People will grow up and develop with unperverted understanding and feelings. Having discarded a teaching accepted credulously, people will order their relations towards God reasonably in conformity with their knowledge; and will recognise the moral obligations that flow from that relation.” May we be able to save ourselves from the hands of the theologians who delight in distorting the truth! And may we try to learn the highest ideals of the synthetic religion from the lives of our mystics—our Kabirs, Nanaks and Sri Ramakrishnas—our saints and sages—our living scriptures! If we can do that, not only Hindu-Moslem unity, but the unity of the followers of all religions will be an accomplished fact in no time. May we all strive for that!

ÆSTHETICS AND RELIGION

BY SWAMI GHANANANDA

I

WELL has it been said by a poet that ‘a thing of beauty is a joy for ever’. Man possesses a keen sense of the beautiful and instinctively appreciates it. We glory in the beauty of the sun and moon and stars, the hills and woods and streams, the foliage and flowers and fruits. We delight in the dulcet sounds of music, the graceful rhythm of songs, and the mute eloquence of painting and architecture. We see beauty in life and nature around us. It casts a spell over ‘even the tenderest babe in arms’. It has a charm for all mankind.

Though we all feel satisfaction in the contemplation of beauty, we feel it is a stroke of temerity to define it. It has

been recorded of St. Augustine that he remarked of time, "What is it? If unasked, I know; if you ask me, I know not." In a similar way, if unasked, we all know what beauty is; but when we are asked to express its nature, we find that words fail us. It is beyond all analysis. We cannot say it has a material origin. It cannot result from a mere mechanical manipulation of atoms and molecules. That it is something divine we imply, when we speak of the beauty of virtue or of a noble life or of God. But when we try to conceive of it or contemplate it, we realise that we lose ourselves in its thought. It brings about a little of that self-forgetfulness which great seers and mystics used to experience when they felt inspired by divine thoughts occasioned by the sight of something beautiful like the blue sky or the passing cloud.

When the great philosopher Kant called the feeling for the beautiful 'a disinterested delight,' he expressed a psychological fact the accuracy of which we can test by self-observation. When the idea of beauty passes through our mind, we are raised from the world of petty interests or selfish ideas to a higher plane where the mind leaves its old moorings and feels an unearthly joy. It is in this power of beauty to ennoble and purify the human mind that its divine nature lies. The feeling for beauty should on no account be identified with what is pleasurable, because pleasure results from a gratification of the senses or a titillation of the nerves, whereas beauty is of the soul.

II

It is interesting to study the conditions of the mind when it feels and contemplates the beautiful. Such a study will reveal how æsthetic contemplation can help us in going beyond this world to the threshold of the other which is above time, space and causation. It is but natural that an explanation for this can be sought for only in psychology and metaphysics.

The functionings of the mind can be classed into two kinds: one is its outward workings and the other its inward activities. These have been designated in Sanskrit as Pravritti and Nivritti. In the man in the street, who has not tasted to any high degree the 'sweetness of light and culture' and whose enjoyment consists almost entirely in the senses, the mind is functioning in the path of Pravritti. Says the Katha Upanishad:

पराञ्च खानि व्यतृणत्स्वयम्भूस्तस्मात्पराङ् पश्यति नान्तरात्मन् ।

"The self-existent (God) has rendered the senses (so) defective that they go outward and hence man sees the external and not the internal self".

Such a mind is turned towards the world of external phenomena. But in the cultured and educated man of refined tastes and higher ideal, who is a seeker after Truth, the mind is working in the Nivritti path. As the Sankhya Karika has it—

प्रकृतिं पश्यति पुरुषः प्रेक्षकवत् अवस्थितः सुस्थः ॥

"The Purusha (Soul) beholds Prakriti (nature), spectator-like, standing aloof, well-standing." Higher æsthetics which inspires us with religious feelings and sentiments helps us in withdrawing the mind from the path of Pravritti and making it tread the path of Nivritti.

There are two standpoints from which to investigate the world by abstract thought, and these are the empirical and the transcendental. When we confine ourselves to the empirical standpoint, we regard things in the form in which they appear to us, that is, as they are reflected in our consciousness. From the transcendental standpoint we try to discover the inner reality or the essence of things. In the empirical view, the subject and object are always connected by nearer or remoter relations of time, space and causation. It is in the consciousness of these relations that our 'interest' in the objects consists. Æsthetic perception is possible when the consciousness of these relations and along with it also the possibility of an interested pleasure is transcended, with an extraordinarily intense activity of the mind. When this happens, both subject and object 'face each other, lifted as it were, above time, space and causality,' that is above the condition of finite earthly existence. Remarking on the nature of this experience, Dr. Paul Deussen writes— "Here and here alone lies the point of contact between æsthetics and morality. The aim of morality is the negation of individuality, that of æsthetic intuition the temporal forgetting of it. The positive delight of æsthetic contemplation is to us a warrant, that beyond individuality there is not a painless Nothing, but a state the exuberant bliss of which cannot be compared to any earthly feeling of delight." The Sunya-vada (Nihilism) of Buddhism does not realise that the divine bliss of Samadhi (God-communion) is a positive

state. What is negated is only the individuality of the mediator. The Vedanta follows the method of negation (Neti, Neti) as one of the methods of meditation, but the negation is not the negation of the Self but the negation of matter.

The æsthetic phenomenon is a subjective process. The transitory elevation of the mind above individual existence is attained by the contemplating subject being withdrawn by processes in himself from the consciousness of individuality. But this may also be brought about by the contemplated object making us forget all that is finite in its imperfection and limitation. To exercise such an elevating and purifying influence on the mind, the object must be beautiful. And the feeling for beauty is evoked through a strange concurrence of subjective and objective conditions—by a mutual influence of subject and object—which can be explained only on the basis of an original kinship between them. This is in accord with what the Vedanta holds, viz., that the subject and object are both transcended by the Atman or Spirit. Plato describes the very same thing in a mythological way in his *Phaedrus* when he says that it is a contemplation of the Ideas taking place beyond the phenomenal world before birth by which what is spaceless and timeless is expressed in terms of space and time.

III

Thus, in æsthetics, the power of beauty to make man forget his little self enables him to concentrate his mind wholly on the object of æsthetic contemplation within himself. This process subdues all the waves of his mind except the one which is the thought of the object. When such contemplation is continued for a sufficiently long time to make all the foreign waves of thought quiet down and to give greater and greater concentration on the object, the contemplator feels a great joy and calmness of mind. Many poets and artists have had this mood in several moments of their life, but a close study of their writings would show that it is not "the peace which passeth all understanding" of the Bible or the Samadhi of the Indian Yogis. Trances and poetic moods may come and go but they cannot reveal to man that Truth Eternal realising which he becomes illumined. They are but temporary elevations of the mind and cannot destroy the Samskaras (impressions) and Vasanas (tendencies) which stand between the æsthetic contemplator and the ultimate Reality.

Had it been otherwise Shelley would not have written in this strain—

"Oh ! lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud !
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!"

nor Wordsworth in this manner—

"Me this uncharter'd freedom tires ;
I feel the weight of chance desires."

Calm and serene moods which are brought about by an objective vision or subjective contemplation can, however, stimulate in the artist a desire to realise the Beauty which transcends the mind and which therefore is Truth itself.

IV

It is difficult indeed for man to rise to the heights of meditation and realise his Soul. Very few only have been able to accomplish this. But the world's scriptures have recorded instances of rare persons who have crossed this world which is the net-work of time, space and causation. They alone are the genuine artists of the world who have been able to realise Beauty as Truth. Their Vidya (knowledge) is Para (higher). The artists who realise their ideal of beauty and loveliness through the five forms of art—architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry and music—are specialists in Apra (lower) Vidya (knowledge). Life cannot attain its complete fulfilment without the higher knowledge. When the artists sincerely attempt to realise their ideal of beauty through form, sound or colour, they realise that it is difficult of attainment in the objective world and are possessed by a 'divine discontent'. An art-critic calls them 'transcendentalists'. Among them are Leonardo and Ruskin. "To most people, when once their ideal rises to a certain height, thenceforth all execution seems vanity." They feel all works of art to be, at best, mockeries and make-shifts. Tami Koume, the great Japanese artist, declared: "Through my art I ascend a step of the eternal staircase." Indeed it is his doctrine that art's highest function is the transcendence of art. "True art has neither composition nor colour nor canvass: these are the inventions of artists." Art is verily a hand-maid of religion. Art can give us a temporary deliverance from the miseries of life and also inspire us with deep religious sentiments; but religion alone shows us the way of Eternal Freedom.

V

It may be justly said that æsthetics has its fulfilment in Bhakti Yoga or the path of devotion. What the artist does on the canvass or marble, the Bhakti Yogin does in his mind. He takes up some divine form (Ishtam) which he likes most, and directs his whole mind towards it. He worships it, meditates on it and tries to become one with it, as a result of which he attains differing degrees of spiritual realisation which may be dualistic, qualified monistic or monistic. He looks upon God in several relationships—Shanta, Dasya, Sakhya, Vatsalya, and Madhura. Thus human love in its varied forms is made to typify the love Divine, and God becomes master, father, mother, child, friend or lover to the devotee. In terms of dualism, God is outside the devotee; in qualified monism, the devotee realises himself as part of God; and in the highest monism, he and his Beloved are one. Thus the Gopis of Brindaban reached the last stage in their progress when they felt that they became absolutely merged in the object of their worship. Thus “in the end comes the full blaze of the light of love” in which the little self becomes one with infinite love itself, and “man begins thus to be transfigured before the presence of the light of love, and becoming cleansed of all impurities and vain desires of which his heart was more or less full realises at last the beautiful and inspiring truth that Love, Lover and the Beloved are one.”

In the Bhagavatam which is one of the greatest Puranas of the Hindus and is full of echoes from the divine realm of Love and Beauty, Sri Krishna in his spiritual discourses with Uddhava teaches him the way of meditation on God in His personal as well as impersonal aspects. He says—

सुकुमारमभिध्यायेत्सर्वान्गेषु मनो दधत्
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यो मनसाऽऽकृष्य तन्मनः ।
बुद्ध्या सारथिना धीरः प्रणयेन्मयि सर्वतः ॥

One should meditate on this form (meaning His own form) concentrating the mind on all the features. The man of self-control should withdraw the organs from the sense-objects with the help of the mind, and with the intellect as guide, direct the mind to My whole body.

तत्सर्वव्यापकं चित्तमाकृष्यैकत धारयेत् ।
नान्यानि चिन्तयेद्भूयः सुस्मितं भावयेन्मुखम् ॥

Then one should concentrate that mind—distributed all over My body—on one part, and think of the smiling countenance alone and nothing else.

तत्र लब्धपदं चित्तमाकृष्य व्योम्नि धारयेत् ।
तच्च त्यक्त्वा मदारोहो न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥

Drawing the mind which is concentrated on that, one should fix it on the Supreme Cause. Then leaving that too, one should rest on Me (meaning the pure Brahman) and think of nothing whatsoever.

It is meditation of this kind which is enjoined in the Sastras and personal instructions for which can be received from an illumined Guru, that can lead us to the realisation of the Divine Beauty.

We can receive inspiration and stimulus for the contemplation of beauty from any aspect of nature around us, any scene in human life, which enables us to forget ourselves. But great care must be exercised to exclude that which rouses the baser emotions of the mind. Such things as do not call up in us a pure and refined contemplation add one more link to the chain of the worldly life, and instead of delivering us from the “penal servitude of willing” or Samsara, only strengthen our bondage.

VI

Man's adoration of Divine Beauty is expressed through what is known as “mystic literature”—literature produced by those who have had either a realisation of the Truth or at least an intellectual comprehension of it. It reveals to us the struggles that great saints and seers passed through and the severe agonies they suffered before their realising the Ideal, as also the supreme joy and peace they attained after their realisation. The beautiful and inspiring hymns in Sanskrit in praise of the Divine Mother, Rama, Krishna, Siva and other Deities, the poems of Thayumanavar, Appar, Sundaramoorthi, Thirujnana Sambandhar and Manickavasagar in Tamil, the Gita Govinda of Jayadev, the songs of Tukaram, Namadev, Kabir and Nanak, the mystic writings of philosophers like Plato, Socrates, Plotinus and Proclus, of saints like St. Francis of Assisi and Thomas-a-Kempis, of poets like Spenser and Blake, Browning and Thompson—all these contain,

more or less, highly ennobling ideas, elevate the reader's mind, and stimulate in him a desire for the contemplation and realisation of Divine Beauty. The Divine Mother in a Sanskrit hymn has been called कलावती (the Divine Artist) and कलारूपा (of the form of Art), and that art is the best—whether poetry, music, painting, architecture or sculpture—which purifies the mind and helps it in meditation on the Supreme which is declared by the Upanishads as आनन्दरूपममृतं यद्विभाति “The Immortal which shines forth full of bliss” and as शान्तं शिवं सुन्दरम् “Peaceful, Auspicious and Beautiful.” Art must not be content with aiming at perfection of form by merely imitating nature. It must have a spiritual element endowing it with wings with which to soar into the highest empyrean, and in the words of Havell, “bring down to earth something of the beauty of the things above.”

MORAL INSTRUCTION IN SCHOOLS*

BY SWAMI SIDDHESWARANANDA

WHEN Dr. Tagore compared the Indian educational system to the patented tins of imported food-stuff labelled “untouched by hand”, he made a statement on the subject which is nearer the truth than any other. Our present educational system does not afford any scope for the play of human feeling and the influence of intimate personal contact between the teachers and the taught. Education has become almost entirely mechanical. The personal contact of the teachers has rarely anything to do with the accomplishments of a scholastic and collegiate career. The moral urge in the awakening mind of the student finds no channel whatsoever for expression. In short there is no chastening influence on character which is the prime object of all education. The student is not made a *man*. Expert educationists have begun to feel this defect of modern education. They cry halt to this system bringing about the degeneration of the race. Many parents are feeling that their children will grow up better within their homes than in outside educational

*Notes of a lecture delivered in the Training College, Mysore.

institutions. Schools have become mere grinding mills where even the family virtues instinctively imbibed by the child from the cradle and the nursery are as it were mercilessly crushed out. Undue precociousness and in many cases regressions from the elementary moral virtues are the main evils of modern schooling. A teacher with forty boys under him cannot be expected to give his attention to all individually. Even if it were possible, his low salary, weak health and family worries prevent him from spending a few happy hours in the company of his pupils. He has to teach the lessons and play the pedagogue all the year round with huge bundles of note-books and answer-papers to worry him and disturb even the peace of his home. He has to satisfy the inspector who carefully looks into the entries in his notes of lessons but rarely examines the character of the students placed under his charge. It is, however, a very happy sign of the times that the problem of imparting moral instruction in schools has come to the forefront in all educational circles.

Among the students two traits can be noticed generally. One of these is the impressionableness of childhood and the other is the idealism of adolescence. There is a tendency in young minds for hero-worship. Each student wants to emulate the virtues of his master. This tendency of his in his most impressionable age should be properly taken advantage of by the teacher in inducing in him a reverence for the ideals of life which he values most. His emotions and intellect should be given a higher turn which alone can enable the idealism which he possesses to be expressed. The corporate life of the present educational institutions, where for a few hours a crowd of students move with four or five teachers, cannot be expected to fulfil this purpose. Only that institution in which the students and teachers live together can successfully inspire the students with the ideals of the teacher. All schools must be residential institutions maintained with proper discipline and care, and placed under the efficient management of the right sort of teachers.

In the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home in Madras, such an ideal is being realised. All the students live within the premises of the school. The teachers share the social life of the students. Groups of students are directly under the supervision of ward-masters who are themselves teachers of the institution. Whether the students are on the playground, in dining hall, study or dormitory, the teacher

is the friend of the pupils and his presence, instead of being disliked, is very much sought after and welcomed by them ; for he shares with them their juvenile thoughts and feelings. The resident teacher devotes his whole time and attention to the welfare of the students. The entire establishment for the students is under the direct charge of a monk who spares no pains to make the whole institution highly efficient. The monk-in-charge directs the whole working of the institution through his ward-masters and other assistants. He holds before the students their own ideal, for the monk is a Vidyarthin (student) throughout his life. Thus the students have the advantage of receiving a training under a monk, which is so well praised by Evelyn Underhill in her book, *The Life of the Spirit and the Life of To-day*. The institution has, therefore, been able to partly realise the dream of Swami Vivekananda who wanted educational institutions to be placed under the charge of monks. It need hardly be mentioned that the success of the Jesuits in educational work is mostly due to their having properly qualified teachers who devote their whole life to the cause of education.

In the educational institution conducted by the Ramakrishna Mission at Deoghar near Patna the teaching staff is manned entirely by monks. The boys have no special moral instruction classes as such, because a pure atmosphere is kept up in the institution to make it possible for the boys to live and move only in a world of morality. It gives a creative impulse for the students to think, speak and act in healthy ways. This atmosphere we have to prepare as it is more important than the imparting of moral instructions in a formal manner. And how can such an atmosphere be created in our modern institutions ? The students have a knack of adjusting themselves to their surroundings and conforming themselves to the standards set up by their teacher, which unconsciously shape their minds. The teacher should therefore be a man whose life and character are worthy of emulation. For this there must be institutions to train up teachers, and those who are to be admitted for the training must have a genuine love for the teaching profession and must not embrace it merely because they have no other way of earning their livelihood.

Indian students must grow up as Indians. They should not be aliens on their own soil. To them must therefore be imparted the culture of the race by one who is its votary.

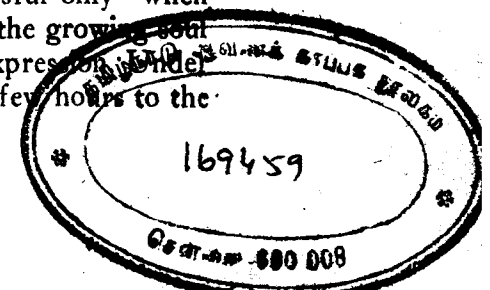
The Indian culture holds up the ideal of morality in an unparalleled way and has a unique way of working out high ideals in the lives of men and women. It has a regulated way of taking one from the lower to the higher truths concerning life and its problems. It recognises the differences in the mental levels of people and so regulates its teachings that one can rise to higher and higher planes of life. The teacher should be one who can perceive these differences, and group students according to their different mental levels. He cannot frame one code of conduct for all his students.

Modern psychology has proved that sometimes the behaviour of students, which may appear to be very reprehensible and is generally taken serious objection to by teachers, would yield to a different interpretation if the teacher analyses the motives behind it. The wonders of the child mind are indeed very strange. The responsibility of the teacher is therefore as serious as that of the surgeon in his operation theatre. The tendency to lie, pilfer, tease or bully that we find in students cannot be explained away by references to their conscious plane. It has its origin in the sub-conscious, and can be corrected in an effective way only if the teacher can take the students into his confidence and help them to open their hearts to him. If, on the other hand, severe punishments are meted out, they may temporarily check the mind of the pupils only to make them worse and make them manifest their evil tendencies more strongly than before. The teacher must be able to educate their instincts and sub-conscious tendencies.

Says Evelyn Underhill—"By education I mean that deliberate adjustment of the whole environment of a growing creature which surrounds it with the most favourable influences and educes all its powers, giving it the most helpful conditions for its growth and development. Education should be the complete preparation of a growing thing for the fulness of life involving the evolution and balanced training of all its faculties, physical, mental and moral. It should train and refine senses, instinct, intellect, will and feeling." If the education that is imparted at the present day had been up to this mark, the very question for special moral instructions in schools would not have arisen.

The education of students can be successful only when the work is conducted in environments where the growing soul will receive the necessary incentive for self-expression. Under the present system the student is taken for a few hours to the

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class-room where he is influenced by moral values which are totally different from those in his own home. The school rooms generally form the place where the repressed feelings of the students find vent; for he knows he is not under the vigilance of his parents and he can open, as it were, all the valves of his mind. This is how the young students learn all the vulgar expressions of their mother tongue, freely use them amongst friends, and, if they are not taken proper care of by their parents, fall into bad company which ruins both their body and mind.

As the young boy will be very inquisitive, the teacher should give him satisfactory answers to his questions. No intellectual difficulty should be left uncleared, nor its solution put off. For this the teacher must be a gifted man. He must have simplicity, enthusiasm, sympathy and a vigorous sense of humour.

In the period of transition from childhood to adolescence, the growing boy is to be guided by strong moral checks. The teacher should help his boys to live at high levels of thought and to act with noble impulses. Good teachers and good boys are of supreme value to the state. Morality cannot be taught but caught. The only way to keep the minds of the students elevated is by creating in them an intense interest in life. And the student's life is lived in the games-field, class-room and lodgings. He must be encouraged in any æsthetic taste he may possess. He must be made to feel the pulsations of life around him, be it social, industrial or political. He must be made to realise that on the right living of his life as a student depends his growing up as a member of a healthy society and citizen of the state. He must be kept intensely active. Those students who have disappointments written on their faces or are effeminate and shy are a grave danger to the other students with whom they come into contact, as they are most likely to spread their infectious mental disease. Such boys should be specially attended to, and all possible efforts should be made to make their lives bright and happy. In the mischievous student, there is a good material which requires but a little chiselling. One has only to provide a channel for the flow of his exuberant animal spirits.

It is the experience of many educationists that setting apart special hours in the class room for moral or spiritual instructions has not been very fruitful. The student does

not bring to these classes a willing mind. He has to be coaxed up to keep himself straight and attentive. This may be of value when the conditions for success are present. But in the absence of such conditions, they are likely to do even positive harm; for the student may come to have a prejudice against these classes, which it is difficult to remove in a child of tender years. In such cases it is better for the teacher to avail himself of the opportunity of introducing intelligent talks on morality and religion through lessons in history, literature and science. The present lecturer remembers well, how, when he was a student, the teacher used to explain passages from Longfellow's Builders and make it possible for the whole class to enthusiastically discuss with him many a moral and spiritual problem which confronts life. Such classes left a permanent impression on the plastic minds of the young students. Had there been a special class for moral instructions, the talks of the teacher might not have gone home into the pupils' minds, for they would have come to such classes with a yawning mouth. Moral instruction classes as such are not to be condemned but they fall flat unless a favourable environment is prepared for them.

The moral element is a common feature of all religions, and therefore to a class composed of students belonging to several religions, we can easily make an appeal on the moral side. It is always better to leave aside the ceremonial and mythological aspects of religion and hold up before the students only the moral element in it. The religion taught to the student must not be the religion of the rector or theologian. It should be a man-making process by which the student can be helped to build a sound body and mind, cultivate self-reliance and form a strong character. The relationship between the teacher and the taught must be enduring and capable of serving the highest interest in life. This can be achieved by making the idea of God dominant in the juvenile consciousness, by imparting such teachings for their physical and mental improvement as would be compatible with this idea, and by removing all obstacles to the discharging of their social duties.

In every school of the residential type, there must be a temple or worship room which can help the student to purify and strengthen his emotional nature by means of worship, devotional music, tasteful decorations and so forth which have an immense influence on his mind. If we do not give him

an opportunity to express his emotions in this way, he may try to satisfy himself by attending cinema, theatre, and concerts. Music has the power of purifying the emotions, and when pressed into the service of devotion it will exercise an elevating influence on the mind. But care should be taken to avoid sentimentalism of all kinds.

The most impressionable part of a student's life is spent in the class room. So the value of the training he receives from his teachers and in a corporate life cannot be over-estimated. In ancient India which had many Gurukulas, the need for imparting special moral instructions had not been felt, as Dharma formed a potent factor in educational life. The present educational system is fatal to our Dharma, as it teaches the young generation the culture of an alien race.

Vedanta recognises that each soul is potentially divine. We have only to remove the veils of ignorance hiding the divinity within. Therefore it was that Swami Vivekananda defined education as the manifestation of the perfection already in man. The teacher's function consists only in removing the obstacles to that manifestation. He cannot make a boy grow but can only help him in the process of growth by creating favourable environments.

Herbert Spencer has grouped the essentials of a right education under four headings: firstly, self-preservation in all its aspects—how to keep the body and the mind healthy and efficient, how to be self-supporting, and how to protect ourselves from external dangers in our environments; secondly, the training of the growing boy in his duties of life—parent-hood and its responsibilities in their widest sense; thirdly, the preparation of the student to take his place as a member of the society in which he is born; and lastly, handing on to him the cultural refinements which the past has given to us. It can be said without any exaggeration that the Indian ideal of life based on Dharma recognises all these essentials of a true education. All the educational experiments of the future should endeavour to preserve the Dharma of the race and produce men truly endowed with the manhood of the race—that manhood for which the Indian ideal has stood from time out of mind.

RAMAKRISHNA—THE GOD-MAN OF MODERN INDIA*

BY PROF. T. L. VASWANI

INDIA HAS THE BREAD OF LIFE

IT has been often said that India is a nation of idol-worshippers. India, I humbly submit, is a nation of hero-worshippers. And her highest heroes are the seers and saints. Therefore is India still the hope of humanity. Therefore, in spite of her subjection and poverty, India has still the bread of life for the nations.

TEMPLE OF THE FUTURE

One of her seers and saints was Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Born in 1836, he passed away in 1886. Not long was his earth-life. Only 50 years! But he belongs to the Temple of the Future. Not yet have we known him well. Not yet has the world realised his true greatness. He is of the race of the Rishis.

LINKS IN THE CHAIN

I was a boy when he passed away. But later years—of search and struggle, of thought and meditation—have woven round his blessed name a chain of reverence. And there are three links in that chain. The first link is Sadhu Hiranand of Sindh. When studying in the Presidency College, Calcutta, he met Paramahansa from time to time at Dakshineswar. Hiranand served the saint. Hiranand came back to Sindh in 1884.

PROBLEM OF SUFFERING

Hiranand is in Hyderabad when he hears that Paramahansa is ill and has been removed to Calcutta for medical treatment. Hiranand comes all the way from Sindh to see and serve the saint. It is April 22, 1886, when Hiranand meets Paramahansa, then suffering from the "clergyman's sore throat," which developed into cancer. Hiranand can't

*Summary of an address given at the Bihar Young Men's Institute, Patna.

bear to see the saint suffer. In his tender, sweet voice, Hiranand asks: "Why does the *Bhakta* of God suffer?" A significant question! He may understand why the wicked suffer. But the just, the pure, the *Bhaktas*, the saints—why suffer they? Is the universe unjust or un-moral? Hiranand's question is significant. Yet more significant is Ramakrishna's answer. He looks at Hiranand and says: "Only the body suffers—you understand?" Yes, suffering is meaningful *Maya*! It is *Sthula Sarira* which suffers, decays, dies, not we, the *Atman*. That is incorruptible, immortal, destined for life in Love ineffable.

A GROUP-SOUL

My next link in the chain of reverence I spoke of is Sri Keshub Chandra Sen. Studying him, I was drawn more and more to Sri Ramakrishna. Keshub linked me with Paramahansa. I do not think of them as separate. The twain were a group-soul.* Each loved the other, for each moved in a common spiritual atmosphere; each was a prophet of God-consciousness. One day Paramahansa comes to the Brahmo Samaj; Keshub is giving a discourse; he sees Paramahansa, leaves the discourse unfinished, comes down from the pulpit and greets the saint. Keshub's love was beautiful. And how tender Ramakrishna's! Keshub is expected at Dakshineswar. Paramahansa hears some sound and asks a disciple to go and see if Keshub is coming. The disciple returns to report that Keshub is not come. Sound again! "Is Keshub coming?"—asks Paramahansa again. "No," answers the disciple. Then says Paramahansa: "The rustling of leaves makes Radha exclaim 'Oh! here comes my Beloved.' Keshub always tantalises me thus!" What tender love in these beautiful words! Keshub wrote and spoke of Paramahansa as "the Saint of Dakshineswar." And Paramahansa hearing some of his disciples criticise Keshub

*Speaking of Sri Ramakrishna's relation with Sri Keshub Chandra Sen, Prof. Max Muller observes in his "Ramakrishna—His Life and Sayings": "Keshub was leading a life of prayer and seclusion. Ramakrishna heard of him, went to see him. Keshub was so much impressed with the simple words, full of the highest knowledge, the wonderful love of God, and the deep trances of Sri Ramakrishna, that he began to come often and often to him..... A strong and deep love grew up between the two, and Keshub's whole life became changed till, a few years later, he proclaimed his views of religion as the New Dispensation, which was nothing but a partial representation of the truths which Ramakrishna had taught for a long time."—Ed., V. K.

at a time when a big storm of criticisms was blowing over Keshub's head, said: "Don't criticise Keshub, he is one of the greatest *Bhaktas* of God." On another occasion when a disciple asked, "Sir! What do you think of Keshub?" the Paramahansa answered: "Oh! he is a saint of God!" Keshub's illness in 1883 made Paramahansa very anxious and he prayed to the Divine Mother for Keshub's recovery: "Whom shall I talk to, Mother, if Keshub is withdrawn?"

THE BEAUTIFUL ROSE

A third link in the claim was Upadhaya Brahmabandhava, one of the ablest interpreters of the ancient ideal, one of the purest patriots history has known. He lived for India; he died for India. He spoke to me often of Paramahansa, gave me incident after incident of his life, repeated to me some of his sayings. "How beautiful the rose—say the English-educated. But they do not say—How divine the rose! They do not see in the rose the beauty of my Mother!" So said Ramakrishna one day. This story was told me by Upadhaya Brahmabandhava. I do not know if this story has gone into the books about Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.*

BROTHERHOOD OF THE NATION

Years ago I visited the Belur Math. A kind Sannyasin greeted me. "Whence do you come?" he asked. "From Sindh," I said. "From the Province of Hiranand?" he

*Similar ideas appear in slightly different forms in some of the books about Sri Ramakrishna. The original Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna in Bengali by M. contains many such passages of which we translate the following for our readers. In it Sri Ramakrishna addressing some devotee says at one place: "Do you know the way in which worldly people speak of God? It is like this A modern educated young man picks up a flower while walking in a garden and remarks to his friend—'What a beautiful flower God has made!'"

"Why do people speak so much of the Lord's glory? Everybody is struck with wonder to see the rich man's garden containing beautiful plants and flowers. But how many want to know the owner? Very few..... However, he who seeks God—the Author of everything—with a yearning heart finds Him."

Describing one of his visions of the Divine, Sri Ramakrishna thus says in another place: "(After the realisation of Brahman) I began to see God in everything. One day I was plucking Vilwa leaves. A little of the bark from the branch came out along with the leaves. I saw the tree was permeated by the Divine Spirit and I felt pain. When I went to pick up grass, I saw again the same vision. One day I was about to pluck flowers. It seemed, as if the plants and flowers had been already offered in worship to the Virat Purusha and were adorning His head."—Ed., V. K.

exclaimed. And I saw the beautiful room of Vivekananda and another little room in which were brought together some of the things associated with the life of Paramahansa. Then I learnt of his reverence for all religions, all Prophets. Yes, he loved Muhammad, and in his room at Dakshineswar incense was burnt before a picture of Jesus. In this message of reverence for all Prophets and the synthesis of all religions is the hope of the future. It is India's message to the nations. Muhammad is mine—saith the soul of India. And Jesus is mine! And the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity, I humbly submit, will be solved in no external way. A human, spiritual solution is the only adequate solution. Muhammad is yours, ye sons of the Rishis, and Krishna is yours, ye children of Islam! The different religions are different expressions of the one Divine Life. On this faith may you build a mighty brotherhood of the nations against which the dark forces of reaction and imperialism may battle in vain.

"A BROOMSTICK"

Thinking of Paramahansa, I think something of St. Theresa, something of St. Francis of Assisi. I love to think of Ramakrishna as the Child-man of the 19th century. And as a psychic, he should be an object of deep interest and study to students of new psychology and physico-psychological science and indeed to all who would study scientifically the hidden Self of man!

A spiritual giant, he always felt he was a simple child of the Divine Mother. To a rich man the saint explains how the name of God purifies and strengthens. The rich man is annoyed; who is this poor "Paramahansa" to teach him—the man of wealth? He says to Ramakrishna: "Have you been able to know everything?" And the saint with folded hands and in a child-like manner answers: "I do not know everything; but a broomstick, unclean in itself, may yet sweep a little corner and make it clean!" A logician proud of his learning comes to the saint and asks: "Knowledge, knower and object known: what is the difference between them?" The saint replies: "I do not know the subtleties of logic. I only know that I am a child of the Mother Divine!" Ramakrishna was always so simple, so artless, so spontaneous, so humble, so child-like! Therefore he lives. Therefore his influence is growing day by day. Your big man distinguished to-day, is

extinguished to-morrow. But Sri Ramakrishna has inspired a flame and a message for generations unborn.

INDIA THE MOTHER OF SAGES

India! My Motherland! The very voices of the Infinite are in the atmosphere around Thee! And in Thy Heart is the memory of many a mighty sage who hath communed with Eternity. One such was Ramakrishna. He despised not the earth, but deemed it sacred as a playground of the Deity. He conquered the flesh and revered the body as a temple of the soul. He loved God with all the yearning of his soul. "Wherein lies the strength of a seeker?" he asked. And he himself answered the question thus: "The strength of the seeker is in his tears." Yes, tears are a treasure—tears of love and longing. As Sri Ramakrishna said: "Call Him constantly." Many call Him, but with the lips only. Many, again, there are who call Him but with the mind only. And the voice of the mind is weak. He cometh in answer to the call of the heart. For dear to Him, the Lord of Love, is every soul that truly seeketh Him, and more precious than the purity of the pious and more fragrant than the virtue of the gods is the garland of tears placed at His Lotus-Foot by a broken human heart.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

A CRUSADE AGAINST SCIENCE

It is amusing as well as interesting to note that a crusade is being carried on against science by several bigoted theologians in some of the Southern States of America. The well-known 'monkey trial' in Tennessee in which Prof. J. T. Scopes was prosecuted and fined in July last for teaching his students the theory of evolution in accordance with the curriculum of studies in the State is still green in the memory of all. A ban of more recent date issued by another state in U. S. A., which on the strength of a bill signed by the Governor of Mississippi forbids teachers in State-supported schools, under a penalty of \$ 500 and a cancellation of contract, to teach that "man is ascended or descended from the lower order of animals" bears another eloquent testimony to the existing conflict between science and dogma in the Southern American States. The proposals of some back-country men to inflict the horrid punishment of "burning at the stake" on the innocent victims, which, however, was fortunately rejected, cannot but excite the contemptuous laughter of anyone who has the smallest iota of common sense.

As the Times wrote sometime back Texas, Mississippi and Tennessee form a trio of Southern States where the teaching of evolution is prohibited. Texas as yet has not passed any law against evolution, but the State Text-book Commission recently ordered all references to evolution to be eliminated from all text-books, all definitions of evolution from dictionaries, and all chapters from standard works on biology. The City Board of Education of Atlanta, Georgia strictly prohibits the teaching of evolution while Kentucky is organising a vigorous campaign against Darwinian doctrines. Commenting on these fanatic and foolish steps to check the progress of scientific thought, nay even to throttle it, a writer observes: "That similar human props were always employed to stave off the onward march of science and enlightenment, thus trying to keep the dogmas of the Bible immune from their impact is something with which a student of cultural history is familiar and the fate which they share is also a familiar phenomenon."

How can we reconcile the scientific theory of evolution with religion? The basis for such harmony is furnished by the philosophy of the Hindus.

Science does not say whether "the tendency to vary" of evolution is an indefinite process or is limited by a definite law. The Hindu philosophers hold that evolution is not a process which goes on for ever. They go a step beyond modern science and say that there is nothing in the end of evolution which was not also in its beginning. Prior to evolution what is evolved must have existed in an involutioned state; thus every evolution is preceded by an involution. According to this, the intelligence of man or the perfection of a Christ or a Buddha exists already in the most minute protoplasm, though in a latent condition. It is gradually unfolding itself by an inward urge which is the cause of the tendency to vary, and the process of unfoldment is effected by slow and gradual change of physical bodies accompanied by a greater and greater "release of consciousness." Thus there is evolution of matter and along with it also the manifestation of spirit which is covered up in the folds of matter.

Evolution was known in India not less than four thousand years ago. The great Indian philosopher and scientist, Patanjali, refers to it in his Yoga Sutras as the process of "the infilling of nature." He means that the struggle for evolution removes all obstacles to it and in the highest man divinity manifests itself by its own nature, just as water flows of itself to a field when the impediments are cleared. The urge for evolution is therefore from within a being, and not from without.

That along with the evolution of physical forms, there is also a corresponding evolution of intelligence or a progressive release of consciousness has not been sufficiently recognised by Darwin. What happens to the instinct in the animal and to the intelligence in man at the time of death? And where do they come from? Bergson is of opinion that instinct, intelligence and intuition or the divine faculty of saints and sages are three independent faculties finding each its highest expression in ants, bees and wasps, in man and in God-men.

He says they become extinct with the death of these beings. But the explanation given by Vedanta is more logical and rational. It tells us that the instinct of the animal evolves into intelligence in man and this again evolves into intuition in the seers of Truth.

The Christian theologians therefore need not see in the theory of evolution a strong and merciless enemy of theirs who will break into pieces the citadel of their faith. Man is made in the image of God. He comes from Him and goes to Him at the end of his life's journey. What is called evolution is only of matter, and the manifestation of spirit is its concomitant.

Religion can grow only in an atmosphere of freedom. What is the use of maintaining pet theological dogmas which are incompatible with science and prejudicial to the interests of religion? Religion in its true sense is not a contradiction but a fulfilment of science.

BROTHERHOOD IN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

In the course of an interesting article on Universal Brotherhood in Islam and Christianity in a recent number of the Islamic Review, a writer says: "The democracy which is so much immortalised in the pages of Plato and Aristotle as having originated in the ancient Greeks reveals itself as an insignificant and negligible factor to one who investigates the true underlying principles of the practical democracy of Islam." Continuing he observes also that the democracy of Europe or America or of the self-governing colonies of the British Empire is firmly consolidated on materialism and has none other ulterior motive than the aggrandisement of the weaker classes, and besides, it lacks that basic element of humanity on which alone can be reared the fabric of the practical brotherhood of mankind.

Describing the conditions that obtain at the present day in several countries of the West the writer cites instances the veracity of which cannot be challenged, such as the oppression of the Christian Negro by the American Christian, the pitiable plight of the South African Indian, the barring of the doors of Australia against her own coloured children and the atrocities committed by the Greeks in Asia Minor and by the French in Damascus. This lack of the sense of solidarity and feeling of brotherhood is manifest not only in the field of politics but also in the spheres of religion, society and commerce.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the followers of Islam are knit together by stronger ties of brotherhood than the followers of many other religions. The history of Islam bears ample testimony to the fact that its adherents have been able to realise the practical idea of brotherhood as embodied in the precepts of Mohammed who said: "All Muslims are like one foundation, some parts strengthening others; in such a way they support each other." There is no distinction of caste or colour or of grades of society in Islamic brotherhood. In whatever parts of the world Islam has penetrated, it has succeeded to a great extent in instilling this strong sense of solidarity and unity into the minds of those who have embraced it.

It is true that Christianity does not possess such a strong unifying power as Islam. But it is also equally true that there is missing in the Islamic brotherhood that width of catholicity and universal spirit of fraternity which has the power to create "the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the world."

For this, however, the religion of Islam is no more to blame than any other religion. Like every other true and great religion, it is capable of serving as a most potent factor which can bring into being a real and universal brotherhood. Mohammed has taught: "Assist every person oppressed, whether he be Muslim or non-Muslim." Jesus also has exhorted his followers in the words: "Love thy neighbour as thyself." Says Hinduism: "He who sees the Self in all beings, realises the equality of all, attains to the supreme state of Brahman." But unfortunately the scriptures are interpreted more or less narrowly, and this chokes the true spirit of religion which is universal and lends support to the keeping up of all sorts of invidious distinctions between the followers of one creed and another. It seems that Mohammedan theologians have overlooked the universal aspects of their religion and have unduly emphasised at the same time such portions of the teachings of Mohammed as "Know that every Muslim is the brother of every other. All of you are equal. Ye are all of one brotherhood." Has not their prophet also said "The best of men is he from whom good accrue to all humanity. All God's creatures are his family; and he is most beloved of God who trieth to do most good to God's creatures"? If the Mohammedans will try to realise this universal aspect of their Prophet's teachings, religious intolerance and fanaticism, so often roused up in them by the scheming propagandist, will be a thing of the past. And the world will advance to no small extent to the realisation of the true brotherhood of man, which is a consummation devoutly to be wished.

THE PROBLEM OF AGRICULTURE IN INDIA

India is primarily an agricultural country. But the condition of her peasantry, instead of being prosperous, is precarious in the extreme. The vast majority of our agriculturists are poor men of small holdings. As matters stand now, they also lack a real interest in the land they cultivate. The present land system is mainly responsible for this. No great improvement in agriculture can be effected unless this system is improved and the cultivator is induced to take a greater interest in the land.

In a thought-provoking article contributed to the Modern Review for June, Dr. Naresh Chandra Sengupta deals with some of the outstanding agricultural problems in Bengal. The writer clearly points out that the divided ownership of land is the main cause of the agricultural backwardness of the province. The Zemindars and the Talukdars are recognised by law as proprietors of the land. But in fact they are not its real owners, but are mere "rent receivers" having in most cases middlemen of various grades between them and the Raiyats. And this rent again has very little to do with the produce of the land.

So long as things go on smoothly, the Raiyat has the exclusive right of possession and cultivation. But he in many cases sublets his hold-

ing, instead of cultivating it himself. The Raiyats and the under-Raiyats may again have a Burgadar who cultivates the land on the condition of giving a share of the produce to the former. As Dr. Sengupta shows—"In this way a large quantity of land is now being cultivated by men who have no right to the Raiyati. The tenure on which these actual cultivators hold the land is of a more or less precarious character."

Under these circumstances neither the Zemindars, nor the Talukdars, nor the middlemen, nor the Raiyats have any real interest in the soil, or even any capacity to improve it. The present land system stands self-condemned. No agricultural improvement can possibly be made until it is got rid of. "The only sensible way of doing it," suggests the writer, "and the only one which would make land improvement schemes possible would be to make the actual cultivator the undivided proprietor of the land he cultivates. This would mean the buying off of present owners and middlemen."

The change suggested is revolutionary. If it is attempted it will create a strong opposition in the country, and make all agricultural improvements impossible at least for sometime to come. The more practical step, by which, however, the object may be achieved in a less perfect and less violent manner is, as the writer himself suggests, to reduce the present rights of the proprietors "to an incorporeal right to the rent without ownership of land." Anyway, the actual cultivator must be made to feel a living interest in the soil. When this is done, agricultural improvement is bound to take place as a matter of course.

MORAL BEAUTY OF BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS

The full moon of Vaisakh is very important and auspicious to the Buddhists. It is the day not only of the nativity but also of the enlightenment and final Nirvana of the Tathagata who came "for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many." It is observed by one-third of the population of the world, which to-day owes allegiance to Lord Buddha. It is being celebrated at many places in India in recent years, and the sublime ideals as lived and preached by the Enlightened One are also appealing more and more to an ever-increasing number of people. Bombay too celebrated the anniversary this year in a befitting manner under the presidency of Mr. C. F. Andrews.

Lord Buddha was the embodiment of love and compassion. The philosophy of life that he preached was in reality the Advaita or monism as realised by the great sages of ancient India long before his illumination under the Bo tree at Buddha Gaya. But the great speciality of Lord Buddha lay in the fact that he went to the logical conclusion of Advaita, gave it a very practical turn and spread it broadcast among the masses. This brought about a tremendous improvement in their moral and spiritual life. As Swami Vivekananda has observed, "At first some monks got hold of it (Advaita) and took it to the forest, and so it came to be called the 'Forest Philosophy.' By the mercy of the Lord, the Buddha came and preached it to the masses, and the whole nation became Buddhists." Mr. Andrews spoke in much the same strain in his presidential address at the Buddha anniversary in Bombay.

There were "enlightened" ones before Gautama. "But their inspiration," observed Mr. Andrews, "was on the whole somewhat local. They did not penetrate permanently and vitally the masses of mankind. The truths they foreshadowed did not reach down to the common people—the slave, the outcaste, the savage, and aboriginal. . . . They did not actually create a new and vital transformation in the mass of the human race, lifting it almost bodily from the dust and setting it once and for all on a higher spiritual plane. But Gautama, the Buddha, appears to me to have actually achieved this. The whole human history took a new turn from the date of his enlightenment under the Bo tree."

The dynamic teachings of Lord Buddha had a great influence on the Indian people. Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim, wrote in his "Travels in India" about the Indians—"They are of hasty and irresolute temperaments, but of pure moral principles. They will not take anything wrongfully, and they yield more than fairness requires. They fear the retribution for sins in their lives, and make light of what conduct produces in this life. They do not practise deceit and they keep their sworn obligations." But things have changed a great deal since these glorious days of India's history! Hatred, selfishness, intolerance and other vices are now eating into the vitals of the Indian people. "I have felt," said Mr. Andrews, "that in our present crisis of Indian history, the lesson of his universal moral ideal is needed most of all." India certainly stands in urgent need of the universal moral ideal of Buddha—of Love, Compassion and Tolerance which he taught two thousand and five hundred years ago. Lord Buddha's teachings are not foreign to Indian culture. They are in fact the teachings of the ancient Rishis of India, preached with a new force and meaning. As he himself acknowledged, the path that he showed was the Aryan path and the truths that he proclaimed were the Aryan truths.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE INDIAN COLONY OF CHAMPA, by Phanindranath Bose. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 162. Price Cloth Rs. 2.

The materials for this little interesting book have been gathered from the works of French scholars to whose labours in the field of research as regards Champa the author pays a fitting tribute. The author has traced Champa to be the name given to the colony of the Hindus, which grew up and flourished in Indo-China for about 1,200 years commencing from about the first or the second century of the Christian era and comprised the provinces of Quang-nam and Binh Thuan. It is not clearly known from what part of India the colonization took place. Thirteen dynasties appear to have ruled over the Kingdom of Champa, and the last king of the twelfth dynasty having been defeated by the Annamite Emperor, the Indian royal family which

had been keeping the torch of Hindu religion and culture aglow ceased to exist though to a certain extent the civilization and culture of the Hindu race is still preserved among the Chams, the indigenous people of the Kingdom of Champa. The conquest of Champa by the Indians has, as the author clearly shows, been not only a physical conquest but also a cultural one. During the period of rule by the thirteen dynasties, the Hindu art and sculpture and the Hindu system of caste and other social institutions were introduced, and established under the direct patronage of the rulers who were themselves well-versed—at any rate most of them—in the Hindu Sastras and the six systems of the Hindu philosophy. Many Hindu temples were erected by them and adequate provisions made for their maintenance. Buddhism made an attempt to establish itself in the little Kingdom of Champa but on account of the strong leaning which most of its rulers had for the Hindu gods and goddesses, it failed to secure a footing. A perusal of the book will impress the reader how the Indians in those days were able to keep up the torch of Indian civilization and culture outside their motherland and how they did it in the small Kingdom of Champa amidst congenial surroundings and circumstances for more than 1,200 years. It will surely stimulate him to contribute his own quota, should opportunity ever present itself, to the accomplishment of the Hindu ideal of disseminating broadcast the spiritual culture of which the Hindus have been ordained to be the custodians by Providence.

SOME SOCIAL SKETCHES OF SOUTH INDIAN LIFE, by Rao Sahib Ramaswami Sivan, B. A., Agricultural College, Coimbatore. Pp. 89. Price As. 6.

It can be inferred from a reading of these sketches which originally appeared as serial stories in *The New India* that the author is an ardent and sincere social reformer. By means of dialogues, he brings home to us the need for eradicating such evils as child marriage and the demand of *varasulkam* (dowry). Young men and women should be given such an education as will make them manly and noble men and worthy and strong-minded women. Mr. and Mrs. Sivasankara Sastri of these sketches are types of sensible persons by whose advice parents and young boys and girls can profit themselves.

GNOSTICISM, by Mary W. Barrie, M. A. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 114. Price: Wrapper Re. 1¼, Cloth Rs. 2.

This book endeavours to trace the sources and growth of Gnosticism and claims to dispel some wrong notions that exist about it in certain quarters. As it has a close connection with Christian Theology and Science, it may interest the Christian world particularly. There is everywhere the need of a religion which can demonstrate that life is one and universal, and Gnosticism is expounded in this little volume as this religion. The origin and development of Gnosticism and its tenets and principles the author has no doubt taken pains to elucidate, but unfortunately, the exposition has rather been obscured by the introduction of symbols, numbers and figures which have been added as Appendix and referred to in the book.

THEOSOPHY AS THE BASIC UNITY OF NATIONAL LIFE. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 96. Price : Board Re. 1 ; Cloth Re. 1-8-0.

This book is a reprint of the four Convention lectures delivered in Bombay at the forty-ninth anniversary of the Theosophical Society, in December 1924.

THE FIRE OF CREATION, by J. J. Van Der Leeuw LL. D., with a foreword by C. Jinarajadasa. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 250. Price Rs. 4-8-0.

This is the outcome of a series of talks given to a group of students interested "in the meaning and work of the Third Person of the Divine Trinity, He who in the Christian religion is called God the Holy Ghost".

RAMANAND TO RAM TIRATH. Published by Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pp. 256. Price Re. 1-8-0.

This is a very useful book recounting the lives and teachings of some of the North Indian saints from Ramanand to Ram Tirath. It contains sketches of Ramanand and Kabir, Nanak and the Sikh Gurus, Ravi Das—the Chamar saint—and Mira Bai—the ascetic queen of Chitor—, Vallabhacharya and Tulasi Das, and Swamis Virajananda, Dayananda and Ram Tirath. The teachings of the Sikh Gurus and those of the Vaishnavite reformers like Ramananda and Ravidas, were mostly directed to the freeing of religion from superstitions, and remind one of the great Protestant movement of Europe. That these great saints appeared at a time when the Mohammedans were the rulers of the country and democratised the truths of Hinduism through their immortal songs and rapturous hymns in the vernaculars testifies to the fact that the fire of Indian religious consciousness has always been kept alive, and though there was a diminution of its lustre during unfavourable times, it could never be extinguished. We commend the book to those who want to know something of the history of Hinduism from the days of the Vaishnava movement in North India up to recent times.

TOWARDS DISCIPLESHIP, by J. Krishnamurti. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 144. Price : Board Rs. 1-8-0, Cloth Rs. 2-4-0.

This contains a series of informal talks on discipleship given to a coterie of young friends in 1924 in Pergine, Trento, Italy.

POEMS TO THE MASTER, by Mary C. A. Bright. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 68. Price : Re. 1.

These poems are dedicated to the Masters who are believed to have inspired the Theosophical movement.

NEWS AND REPORTS

FAREWELL ADDRESS TO SWAMI SHARVANANDA

On 3rd June, the day of his departure from Madras, Srimat Swami Sharvananda was given a farewell address by the Sri Satchidananda Sangha in a meeting held in the Hindu High School Hall, Triplicane. The meeting was presided over by Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L., Sub-Judge, who paid a glowing tribute to the Swami.

The address which was read by Mr. P. V. Pasupathy Mudaliar, one of the secretaries of the Sangha, referred to the manifold activities of the Swami as President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission for the last fifteen years. It mentioned also how he had travelled to distant places like Bombay, Nagpur, Mysore and Cooch Behar in India and to Ceylon, Burma, Federated Malay States, Java and Bally outside India to spread the message of the Vedanta. It wound up with an eloquent expression of the regard and gratitude of the Sangha to the Swami who had inspired and guided its activities since its inception.

The Swami in reply to the address expressed how he had an opportunity of serving the Lord by serving his fellowmen. He remarked that he remembered with pride the two characteristics of Madras, viz., its simplicity of life and the purity of its Vedic culture. He also said that his present retirement was the outcome of a hankering in him to lead a purely meditative life.

Dewan Bahadur A. V. Ramalinga Iyer, Prof. P. N. Srinivasachari and Dr. C. Natesa Mudaliar next spoke in appreciation of the services rendered by Swami Sharvananda to the cause of religion. The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the chair.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MANDIRAM, OOTACAMUND

Active steps are being taken to establish a branch of the Mission at Ootacamund to minister to the spiritual needs of the people of the Nilgiris District. The inhabitants of these hills are isolated from the plains and are consequently denied all the amenities, social and religious, which people in the plains ordinarily enjoy. The presence of the aboriginal classes in the district offers an almost inexhaustible scope for work among them. The permanent residents of Ootacamund, many of whom are Government servants and tradesmen, have also been feeling the want of a spiritual guide among them for a long time. Several spasmodic efforts were made in previous years without any decided success. In 1924, when His Holiness Srimat Swami Shivananda, President of the Ramakrishna Mission, was staying at Coonoor, the public of Ootacamund approached him and placed their representations before him. He readily consented to help them in establishing a branch of the Mission at Ootacamund. A local Committee was formed, which undertook to take the preliminary steps necessary to found an Ashrama. A free gift of a site measuring two acres was made by an old devotee,

a washerman by caste. The situation of this site is eminently fitted for an Ashrama. It commands a beautiful scenery. Though it is secluded from the town, it is easily reached and is only ten minutes' walk from the central market. It lies on the eastern side of the ridge leading from the Elk Hill towards the Bishop's Town. Sri Hathiramjee Mutt, the place of the Mahant of Tirupati, is also closely situated. In July 1924 His Holiness Srimat Swami Shivananda turned the first soil of the foundation on an auspicious day. Vigorous steps were then taken to collect subscriptions. Mr. Mandharam Rungiah Chettiar contributed Rs. 2,000 towards the erection of the Central Hall. And the plans and estimates were also drawn up.

The building consists of a Shrine Room, opening into a hall 20 by 30 feet, to which are attached two living rooms. A separate kitchen block is also provided. The estimate runs to about eleven thousand rupees. The hall and the living rooms will shortly be ready. The Shrine Room will be completed in about two months. The kitchen block is yet to be begun. The Maharajas of Mysore, Baroda and Jodhpur have been approached for help by the Local Committee. The Rajas of Kallikotta, Kirlampudi and Chikati have contributed towards the construction of the building. It is expected that the Ashrama will be opened in another month, and actual work and worship will begin under the auspices of His Holiness Srimat Swami Shivananda who is now at Ootacamund. For the present, religious instruction will be given to the students in the educational institutions and also to the general public by the Swamis who will be accommodated in the Mandiram. The Swamis will also visit the Badaga villages for propaganda and preaching work. After the establishment of the Mandiram it is intended to open an industrial school and an orphanage as adjuncts to the Ashrama. The Local Committee is already busy in making arrangement for the maintenance of the Ashrama.

VEDANTA WORK IN SAN FRANCISCO

A member of the Vedanta Society of San Francisco writes :—

During the month of April the members and followers of the San Francisco Vedanta Society were privileged to have the visit of Swami Bodhananda, head of the New York centre. He was very cordially received by Swami Prakashananda who made his stay at the Hindu Temple headquarters very agreeable. During his stay Swami Bodhananda gave four illuminating discourses on the teachings of the Gita every Tuesday evening. He also delivered four forceful and highly interesting Sunday public lectures on the following topics—The Common Goal of Religions, The Power of Concentration, Evolution, and, The Power of Silence.

The special Easter service was held at the Temple on 4th April by Swami Prakashananda who chose "The Awakening of Soul Consciousness" as the fitting subject for the occasion. He also spoke at the Sunday morning services during the month of April on the following subjects—Individuality and Cosmic Consciousness, How to Enter the Realm of Inspiration, How to Overcome our Sensitive Nature. The Thursday classes on the Upanishads with a short meditation were

conducted as usual by the Swami. All the lectures and class discourses were attended by large and appreciative audiences. Swami Bodhananda left San Francisco deeply impressed with the growth and increasing interest of the work here at the Temple and expressed his intention of soon visiting it again. He returned to New York via Portland, Oregon, where he gave a few lectures at the centre newly established by Swami Prabhavananda. He also visited and lectured at the neighbouring cities of Tacoma and Seattle, Washington.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA STUDENTS' HOME, JAFFNA

The Ramakrishna Society of Jaffna was feeling the need for establishing a Students' Home in Jaffna with a view to provide free board and education to helpless orphans and poor deserving students. In order to remove this want, Swami Vipulananda, the President of the Society, and some friends visited Colombo in April last and made an appeal for the necessary funds, which met with a ready and adequate response. It was then decided to start a Home for boys with six students, and increase the number gradually as circumstances would permit. The Home was formally opened on Sunday, the 6th June, by Swami Vipulananda, and three students were admitted. The Swami also delivered an instructive speech on Gurukula Life, dwelling on the great necessity for such an institution for Hindu boys who sometimes were unfortunately lost to the community on account of the indifference of the Hindus to their welfare. We wish all success to this new institution.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, CALCUTTA

The work of this educational institution is increasing in dimension and usefulness. Twenty-seven students were staying in the Home during the year 1925, of whom five appeared for the I. Sc., one for the I. A., and another for the M. A. examinations and passed creditably. A new feature of the Home is the Students' Self-help Syndicate which gives the students an opportunity of earning a portion of the cost of their education, by preparing exercise books and selling books on commission. A publication department also has been opened in the Home which is intended to be incorporated with the Syndicate in the future.

The receipts during the year amounted to Rs. 6,239-1-0 and disbursements to Rs. 5,536-12-0, leaving a balance of Rs. 702-5-0. This with the last year's balance of Rs. 8,651-0-6 makes a total balance of Rs. 9,353-5-6. The Home stands in urgent need of a permanent residence of its own and appeals for help. Subscriptions may be kindly sent to the Secretary of the Home, or to the President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur, Howrah.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, BELUR, HOWRAH

The report for the years 1924 and 1925 shows a development in the work of the institution. The industrial school is located in the compound of the Belur Math itself and the students are accommodated

in a rented building near the Math. The boys are given a general elementary education, besides a course of practical training in spinning, weaving, tailoring and carpentry. So far twenty-three boys have finished their course of spinning and weaving and have started independent work in this line. There are at present eleven students on the roll.

The institution requires a permanent building for the school and boarding house, and funds for additional looms, tailoring outfits and carpentry instruments as well as for the maintenance of the boarders. Contributions can be sent to the Superintendent of the school or to the President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur, Howrah.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES

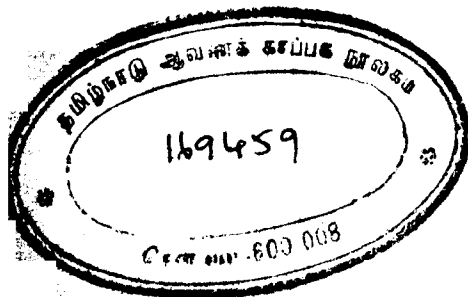
We are glad to find from the report that the philanthropic activities of the Home have been steadily growing since its inception in 1900.

The Indoor General Hospital, which contains 108 beds, admitted during the year 1456 persons, of whom 388 were picked up by the workers of the Home from the streets, lanes and bathing Ghats of Benares. The Outdoor Dispensary rendered medical relief to 44,442 people including repeated cases. The Home also gave outdoor relief by way of weekly doles of rice and money to a large number of invalids as also to poor ladies of respectable families. Besides rendering other forms of service, the Home maintained 4 invalids in the Male Invalids' Block, supported 12 helpless women in the separate Home for Women on the banks of the Ganges, and admitted in the Girls' Home 7 girls who received training in the general work of the female hospital along with their education.

The authorities of the Sevashram propose to build a spacious block for helpless women, and also to open a training centre for nurses in the female department of the hospital.

The balance sheet of the Home for the year 1925 shows a receipt of Rs. 31,751-6-2 and an expenditure of Rs. 30,635-15-5, thus leaving a balance of Rs. 1,115-6-9. The Home has to spend an average sum of Rs. 80 per day.

This non-sectarian charitable institution stands in urgent need of support by the generous public to meet the ever-increasing demands on its service in the holy city of Benares. Contributions may be kindly sent to the Hon. Asst. Secretary, The Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares City, U. P.



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