

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

(ESTABLISHED IN 1897.)

President : SWAMI SHIVANANDA.

Secretary : SWAMI SARADANANDA.

[Incorporated on the 4th May, 1909, under Act XXI of 1860.]

Objects stated briefly are—

- i. To impart and promote a real knowledge of Hinduism or the Religion of the Vedas, by means of preachers trained in the Ramakrishna Math at Belur, near Howrah, and other places.
- ii. To look upon all men, women and children, irrespective of sect colour, creed or caste as veritable manifestations of the Lord and worship them as such by trying to remove all their needs and sufferings—physical, moral, intellectual and spiritual.

Prominent Centres—

BENGAL.

1. The Ramakrishna Math and Mission Headquarters, Belur, Howrah.
2. " " " 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.
3. Sister Nivedita Girls' School (R.K. Mission Branch) Baghbazar, Calcutta.
4. Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, 7, Haldar Lane, Calcutta.
5. Gadadhar Ashrama, 86/A, Harish Chatterji Street, Bhawanipur, Calcutta.
6. Ramakrishna Mission Anath Ashrama, Baranagore, 24, Parganas.
7. The Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bankura.
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13. Sri Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Sorisha, 24, Parganas.
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16. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Narayangunj, Dacca.
17. The Ramakrishna Math and Mission Sevashrama, Dacca.
18. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Tajpore, Aminipore P. O. Dacca.
19. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Baliati, Dacca.
20. The Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mymensing.
21. The Ramakrishna Ashrama, Dinajpore.
22. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mukdampore, Malda.

ASSAM.

23. Sri Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Sylhet.
24. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Dishongshella, P. O. Laitkynsew (Khasia Hills.)

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26. Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Moradpur, Patna.
27. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Jamtara, Sonthal Parganas.
28. Sri Ramakrishna Mission Bidyapith, Deoghar, Sonthal Parganas.

UNITED PROVINCE.

29. The Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Luxa, Benares City.
30. The Ramakrishna Advaita Ashram, Luxa, Benares City.
31. The Ramakrishna Math and Mission Sevashrama, Muffiganj, Allahabad.
32. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Aminabad, Lucknow.
33. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Brindavan, Multia.
34. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama Kankhal, District Saharanpur.
35. The Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, (via) Champavat Almora.

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THE VEDANTA KESARI

"Let the lion of Vedanta roar."

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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PRAYER

एकस्त्वमसि लोकस्य स्रष्टा संहारकस्तथा ।

अध्यक्षश्चानुमन्ता च गुणमायासमावृतः ॥

संसारसागरं घोरमनन्तद्वेशमाजनम् ।

त्वामेव शरणं प्राप्य निस्तरन्ति मनीषिणः ॥

न ते रूपं न चाकारो नायुधानि न चास्पदम् ।

तथाऽपि पुरुषाकारो भक्तानां त्वं प्रकाशसे ॥

Lord ! Thou art the sole Creator, Destroyer and the Presiding Lord of the universe. Thou dost permit Thy creatures to act according to their will, Thyself being only a Witness. Thou art veiled by the Gunas and Maya, and art therefore beyond the comprehension of ordinary mortals.

The wise men, finding in Thee the surest Refuge, cross the terrible ocean of birth and death,—the cause of endless pain and misery.

Thou hast no colour, no form, no weapons, no particular abode ; yet Thou revealest Thyself unto Thy devotees in human forms.

—THE MAHABHARATA

SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

(At the Belur Math)

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MOST people waste the whole of their life in trivial matters. And when old age overtakes them, many of those who are in service retire with pensions and spend their last days at some place of pilgrimage. They think that in this way they can attain Bhakti (devotion) and Mukti (liberation). They also fondly hope that the Tirthas (places of pilgrimage) will enable them to expiate all the sins they have committed. Is it not sheer madness to think thus?—What else can it be? He who firmly believes in the purifying power of the Tirthas will, of course, receive some spiritual impetus therefrom. Truly the Tirthas are always pure and holy, and those who have good Samskaras (tendencies) in them are indeed somewhat benefited by them spiritually. That is all. Nothing more can be expected out of it. Man indeed is to strive hard for his salvation. Benares, however, has to be considered as an exception. Many people, therefore, are anxious to spend there the last days of their lives. They entertain the firm hope that they will attain liberation if they pass away in that sacred city. True it is that a man is freed from the bonds of Samsara (birth and death) if he breathes his last at Benares. Viswanath* is the Lord of the Universe and queer and inscrutable are His ways.

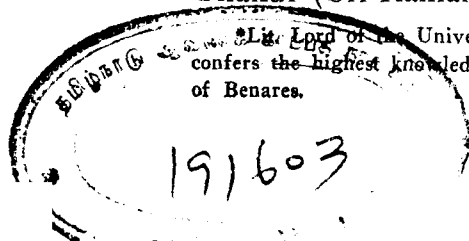
Is it desirable to live a whole life in misery and suffering and then attain Mukti (liberation)? Is it not, on the other hand, wiser to enjoy the present life in the ecstasy of devotion and spiritual practice and then once for all enter the portals of infinite bliss? As Thakur (Sri Ramakrishna) used to say—"You can enter

*The Lord of the Universe, a name for Shiva who, as the devotee believes, confers the highest knowledge and salvation to those who die in the holy city of Benares.

a house through its front gate as well as through its back door." But which of these is better? When it is possible to gain entrance through the front gate, why should we enter through the back door, inhaling the noxious smell of faecal matter? Decide now which of these two you should choose,—momentary happiness or infinite bliss,—the pleasures of this life, or the everlasting peace of the life beyond?

One great thing to be considered is Kripa (Divine grace). The breeze of His grace is always blowing. Only unfurl your sails and you will have it. How can you get the breeze if you keep your sails rolled up? Hoist them now and do not delay any more. Give up your desires for worldly enjoyments, your hankering for name and fame, and fully resign yourself to the Lord. It is quite impossible to enjoy worldly pleasures and at the same time realise God. You cannot serve both God and mammon at the same time. If you want to realise God, you must renounce worldly pleasures. If, on the other hand, you desire to enjoy temporal pleasures, you will have to give up God. Do not keep your feet in two boats, as they say. If you do it, you will only make yourself miserable. You must have a clear conception of your life's ideal. Decide now what life you want to lead. Should it be this fleeting life of transient pleasures or the everlasting life of eternal bliss?

You are young boys,—innocent and guileless. Worldliness has not left its impress on your mind yet. If you will be up and doing from now, you can escape from the clutches of the trials and tribulations of worldly life. Fix your principles even now. If it is not done now, it will never be done. Bare skipping on the surface will be of no avail. Hold on to your ideal fast and never loosen your grip. To the man who has accepted God as the be-all and end-all of life, has forsaken all desires and cravings for sensual enjoyments—for him God is very near. Such a man binds God with the ties of his love as Yasoda and the Gopis did Gopal.



and prosperity, the wealth and power of India therefore depend upon those of her villages. Those who work for the good of the country therefore must bring about a resuscitation of its village life. In the words of Mr. K. T. Paul, a prominent rural worker of considerable experience, we must "remind ourselves that 90 per cent. of our people live in villages of less than 5,000 in population, that it is their health that determines the vitality of the nation, their labour which decides what India shall buy or sell, their habits which denote our national character, their education which can enable India to assimilate the lessons of well-being offered by the experience of the world."

EXPLOITATION OF VILLAGES BY TOWNS

The cry of "Back to the Land" which is heard everywhere in India to-day is a vehement protest against the growing evils resulting from the centralisation of life in cities and towns. Referring to the same problem in the West, A. E., the great patriot and practical idealist of Ireland, has said—"The absorption of life in great cities is really the danger which most threatens the modern State with a decadence of its humanity. In the United States, even in Canada, hardly has the pioneer made a home in the wilderness when his sons and his daughters are allured by the distant gleam of cities beyond the plains. In England the countryside has ceased to be the mother of men—at least a fruitful mother." This observation is entirely true of India as well. Western civilisation and system of administration with which our country came into contact about a century and a half ago has been exercising a deep influence on the mode of life and the habits of the people. It has brought in its train an unrestricted growth of industrialism which has given rise to big cities and towns that absorb the best brains and riches of the land. Our local boards deal with towns and effect improvements for the comforts and conveniences of life in urban areas alone. The representatives of the people who sit on these boards as well as in higher councils are men from towns whose interests are almost entirely in urban life. And the administration is built up on the model of England where under the influence of the great industrial revolution the large majority of the people live in cities and towns and not in villages. The fact that a small body of Englishmen have had to build up our administration has also been one of the reasons of centralisation which

benefits the town more than the village,—nay, raises the one on the ruins of the other. This merciless exploitation of the villages has proved prejudicial to the welfare of all the classes of people in the country, nay it even threatens with ruin the very foundations of its economic life. Allured by the comforts and enjoyments of the city and captivated by its charms and its splendours, the members of the aristocracy are leaving their ancestral homes and losing their living interest in the village. And compelled by poverty and actuated by the hope of earning their subsistence in towns, the middle class people also are forsaking their village homes. This exploitation by the town drives the poor peasant to a life of a petty wage-earner in the great centres of industry and commerce. It is thus evolving a homeless and landless proletariat which was unknown in the prosperous India of the past. The city has been draining the village of its resources not only of men but also of its precious products.

PICTURE OF A MODERN INDIAN VILLAGE

The modern Indian village presents indeed a very dismal and pathetic spectacle. Most of its inhabitants are suffering from poverty and disease and are sunk in degradation and ignorance. The old spirit of love and co-operation is being replaced by a spirit of arrant selfishness and aggressive individualism. The solidarity created by the ancient caste guilds and the co-ordination of labour for the mutual good and the common welfare of the whole community of which the villagers formed the limbs are fast breaking down. The simplicity and purity, the peace and prosperity, which characterised the village life of the good old days and which formed the themes of many a song and many a poem on the countryside are ebbing away. The schools which used to teach the three R's to the boys and girls and which, on the authority of Sir Thomas Munro, existed in every village are more or less extinct, and almost extinct also are the simple country games, religious festivals and modes of worship. All this havoc has been done by the mad rush of the people from the country to the city. So it was that in the course of a very valuable address on what he called "The Robbery of the Soil," which was published in the *Modern Review*, Mr. Elmhirst remarked—"Of all thieves, the cities are the most ruthless. In the race to satisfy their demands the present individualistic type of society, with its enslavement of the uneducated masses, its law-suits, its lack of culture and of all finer feelings and

ideals, has completely obliterated the old common life in which all from the Brahman at the top to the labourers at the bottom, were servants of the common welfare. Nowadays in the scramble for gold and power, nutritious food, sanitary considerations and civic amenities are sacrificed. The soil is given no chance to do its part, and poverty and disease, famines and fighting in law courts, complete the dismal picture." All these evils can be remedied only by the work of rural reconstruction on a sound and secure basis.

REVIVAL OF THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

A scheme for the rehabilitation of our villages—for their economic, industrial, educational, social and other improvements—can be formulated only in the light of India's past history and traditions, though the methods employed by foreign countries for bringing about their own speedy advancement should also be adopted. And the first and foremost item in any programme of village reconstruction should be the resuscitation of the village community. In the past the village was the unit of local self-government and so should it be in the future. It formed the strong and solid rock on which the national edifice was firmly built. Dwelling on the profound wisdom of this policy, Sir Charles Metcalfe observed—"The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything they can want within themselves and almost independent of any foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds revolution; Hindu, Pathan, Moghal, Mahratta, Sikh, English and all masters in turn, but the village communities remain the same. . . . This union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little State in itself has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the peoples of India, through all the revolutions and changes which they have suffered, and is in a high degree conducive to their happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence." It is one of the most pernicious results of the present form of administration that this ancient system has undergone a complete change. Under the old system, the village officials were elected by and responsible to the villages. They were the true servants of the people and were remunerated by grants of land or assignments of grain during harvest time. But with the break-down of the village community the national degeneration which we notice to-day began to set in. The

educated classes have been sucking the very life-blood of the poor illiterate masses who have been patiently toiling for centuries past without a word of murmur or a voice of protest. It is this great havoc and untold misery wrought by the tragic blunder of the British system of administration that Lord Ronaldshay acknowledges in these words: "It is, I think, a not unreasonable deduction from the knowledge which we now possess of the theory and practice of Government in Ancient India that if, instead of creating municipal and district boards of the Western type, we had begun by re-creating the village organisations which were congenial to the people, local self-government would have made more satisfactory progress than has actually been the case. . . . This salutary return in the direction of the ancient indigenous system is breathing new life into local self-government."

A CALL FOR SELF-LESS WORKERS

Pending the salutary change in the administration, by which the village officials will once more be made responsible to the people whom they serve, we should form centres of rural work in every village with the help and co-operation of sympathetic and philanthropic persons of the land. The necessity for such work is urgent and imperative. The burden of responsibility lies on the shoulders of the educated classes who must themselves go back to the villages, live there and inaugurate the noble work of reviving the village life. They must bear in mind, as Sir P. C. Ray observed in a recent speech at Mysore, that when the average income of an Indian per day is seven pies and that of an Englishman is seven rupees, the game of aping the Westerner in the cigar and dress and motor car is not worth the trial or the cost. They must also remember that the status of an Indian in other countries is not that of Tagore or J. C. Bose but that of the average man of our land, and that it is the masses that form the warp and the woof of the web of Indian national life. Deeply moved by their appalling poverty and down-trodden condition, Swami Vivekananda expressed his feelings in these touching terms—"And oh! how my heart ached to think of what we think of the poor, the low in India. They have no chance, no escape, no way to climb up. The poor, the low, the sinner in India have no friends, no help—they cannot rise, try however, they may. They sink, lower and lower every day, they feel the blow showered upon them by a cruel society, and they do not know whence the blow

thought which could not even be dreamt of in any other part of the world. And freedom being the first condition of growth, philosophy could thrive here in a very natural manner. Apparently contradictory systems of thought flourished side by side without being hampered by bloody persecutions that soiled the religious history of other lands.

There are various systems of Hindu philosophy. Each of these traces its origin from a great Rishi or seer of Truth. Thus Hindu philosophy is not the fruit of the experience of a single individual, however great he might have been, but is, on the other hand, the product of the spiritual genius of the entire Hindu race.

Of all the different schools of Hindu philosophy the "orthodox" ones are six in number. These are the Vaishe-shika system of Kanada, the Nyaya system of Gotama, the Sankhya system of Kapila, the Yoga system of Patanjali, the Purva Mimamsa of Jaimini and the Vedanta of Vyasa. The Vaisheshika and the Nyaya schools, which are not two systems but two streams of the same system, believe in the existence of the Creator, in an infinite number of souls, and in eternal entities, such as, mind, the five elements of earth, water, light, air and ether and other categories. The allied schools of Sankhya and Yoga, which do not feel the necessity of God the Creator, speak of an infinite number of Purushas (souls) but of one Prakriti—the creatrix out of which evolve the ego, mind, senses, sense-objects and other products. The Purva Mimamsa system, which also has no place for God in it, believe in the existence of souls, and also of the various elements that, impelled by the unseen power of Karma, combine into the gross material world. The Vedanta of Vyasa dwells on the potential divinity of man and believes in God who is immanent in soul and Nature, and is also transcendent at the same time. All our modern sects and creeds are based more or less on the system of Vedanta of which however there are three main schools. However divergent the systems may be, they all originate from the same "Manasa lake" of philosophical thought. They all speak of the same Truth from different points of view, and as such they possess an underlying unity which may not be manifest to the superficial observer.

The various schools of ancient Indian thought including the six systems may be divided into Astika and Nastika. These terms which in modern times imply belief and disbelief in God respectively, had quite a different meaning in

olden times. Those who believed in the existence of the soul, and its continuation after the death of the body were called Astikas, while those who possessed no such belief were called Nastikas. The Sankhyas who declared that there was no proof of the existence of God, were Astikas because they posited the existence of the "eternal, pure, free and enlightened" Purusha or soul. The Charvakas or the gross materialists of ancient times, who besides denouncing God, also looked upon the conception of the soul as a fabrication of the human brain were Nastikas or Nihilists in every sense of the term. To these reckless sensualists of ancient India life was the product of the combination of the elements, and death the end of all things. They declared—"How can the body when it is once burned into ashes come to life again? So long as you live, live in pleasure, even at the risk of running into debt." Thus crude enjoyment of the senses was the only purpose of life according to this extreme school of materialism which, however, could not thrive on the spiritual soil of India, and died a natural death as a system of thought.

Hindu philosophy is universal in its outlook. All the six systems of thought mentioned above speak more of principles than personalities, more of universal truths than particular forms. They possess certain common philosophical ideas. And the most important of these is that of the Atman, although different philosophers have different conceptions of the term. In fact belief in the existence of the soul is an essential faith of the Indian people. Buddhism became positively nihilistic in later days and its negation of the Atman was one of the main causes of its being supplanted by the mother-faith in India. In his refutation of the different schools of Buddhist philosophy, Sankaracharya made the existence of the Atman the most important point of contention. And not only he but all other orthodox philosophers made the Buddhists' disbelief in the Self the sure target of their attack. All this goes to show that the conception of the Atman forms the most important pillar supporting the mighty edifice of Hindu philosophy.

What is the nature of this Atman? Declares the Bhagavad-Gita—

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥

"The Atman is never born, nor does it die. It is not that not having been It again comes into being. It is unborn, eternal, changeless, ever-Itself. It is not killed when the body is killed." It is subtler than the subtlest and vaster than the vastest. It is self-existent and is not a created entity coming into being in time and perishing in time. Each soul is potentially divine, and as such it cannot be condemned to eternal perdition. This Atman dwells equally in men, animals and all other beings. In the words of the Upanishadic seer—

एव सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढोत्मा न प्रकाशते ।

दृश्यते त्वाग्रया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ॥

"This Atman hidden in all beings, reveals Itself not to all. It is seen only by the subtle-seers through their pointed and subtle intellect."

Associated with the conception of the Atman are those of Karma and re-incarnation. As Swami Vivekananda says,

"Who sows must reap, they say, "and cause must bring

"The sure effect; good, good; bad, bad; and none

Escape the law. But whoso wears a form

Must wear the chain."

The law of Karma or causation is one of the essentials of Hindu philosophy. It has nothing absolutely to do with fatalism and inactivity. On the other hand, if properly understood, it serves as the greatest incentive to work. For according to it, man is not left at the mercy of a tyrant God who exercises his fiat in any way he pleases, but is made fully responsible for his own action. Our present condition is the result of our past actions, and our future will be moulded by our present efforts. The law of Karma asks us to reconcile ourselves to our lot, instead of worrying over things that are beyond our control. At the same time it tells us to put forth fresh good Karma and thereby improve our condition to the best of our capacity. The law of Karma is thus the foundation of morality.

The belief in re-incarnation is inseparably connected with the law of Karma. It too is shared by all schools of Hindu philosophy. Even the Buddhist philosopher who does not believe in God and soul as ordinarily understood, makes it along with the law of Karma one of the main supports of his philosophy. But the Hindu conception of re-incarnation implies not only the existence of the soul, but also its embodied

state before the birth of the present body and also after its death. As Sri Krishna declares in the Gita—

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोपराणि ।

तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥

"Even as a man casts off worn out clothes, and puts on others which are new, so the embodied being casts off worn-out bodies and enters into others which are new."

In spite of the denunciation by Christianity, the theory of re-incarnation is gaining ground in the West. It is appealing to many poets and thinkers who are tending to popularise the idea. The American poet Walt Whitman has sung—

"As to you, Life, I reckon you are the leavings of
many deaths,

No doubt I have died myself ten-thousand
times before."

A single life is not enough for man's evolution. That is why the philosopher Lessing asks—"Why should I not come back as often as I am capable of acquiring fresh knowledge, fresh experience? Do I bring away so much from once that there is nothing to repay the trouble of coming back?"

The soul passes through cycles of birth and death, gathering fresh experience. And the tendencies with which it is born are the effects of causes which are "more ancient than this corporeal birth". They can never be accounted for by the Semitic theory of one birth, nor by that of the hereditary transmission upheld by the material evolutionist. Every embodied being has twofold ancestry, physical and mental. His physical body he gets from others. But as a thinking soul, he is his own ancestor. What he is now is a continuation of the past, and what he will be will be the continuation of the present.

Is man after all only a helpless being eternally bound by the law of Karma and subject to birth and death? Is he to turn round and round in the mighty wheel of Karma without ceasing? In the words of the Upanishad—

इह चेदशकद्वौदुं प्राक्शरीरस्य विस्मृतः ।

ततः सर्गेषु लोकेषु शरीरत्वाय कल्पते ॥

"Here, before the fall of the body, if one is not able to realise Brahman, then one has to take body again in the

world of creation." But when with the dawn of knowledge the soul ceases to identify itself with the body and the mind, and realises its true nature, the world-dream passes away from its vision, and along with it all Karma and re-birth. It is therefore that the Upanishadic seer has declared—

भिद्यते हृदयप्रन्थिच्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥

"The fetter of the heart is broken, all doubts are solved and all works and their effects perish when the Self which is both cause and effect has been beheld."

All the systems of Hindu philosophy place before the aspirants the ultimate goal of life. And they also point out to them the means to its realisation. The Vaisheshika and Nyaya systems speak of Nishreyasa (*summum bonum*) and Apavarga (deliverance). The Sankhya and Yoga schools declare Kaivalya—aloneness or freedom from all forms of misery, to be the highest object of existence. The Purva Mimamsa speaks of the bliss of Swarga or heaven, which is unaffected by misery and is characterised by desirelessness. The Vedanta again declares Moksha or salvation as the highest purpose of life. But whatever may be the term used for salvation, it means at least the soul's attaining to its true, pure state as to the nature of which, however, philosophers differ.

All the schools of modern Hindu thought believe in the existence of God. But this was not so in ancient days. As we find in the aphorisms, the Sankhya philosopher, with his theory of evolution, is not able to find any place for God in his system. He declares—"God is either free or bound. If He is free He cannot have any desire to create. If He is bound, He has not the power to create. Either way He is inefficient for creation." The Yogis too did not believe in a creator. As in the Sankhya philosophy, so in the Yoga system, Purusha or souls, and Prakriti or creatrix are all-sufficient for explaining the theories of cosmology. But the Yogis believe in God as the Teacher of mankind. They hold that "Iswara is a special Purusha untouched by misery, actions, their results and desires. In Him dwells infinite knowledge. He is the teacher of even the ancient teachers, being not limited by time." The Vaisheshikas and Naiyayikas—the atomists and logicians of ancient India—hold that

God is the efficient cause controlling the material causes of the universe. And He directs things according to Karma, both individual and collective. He is the governor of the world. "Iswara is the efficient cause. Every act of man produces results under His superintendence." The followers of the Purva-Mimamsa school recognised no necessity for God in their system. According to them Karma or sacrifice was enough to produce as its result a subtle force that brought about the reward or punishment or both for the acts of men. To the Vedantin, however, God or Iswara or Brahman, is inseparable from the soul. To the dualistic Vedantin who believes in an infinite number of souls, God is the ruler of the universe as also of souls who are eternally dependent on Him as a servant on his master. The Vishishtadvaitin thinks that God is both the material and efficient cause of the universe. According to him, God, soul and Nature make one unit, soul and Nature forming, as it were, the subtler and gross bodies of God. There is an indissoluble connection between God and souls as between the sun and its rays, as between the whole and its parts. The Advaitin acknowledges the existence of God, soul and Nature, but allows them only a phenomenal reality. From the standpoint of the highest truth the three are One which through Maya appears to be many. As the Upanishad proclaims,

सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयम् ।

स य एषोऽणिमा एतदात्म्यमिदं सर्वं तत्सत्यं स आत्मा तत्त्वमसि श्वेतकेतो ॥

"In the beginning, my dear, there was that which is one only without a second. That which is that subtle essence, in it all that exists has its self. It is the Truth. It is the Self, and thou, O Svetaketu, art that."

In the words of Swami Vivekananda, "The Self is the essence of this universe, the essence of all souls; He is the essence of your own life, nay, 'Thou art That'. You are one with this universe."

All these systems of Hindu philosophic thought can be arranged in a hierarchical order. The Vaisheshika, Nyaya and Karma Mimamsa schools represent the common-sense view to which there is the plurality of soul and matter. The evolutionary schools of Sankhya and Yoga believe in an infinite number of souls but in one primal matter only. According to the Vedantin again there is a cosmic intelligent principle directing the evolution of souls and Nature. The dualist holds

that God, soul and Nature are separate. To the qualified monist the three form one organism, God or Brahman interpenetrating the other two. According to the monist the three appear to be different only in the domain of Maya. But they are essentially one and the same. With the dawn of knowledge all multiplicity loses itself in the Unity which is beyond time, space and causation. This doctrine of the One is the boldest and truest synthesis in the whole history of human thought. It means not a lifeless abstraction, but a practical system which fulfils life. To conclude in the memorable words of Prof. Max Muller, "After lifting the Self above body and soul, after uniting heaven and earth, God and man, Brahman and Atman, these Vedanta philosophers have destroyed nothing in the life of the phenomenal beings who have to act and to fulfil their duties in this phenomenal world. On the contrary, they have shown that there can be nothing phenomenal without something that is real, and that goodness and virtue, faith and works, are necessary as a preparation, nay as a *sine qua non*, for the attainment of the highest knowledge which brings the soul back to its source and to its home, and restores it to its true nature, to its true Selfhood in Brahman."

THE SECRET OF RIGHT ACTIVITY

By T. S. Avinashilingam, B. A., B. L.

MAN is born with hope and cheer but dies disappointed and broken-hearted. When he is a boy, he is optimistic and confident of successfully doing everything he attempts. He has a thousand and one plans, and he hopes to carry out everyone of them. Feeling strength in himself, he often proclaims—"What man has done, man can do." But as he grows, his hopes are shattered, his strength fails him, and he finds myriad forces opposing him. Thus it is that most old persons conclude that man's lot in life is nothing but misery and disappointment. What is the cause of this misery? It is not difficult to find. Man pants for the highest but the very means that he adopts to attain it leads him just in

the opposite direction. He wants eternal life, but he wants it through his body which is subject to death. He wants eternal bliss, but he wants to enjoy it through his senses which are ephemeral. He wants perfect knowledge, but he strives to attain it through the mind and the intellect which are bound by limitations. Thus we see that man's ideal, conscious or unconscious, is Sat-Chit-Ananda—Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, but the means he adopts are such that he is doomed to failure.

The real way to attain the end of human life is described in the scriptures. They declare that there are four distinct paths which suit varying temperaments of men and take them to the *summum bonum* of life. These paths are Karma (selfless work), Bhakti (devotion), Jnana (knowledge), and Yoga (psychic control). In practising Karma, a person is to do work but without selfishness and personal motives, without hope and ambition. By its means he gradually loses his ego and merges himself into the Universal. Bhakti is devotion to a Personal God, and by the cultivation of intense divine love, the devotee tries to become one with his Ishtam (Chosen Ideal). With the help of Jnana, a man discriminates about the unreality of the world and arrives by such discrimination at the grand truth of the saying—"Tattwamasi," "That thou art". And Yoga is a means of reaching the Ideal by psychic control. Considering all these, we find that the path of Jnana requires an indomitable will which is not to be met with in the ordinary man. The path of Yoga is hard and dangerous without a proper Guru and is scarcely pursued in these days. So the only paths that are open to one and all in this age are Karma and Bhakti. Of these two, Karma when properly practised will serve not only as a method of individual Sadhana (spiritual discipline) but also as a means by which we can elevate our country and add to the happiness of our countrymen.

Activity is the very nature of life, whatever may be the sphere in which it is manifested,—physical, mental

or spiritual. Karma Yoga or the path of action teaches man to do his work in the right manner. It does not want that he should set apart a portion of his time in learning how to become a Karma Yogi. But it teaches him the attitude he should cultivate in doing all his actions. It does not mean doing particular actions but the particular mode of doing all work in life.

What is the attitude that Karma Yoga teaches us to cultivate? The main message and teaching of Karma Yoga is non-attachment. It advises us that in doing our work, we must be perfectly unattached though we must at the same time put forth all our energy in the work. Attachment is the very source of our pleasures now. We are attached to our relatives and friends, to our wealth and other possessions. This attachment leads us to the intensification and multiplication of our desires. And desire is always subject to the law of success and failure in its gratification. When we attain what we want, we are happy; but when we don't attain it, we feel miserable. That is why the Gita says—"To work you have the right but not to the fruits thereof." We must work, but be unattached. We must be able to throw ourselves heart and soul into our work, and yet at the same time be indifferent to its results. Our miseries are due not to what we love, but to what we expect. People love their wives, husbands, children and friends. So far it is all right. But their love is tainted with selfishness and attachment. They want something in return and they are disappointed in most cases and become miserable. The sages therefore exhort—"Do work but without any attachment or expectation."

An important lesson that we have to learn in Karma Yoga is that all that we do should aim at our self-purification. Our Karma or work, therefore, should help us first and foremost in attaining the Truth. We should avoid making fuss about attempting to do good to the world. There is nothing in the world, of which it can

be said that it is absolutely good or absolutely bad. All the work that we do is a mixture of good and evil; every one of our actions has always a good side as well as a bad side. Looked at from a particular point of view, an action may seem very beneficial; but viewed from a different standpoint, it may seem very harmful. In the words of one of the greatest thinkers of our country—"Good and evil are the obverse and reverse of the same coin". So Karma Yoga says—"Never think that you are doing good to the world. It is all for your own sake, for your own training. Never delude yourself into the belief that you can improve the world. The world is but a dog's tail. Straighten it; it will be straight only so long as you hold it; but leave your hold, it will be curly again. Great spiritual giants such as Krishna and Buddha have come and gone, but to-day the world is as it was before. And so all the ideas of doing good to the world are nothing but vain pride and false conceit." When we are conscious of the fact that our work is intended for removing the veil of ignorance and selfishness from ourselves, whether it brings about good to the world or not, it will help us in obliterating our egoism. Knowing this, we must be perfectly humble and unassuming. It is indeed a great privilege to have the opportunity to serve, for it chastens and improves our character. But service must be done in a spirit of meekness and non-attachment.

When Karma Yoga is thus practised in the right manner, it will make a man more and more selfless and unattached every day, until at last he will reach a stage in which the results of action, —whether they are good or bad, happy or unhappy—will not disturb him any more. His sympathy also will become widened. And gradually he will come to feel himself identified with a growing circle of living beings. In the beginning it may be that he was attached to his family members. But selfless work expands his heart and by its effect, he feels himself one not only with his

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relatives and friends, but also with his community, his country and finally the whole world. The orbit of his love and sympathy becomes larger than ever before. And when his identification with the whole universe becomes complete, he fails to feel either happiness or misery. He realises that he is enjoying happiness through a thousand and one beings and feeling misery through others. Whose happiness is to make him happy? And whose misery is to make him miserable? He therefore transcends ultimately all petty ideas of joys and sorrows, and dwells for ever in the serene bliss and calmness that comes out of his identification with the Highest. But until this final stage is reached, he goes on working and makes the miseries of the world his own and does his best to remove them with humility and gratitude to his Maker who has given him opportunities for his self-purification and self-development.

Karma Yoga teaches us another great lesson. It proclaims that our present condition is but the result of our past actions,—that we are what we are because of our past Karma. And in this teaching is a ray of hope for man. If we are the result of our own past Karma, then our future also is dependent on our own efforts. This then gives us the courage to mould our future and inspires us with the hope that we shall succeed if we have patience and perseverance.

If a man's Karma or work is to become a means of training his character and developing his personality, he should be deeply introspective and exceedingly humble. He should look upon even what the world considers the lowest form of service as a sacred privilege. No work should be too great or too small to deserve his attention. All the egoistic ideas of false dignity and false respect should cease to have a hold upon him. If he does any charity or renders any other form of help to anybody, he should look upon him with thankfulness and gratitude for having given him an opportunity to serve, and

thereby chasten his own character and expand his own heart. So Swami Vivekananda observed—"Do not stand on a high pedestal, do not take five cents in your hands and say 'Here, my poor man!' But be grateful that the poor man is there, so that by making a gift to him, you are able to help yourself. It is not the receiver that is blessed but the giver. No beggar whom we have helped ever owed a single cent to us, we owe everything to him, for he has allowed us to exercise our charity on him. It is entirely wrong to think that we have done or can do good to the world. It is a foolish thought and foolish thoughts bring misery. We think that we have helped some man and expect him to thank us; and because he does not, unhappiness comes to us. Why should we expect anything in return for what we do? Be grateful to the man you help; think of him as God. Is it not a great privilege to worship God, by helping our fellow-men?" From this point of view the world becomes a grand moral and spiritual gymnasium wherein we have all to take exercise in order to become stronger and stronger morally and spiritually.

This spirit of humble service and non-attachment becomes easy and natural for those who believe in a Personal God. The devotee sees all around him the manifestations of his favourite Deity. All that he is endowed with and all his wants and mishaps in life are, according to him, the result of the will of his Deity. In all the blessings and curses of the world he sees the inscrutable will of his Ishtam (Chosen Ideal). So it seems to him that it is hopeless to attain the desired result for his actions, unless it be by His will. This engenders in him a spirit of philosophic self-resignation. Through self-surrender he loses his own petty personality and fails to feel for the result of his own actions whether it is happy or unhappy. He truly realises the meaning of the teaching of Sri Krishna—"To work you have the right but not to the fruits thereof."

In these days when the country has to be roused from its age-long slumber and slothfulness, Karma Yoga has indeed a great part to play. Everywhere we see that most people are steeped in Tamas (inertia). To all appearance they are in a Sattvic state (state of calmness transcending activity), but really it is nothing but langour and inactivity. The spirit of enterprise and devotion to work and the enthusiasm and readiness that are seen in the people of the West are to be very rarely found in our own country. With no strength in body or mind and with no enthusiasm in the heart, the country presents a picture of dullness and inactivity. Without any high sense of idealism and sustained effort, the people are living a life of low contentment which arises not from a philosophic dispassion but from weak slothfulness and deep despair. We should first make our people active, enthusiastic, and undaunted in their efforts to realise their ideal. And this Karma Yoga alone can achieve. It asks us to work constantly—to do service incessantly. By it our energy will be enhanced and confidence strengthened. Slothfulness will then give place to strength, and diffidence to faith and will-power.

THE DOCTRINE OF EXPERIENCE AS THE ONE SELF

By Prof. K. Sundararama Aiyar, M. A.

IV. THE INQUIRER'S AIM AND GOAL

ACCORDING to a well-known Sanskrit saying, "Not even a stupid person will set about doing anything without having some *purpose* in view." Hence, if there is to be such an activity as is implied in the fact and need of our present inquiry, its fruit (*phala*) must be stated. The Vedantist holds that there is only one Existence—the Brahman. Sankara says :—"The inquiry into the true purport of the Vakyas (sentences) of the Vedanta has for its purpose this higher bliss (*nishreyasa*)"—the Brahman, the Absolute Reality. Accord-

ing to the Taittiriya Upanishad, the Brahman is "*Sat*,"—the undifferentiated, the ever-existent (*nitya-siddha*, *nityonitya-nam*), unchanging, perfect reality. How, then, can it be a result or fruit attainable by some means, instruments, or methods of operation,—a *sadhya* or *phala*? If, indeed, it can be secured as such fruit and consequence of human activity, it must cease to be what it claims to be—"Sat" or *siddha-vastu*. Is it not also a fact that we *desire* one thing after another, and then proceed to supply some corresponding want, and gain happiness of one kind or another thereby? But that is because the supreme, ever-present, Brahman (or *Bhuma*) has become limited by association with what is *alpa* (limited)—the ever-changing, unenduring, objects belonging to the material world,—and hence both the desire for happiness and its fulfilment are transient and changing. The Upanishad says:—"There is no happiness in what is limited" (*alpa*) and therefore is without permanence. The Upanishadic terms *Bhuma*, *Brahman* mean *that which is big, unlimited*,—that which is perfect, the supremest of all. The Taittiriya Upanishad calls Brahman not only *Sat*, but also *Chit* (Knowledge Absolute) and *Ananda* (Bliss Absolute). Clearly it is as *Chit* that the Brahman becomes *recognised* as limited with the objects of external world. It is also clear that it is by being freed from such association and of the taint ensuing thereby that the Brahman is *realised* in its true nature (*Svarupa*) as absolute and perfect Bliss (*Ananda*). It is with such a supreme realisation (or Experience) as the purpose in view that we pursue our quest (*vichara*) after the true purport of the sentences of the Upanishads.

Even at this starting-point of our journey, we have to meet a preliminary objection,—*viz.* How can the Brahman, described or conceived of as above, be the result (*phala*) attainable (*sadhya*) by such a process of inquiry as we are going to pursue? Are we not *thereby*—i. e., by making it the goal of our inquiry—making it subject to a limitation which is foreign to its nature? On this point we can at this stage give only an unsatisfactory reply. A full and convincing answer will come on when we reach the difficult topic of *Akhandartha-Vada*. The perfect bliss (Brahman) can never be the result (*phala*) of a *particular knowledge* of any exterior object or phenomenon which owes its existence,—and the transient experience we have of it—to its temporary association with—and the witness of—the Self. Now, let us take an instance,—an object before us seen as a stationary pillar when first per-

ceived from a distance, and later, when we approach near it, as a person standing where we saw the pillar before. Both are clearly instances of the *direct perception—aparoksha-jnana*—of external objects resulting (*janya*) from something like a process of reasoning. In the case of our first *false* impression of a pillar, we imagine we observe some of the signs or features of a pillar and thence infer from them that the object is—or must be—a pillar. Subsequently, we actually see the signs and features of a living human being and thence conclusively know it to be such. But, in the case of the Atman, it is neither an object actually perceived outside, as in the latter case,—nor is it one *supposed* to be so perceived, as in the vision of the pillar for which it was first mistaken. The Atman is the ever-present—*nitya*, not *janya*—absolute Experience; and so it can never appear or become like an object of the external world whose perception (or even existence) is only due to the *witness*, purely hypothetical or assumed, of the former. No such witness can exist—or needs to be assumed—in the case of the Atman. It is the one Existence (*sat*), the one Experience,—and there is no other such. Every other existence or experience is an effected (*janya*) one, and therefore limited (*parichchinna*) by time, place, etc., and has its origin in a false superposition of a material object having name and form on the one Absolute Existence or Self which has thereby to *become a witness* of the same—*i. e.*, of the object which has secured the privilege of coming within its scope and range of experience.

All effected and limited sense-enjoyments of others are to us, while they last, part and parcel of the external world and cannot, through the mere channel of oral communication, become part of the material of our sense-experience. If they do become the latter, they cease to belong to the outer world of sense, but are, while they last for us, part and parcel of what constitutes our inner and living self. At other times they *seem*, no doubt, external to us, only because they have no longer an independent existence or manifestation apart from that association with the Atman in which they had become manifested for us. Further, it is an error to hold that, because there is a difference in the source of experience, the object experienced should be also different. For, whether the source of manifestation is lamplight or sunlight, the object remains the same in form, colour, etc. The case is similar in regard to our true knowledge (*Prana*), whether of the external world or of the inner self. Hence the Self-Existence—*alias*

the *immediate, absolute, Experience*—revealed by the Guru's teaching of the Maha-Vakyas of the Upanishads can never be like the external and phenomenal experience *mediated by the senses and mind of man*. It can never, therefore, be a *sadhya-phala*,—a result attainable through the agency and mediacy, the causative instrumentality, of any object, internal or external, belonging to the changing material world. If it is sometimes (or often) *spoken* of as such, it is only in a secondary or figurative (*gauna* or *upacharika*) sense, but not in the primary significance of the word.

Further, we may look at this question from another point of view. According to Sankara, one of the four fundamental qualifications of the inquirer (*adhi-kari*) into the Atman in his intense *desire* for release from the bondage of *samsara*,—“*Mumukshutva*”. The knowledge of Brahman cannot spring from a mere desire for it,—but only from the appropriate *Pramana* (or instrument of knowledge). The (Upanishad) Vakyas or sentences into whose purport we are making an inquiry (*vichara*) come in here as the proper instrument of knowledge. When this knowledge comes on, it frees us from our ignorance (of Brahman) which is the source of the misery of embodied existence. This freedom is known as Mukti. It (Mukti) alone is the *real result* (*phala*) sought for, and attainable by the *adhi-kari* the inquirer possessing the desire for liberation which is one of his four essential and requisite preliminary qualifications. Then, too, as *previously*, the Illumination, Experience, or Bliss, known as the one Self (or Brahman), is living and existent (*siddha*). Ignorance, and all the impediments to knowledge—whether the relative knowledge relating to phenomena in the universe, or the absolute Brahman which is one Reality—originating in ignorance have vanished. Hence the Brahman is not to be *conceived* of as the possible fruit, immediate or remote, of our inquiry, and cannot be *gained* as such result,—for, as already frequently stated, it is *nitya-siddha*, ever-present; and, therefore, no such mental effort and activity as is implied in our inquiry is needed to gain it. A result (*phala*) implies a means or instrument,—and so we are landed in Pluralism. But there is only one Existence (or Experience)—and no second. Hence the Brahman is not the result (*phala*) of our *vichara*. It is often indeed so spoken of, but only so by courtesy (*upachara*),—*i. e.*, in a secondary, not the primary, sense of the word.

Cannot the Brahman, then, being what it is,—*viz.*, Joy absolute, *Ananda-svarupa*—be regarded as the object of the

desire for liberation (mumuksha) which is accepted as one of the four indispensable preliminary qualifications of the Inquirer into Brahman? Let us first state definitely what is *Mukti*. It is the destruction of the primordial matter (*prakriti, Maya, ajnana, avyakta*, all of which are synonymous terms, as Sankara frequently explains) which is the positive root-cause (*bhavarupa mula-karana*) of the manifested universe of material objects. That process of destruction arises from the immediately previous final mental modification (*Charama-mano-vritti*) which rises into manifestation as a result of the teaching of the Vakyas (sentences) of the Vedanta, but unfailingly also disappears itself in bringing about that process;—and then the sun of the Atman is no longer clouded by the cloud of matter, but shines in all its own everlasting (*nitya-siddha*) glory of self-effulgence (*svayam prakasa*). The usual illustration given in this connection is the dust of the clearing-nut (*kathakarunu*), which, when cast into a vessel of muddy water, goes down to the bottom taking with it also the mud in the water. The Vedanta holds that the destruction of the bondage of *samsara* (arising from the *charama-mano-vritti* already spoken of) can become the object of desire,—the *mumuksha* (or desire for liberation) which is included as one of the four qualifications essential to the Inquirer after Brahman. The Nyaya and Vaisheshika systems of philosophy hold that this negative process of destruction (*dhwamsa*) of the pains and penalties of material existence alone constitutes *mukti*, and there is no positive joy of the spiritual kind transcending it.

The one great rival of the Doctrine of Experience as the One Self in the India of the past has been that held by the Mimamsakas—viz., that the soul of man is an indispensable part and ancillary (*anga*, or *sesha*) of all Vedic *karmas* (rituals) and that the knowledge gained by the study of, and inquiry into, the purport of the sentences of the Veda is meant only to enable the householder to duly perform those rituals. *Mukti*, according to the Mimamsakas, is only at best a particular kind of satisfaction (*sukha-visesha*) resulting from the rituals,—and even this is only an assumption. For, where any results in the shape of enjoyments here or in higher worlds are stated in the Vedas, the aim is only to extol the value and need of the rituals and persuade men to engage themselves ardently in their due performance. The same is also the purport of the passages of the Upanishads where the soul's real nature (*svarupa*) is described as pure and perfect, everlasting bliss, and so on. The inquiry into the Self is needed and pre-

scribed,—but its object is only to convince the inquirer that the aim of the Vedas is only to establish the doctrine of ritualism,—to convince every human being that he is an intelligent person over and above his physical organism so as to create in him an interest in the proper performance of all Vedic sacrifices and other rituals. In the technical language of latter days, the aim of Vedic inquiry is *Kratvartha* (to promote the performance of rituals), and not *purushartha*, to secure a future state of enjoyment in a world beyond this or to secure the grace of a supreme God in his own world and perfect bliss beyond the sphere of matter. This is why it is pointed out (*vide* Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad, III. 1) that even men like King Janaka who had the knowledge of Brahman, “performed Yajna, making many gifts.” If mere knowledge of the Self is the aim of the inquiry, why should they perform Karmas involving enormous exertions and responsibilities of diverse kinds? Further, there are even found passages in the Upanishads themselves (Chandogya, I. 1. 10; Brihadaranyaka, IV. 4, 2) which expressly state that knowledge (of the Self) has no independent value and must be combined with Karma in order to secure or enhance such value,—and so it is only an auxiliary (*sahakari*) of Karma. There are also passages which expressly declare that a full knowledge of the real purport of the Vedas is specially needed for the due performance of the householder's daily duties (*nitya-karmas*).

Sankaracharya, after elaborating as above the special pleading of the Mimamsakas, takes similar pains to demolish it. In the *first* place, the Upanishads are simply content with *extolling* Karmas so as to induce ritualistic activity. Or, in the *second* place, the Karmas mentioned have another intent and bearing (*anyatha-siddha*), as relating to *loka-sangraha* (*vide Bhagavad-Gita*)—the welfare of all humanity as a whole by the abandoning of all activities which proceed from purely egoistic motives, and so not producing a binding effect on the doer. Sankara offers many other arguments, and entirely overthrows the Mimamsaka view. (*Vide Purushartha-adhikarana*, Chap. III, Pada 4 of the Brahama Sutras of Vyasa). The same topic is also dealt with at great length by Sankara in his Bhashya on (I. 1-4). We do not here need to enlarge further on this topic. Sankara similarly overthrows (I. 1-4) also the view that the Vedanta prescribes *pratipatti upasana*, or *bhakti*—(all these being synonymous terms)—of the supreme personal Deity.

Vyasa would not have begun his Brahma-Sutras as altogether a separate treatise and system of doctrine (*darsana*) from the Karma (or Purva) Mimamsa, had he not felt that it required a different *adhikari* (person qualified) for fully profiting by it. Hence, also, Sankara maintains that the qualification for realising the absolute Experience which is the one Self is altogether different from the mere performance of Vedic rituals, or even of the worship of the supreme Deity who creates and sustains the universe. Sankara points out that "the innermost self—the light of which destroys the (beginningless) ignorance together with the binding *Karma-vasanas* hidden in the mind, and which is no longer the incarnating jiva, but the pure absolute Brahman—can no longer be transformed so as to prove merely an indispensable adjunct and limb of Vedic rituals." The Vedanta aims at teaching that the soul of man is, indeed, not merely the living and intelligent doer (*Karta*) and *bhokta* (enjoyer) different from his body which, without his presence, is only a mass of inert matter, but that it is to be known (*vedya*) in its true nature as *asamsari*, one not roving about in birth after birth in the world of phenomena, but the one innermost Self which is all Experience and Bliss, pure and absolute. Such a realisation of the one supreme Entity can never lead to activity,—for it transcends the entire phenomenal universe (of activity). Several Upanishadic passages contain *indications* (*darsanas*—i. e., *lingas*—vide Brahma-Sutras, III. 4-8 and 9) showing that those who have realised the absolute Experience as the one Self are free from all Karmas. If there are also passages seemingly contradictory, a careful inquiry into their purport will unfailingly show either that they refer to the *sopadhika* (conditioned) Brahman, or to some *karma* or *upasana* taught in the Vedas. In this connection Sankara especially refers to the passage in the Kenopanishad (I. 4) which denies over and over again that Brahman is the object of the act of *upasana*. He also refers to Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad (II. 4, 13) which denies that it is the object of the mere mental activity of knowing. The Brahman then in its truth and essence, is the innermost Self, Experience, Knowledge, or Consciousness,—the one pure and absolute Existence.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE MYSORE UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION ADDRESS

His Highness the Chancellor of the Mysore University could not have invited an educationist more inspiring and patriotic than Sir P. C. Ray to address the convocation this year. The great educationist gave an illuminating criticism on 'the colossal waste of national intelligence' which has resulted in the past from our scheme of University education. It deserves the attention of every true lover of India.

Without indulging in the ceremonial sentimentalisms of the ordinary convocation address, Sir P. C. Ray exposed in all its shallow superficiality the myth of modern University development in our land. He justly characterised the evil of multiplying stereotyped universities without regard to regional considerations as 'wanton' and entailing waste of economic power. He also deplored the neglect of the creative capacity of the Indian intellect. According to him, the lamentable lack of sagacity and intelligence in the handling of the Indian educational problem has been mainly responsible for our intellectual sterility. A foreign language has been tolerated so long, and still in many quarters upheld, as the best vehicle of instruction. A routine of lectures and exercises and other compulsory appendages not far removed from those of a secondary school are increasing the distance between the multitude of students and the teacher, and a spirit of exclusiveness insisting on an 'infallible' preparatory education were the chief defects of our university system, which were pointed out with penetrating sympathy by the revered educationist of Bengal. He lamented the degeneration of our land caused by our forgetting the austere and sustaining ideals of life. And he hoped for the day when the rising generation can, through increased knowledge, "combat and banish disease, enliven all homes by prosperity and raise the human species to a much nobler height of intelligence."

The ideal of ancient Indian universities was to preserve the treasured wisdom of the country. Hence there was everywhere a conscious adaptation of the means to the end. Regional and 'religious' variations in types and curricula were devised. The spirit of independent research was fostered with munificence. And there was, therefore, a vigorous circulation of the intellectual life-blood throughout the social organism. But under the present university system which has been transplanted from a foreign country, the ancient educational ideal has been lost. And Sir P. C. Ray's profound and penetrating analysis gives us an idea of the gigantic task that is before our country in the sphere of education.

THE DEMOCRATIC IDEAL

The cry of *Vive la republique* is heard everywhere, but true democracy is practised neither in the state nor in society, whether in the East or in the West. The democratic ideal is good and all right, but there is a lack of proper application of the ideal. It is due to this lack that so many evils both political and social exist to-day.

In the course of an address delivered before the Fourteenth Annual Convention of the Hindusthan Association of America, Boston, and published in a recent issue of the *Welfare*, Dr. William H. Burnham, Ph. D., Professor of Clark University, U. S. A., dwelt on the defects of democratic institutions and their remedies as well. In his opinion, the drawbacks of the nation are mainly due to the training imparted to youngsters at the home and the school. If the defects of this training are removed, the other evils will disappear by themselves. Dr. Burnham observes—"The defects of American democracy are obvious. It is not necessary to dwell upon them. The obvious defects, however, those one reads about, those one meets everywhere, the assertion of individual interest against the public welfare, social, educational and personal craft and group profiteering, and the like, all these are not the serious defects, bad as they are; but the really serious thing from the educational point of view are the low level of what may be called social metabolism, the daily robbing of children of their legitimate tasks, the robbing them of the opportunity to take responsibility, repression of what is relatively bad instead of the integration of qualities and abilities that are good, the dominance of educational groups by pleasing and masterful personalities, who often repress, it is true, in a pleasing and magnanimous manner, but who nevertheless take away the opportunity for group training and make group democracy impossible."

Real democratic institutions will be possible only when man will be able to look upon man not merely as his fellow-being but as a part of his own self, when self-sacrifice will be prized above self-protection and self-preservation, and when hatred, jealousy and selfishness will be banished from the human mind by the spirit of universal love and service.

THE BRITISH COUNCIL OF SOCIAL HYGIENE—ITS WORK

Civilisation consists in the process of idealisation of the primitive instincts of the animal man,—in the progressive subjugation of his acquisitive, gregarious, pugilistic, preservative, procreative and other instincts. He has been trying for several centuries to evolve himself. And with the progress of his evolution, he discovered the path to perfection by the control of his lower nature. The acquisitive instinct has been chasten-

ed by charity and by duties to the family and community. The gregarious instinct has been diverted into clubs and conferences, parties and sects. The pugilistic instinct has been softened by healthy rivalries and friendly emulation. The preservative instinct has been transformed into love of freedom and love of country and trained to welcome even extinction of the individual. In Ancient India, the rigorous discipline of Varnashrama Dharma, combined with the worship of the woman as mother, the exaltation of marriage as a sacrament and the belief in the son as 'saviour of the Pitris (manes)' had ennobled and controlled even the sex instinct. Of late however, because of the general wane of Hindu cultural influences, we have lost sight of these healthy disciplines and hence, the need for an active propaganda on behalf of Social Hygiene has become as necessary here as in England and other Western Countries. The British Council of Social Hygiene has as its aims the promotion of educative and social measures directed towards the control of the sex instinct, the setting up of a high and equal standard of sex conduct in men and women and the elimination of commercialised vice. And with characteristic thoroughness the Council inaugurated only six years ago has now provided facilities for the treatment of venereal diseases which have been found to be a monstrous scourge of man. Through lectures to parents, teachers and social workers it has also spread a knowledge of the suicidal dangers of sexual misconduct and, more than all, provided wholesome recreations and counter-attractions for the youth of the nation. It is a happy sign that the delegates of the council who are organising local councils in India are keenly alive to the invaluable influence of high ideals in promoting social hygiene through chastity. An innate sense of purity and responsibility and the courage to check the urge of low desire can alone save the youth of our land. In India, a call couched in terms of such ideals will not fall on deaf ears. For, here more than anywhere else, release from bondage to the senses—from the bondage of matter to the freedom of the spirit—has been the ever present ideal of life. And any deviation from the ancient ideal of Brahmacharyam (celibacy) in our country can, at the most, be only a temporary stupefaction from which the young men and women of to-day are sure to rouse themselves.

SIR J. C. BOSE—THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS WORK

The marvellous contributions of Sir J. C. Bose to science are likely to widen man's outlook on life. They are entirely different from those of most other scientists. Bose may be taken to be a mere dreamer by the workaday man, but his discoveries are slowly opening out the reserves of thought and culture of India to the world.

"In plain words," one may ask, "what has Bose done?" To begin with, he has proved that all life is one. He has shown, as Major Francis Yeats-Brown writes in the *Indian National Herald*, "that there is a basic unity in composition, in thought, and in response to outer stimulus, that runs through all matter, however apparently inert or however palpitatingly alive. A steel girder will grow tired of a burden even as you grow weary of a weight. A plant needs sleep, feels passion, winces when struck even as a man does, although in a different (but not always a lesser) degree. These things have been drawn out in diagrams and charted in graphs which are the result of accurate experiment in a laboratory."

The next great truth that Bose has demonstrated is that adversity is necessary throughout the order of nature for the development of the powers of an organism. "As an ethical point, this has long been known, but to prove it on a black-board was another matter. This is how Bose does it: he takes—say—a mimosa as his subject and allows it to grow up in his institute carefully shielded from any harmful contact with the outer world. Just so much air and food and light are allowed to reach it—no more and no less than the absolute theoretical ideal for its health and happiness. The mimosa apparently flourishes under this regimen and grows into a prosperous plant. But appearances are deceptive: there is a rottenness in the being of that mimosa. It degenerates in its nervous fibre just as a person that has never been tempered at the fire of sorrow, or borne adversity, cannot be a full man or woman. The pampered plant cannot react as a mimosa should to 'stimuli' from without. Its nervous reflex-arc has contracted. There is a slowing down of that mysterious vital force, concerning which Sir Jagadish (just because he has come closer to it than any other living man) does not presume to theorise."

Sir J. C. Bose is a true child of ancient Aryan culture. He is giving the same message that it has to give to the world, but this he does in the words of science, which are suited to modern times. According to the Western standard, man is to be up and doing—live a life of intense activity and leave this world materially happier and more prosperous. The West understands the doer, not the idealist. But Sir J. C. Bose "has married the deathless and virile beauty of the Aryan tradition to the still adolescent debutante of Western science." He himself declares that he is preaching the same truth that his ancestors realised through meditation thousands of years ago.

When one contemplates on how Sir Jagadish has made a romance of science, one is also inclined to prophesy that the time is sure to come sooner or later when all arts and sciences will move round Truth as

their centre. Art—whether painting, sculpture, architecture, poetry or music—will show to every man the way to Eternal Beauty and Ineffable Bliss. Science—whether physics, chemistry, astronomy or any other—will point its finger to the One Existence sung by the Rishis in the immortal Vedas.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRIMAT SWAMI SHIVANANDA

Srimat Swami Shivananda, President of the Ramakrishna Mission was staying at Mylapore since his return from Bangalore to Madras on the 18th November last. At the invitation of the public of Nattarampalli he went to that place on the 6th December, accompanied by Swami Yatiswarananda, Head of the Mission at Madras. In the course of his short stay of five days there he laid the foundation stone of the Ramakrishna Industrial Students' Home, and visited the local Panchayat School. The visit created great enthusiasm amongst the students to whom he spoke a few words of advice and arranged for sweetmeat to be distributed. He returned to Madras on the 10th and started for Bombay on the 19th. He halted for a day at Raichur on the way and reached Bombay on the 22nd.

THE RAMAKRISHNA INDUSTRIAL STUDENTS' HOME, NATTARAMPALLI

The foundation stone of this Home was laid on Friday the 10th December by Srimat Swami Shivananda in a plot of land measuring about five acres. The plot is situated a furlong and a half from the Ramakrishna Math at Nattarampalli and was made over to the Mission by the Panchayat of the place. A large number of people from the neighbouring villages and towns attended the function. A decorated potrait of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna was taken in the midst of Bhajana in a procession headed by Srimat Swami Shivananda. When the procession reached the pandal erected for the foundation ceremony, an address of welcome was presented to the Swami by the public of Nattarampalli, in which he was requested to lay the foundation stone of the Home and confer his blessings on it. On being asked by the Swami to reply on his behalf, Swami Yatiswarananda spoke in English appreciating the earnestness and devotion of the public of Nattarampalli and invoking the blessings of Sri Ramakrishna on their noble endeavour. Swami Kedaraswarananda who is in charge of the Ramakrishna Math at Nattarampalli and Mr. C. Venkataswami Naidu of Vaniyambady

also spoke a few words in Tamil suited to the occasion. In the midst of cheers Srimat Swami Shivananda then laid the first bricks of the foundation using mortar with a silver trowel. All those who had assembled then returned to the Math, and with the distribution of Prasad the function came to a close.

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA AT BOMBAY

At the invitation of friends interested in the Ramakrishna Mission at Bombay Swami Yatiswarananda left Madras on the 19th December. The Swami was in charge of the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Bombay for over a year and a half. In March last he had been to the Head-quarters of the Mission at Belur to attend the Ramakrishna Math and Mission Convention. He was to have gone back to Bombay after the convention but had to come direct to Mylapore to take charge of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission Branch at Madras. The friends and workers of the Mission at Bombay, who were eagerly expecting him to be in their midst again were keenly disappointed at this. When the Swami was invited to attend the installation ceremony in the newly-built shrine at Khar, he took the opportunity to be once again in Bombay and left Madras in the company of Srimat Swami Shivananda.

THE NIRANJANA ASHRAMA, OTTAPALAM, SOUTH MALABAR

This Ashrama which has been named after Srimat Swami Niranjananda who was one of the most beloved disciples of Sri Ramakrishna was opened with great eclat on Friday the 10th December by Srimat Swami Nirmalananda, President of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bangalore. It is situated a mile and a half from the Ottapalam Railway Station, on an elevated and extensive plot of land on the right bank of the Bharata river, and commands a charming view of the stream, fields and hills. Devotees from several parts of Kerala had assembled on the occasion. The formal opening ceremony took place in the midst of Bhajana conducted by several Sankirtan parties of the neighbouring villages. In the afternoon Prasad was distributed to all present. In the evening Srimat Swami Nirmalananda gave an inspiring discourse in which he dwelt on the divinity in man, the problems confronting the modern world, and the duty of India at the present day.

On the 11th a large number of poor people were sumptuously fed. And in response to an invitation from a village near the Ashrama, Swami Nirmalananda visited it and spoke to those assembled on Dharma.

On the 12th Swami Niranjananda and Swami Vageeswarananda explained the aims and objects of the Mission at a public meeting which was held in the local High School.

All these functions left a profound impression on the public of Ottapalam. And the new Ashrama has removed a long-felt want of a centre of the Mission in South Malabar.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, DINAJPUR, BENGAL

The work of this Ashrama can be classified under three heads—religious, educational and philanthropic. The Ashrama has a shrine room where daily worship is conducted. It also holds a religious class everyday for all people, irrespective of caste or creed. Besides, it has a small library of its own. In the out-door dispensary attached to the Ashrama, the number of patients treated during 1925, the year under review, was 3,573, 1,650 being new and 1,014 repeated cases. The Kala-azar Department had 163 patients in its register, who were treated with injections and allopathic medicines. Cremation of dead bodies, distribution of blankets to the poor during winter, occasional help to poor students and indigent families in coin or in kind and house-to-house medical relief also formed part of the philanthropic activities of the Ashrama.

The total receipts during the year including previous year's balance of Rs. 50-13-0 were Rs. 1037-3-3 and the expenditure was Rs. 923-2-9, the balance left being Rs. 114-0-6.

The Ashrama stands in need of a permanent building of its own estimated at Rs. 20,000 and appeals to the generous public for help and active sympathy.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, KANKHAL, HARDWAR

The twenty-fifth annual report of this Sevashrama shows that its philanthropic activities have been steadily growing since its inception in 1901.

The total number of cases treated in the outdoor dispensary was 45,626 of which 19,966 were new cases. The indoor hospital which has provided accommodation for 66 patients admitted 602 sick persons during 1925, the year under review. The Sevashrama conducts also a free night school which imparts primary education to the boys of the depressed classes, the number on the roll being 41. The Ashrama has also a small library containing 1,775 books for the use of its own workers and the public.

The Sevashrama which is situated in one of the most ancient and sacred places of pilgrimage is thus doing excellent philanthropic work. Its increasing usefulness is evident from the fact that there were 602 indoor and 19,966 outdoor patients in 1925 as against 42 and 178 in 1901.

The Sevashrama stands in urgent need of (1) worker's quarters, (2) a building for the night school, (3) a guest house or Dharmasala, (4) a rest house for the friends and relatives of the indoor patients,

(5) a permanent fund for the Sevashrama and (6) resources for equipment and general maintenance of the Sevashrama. It appeals to the generous public for help.

Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged by Swami Kalyanananda, Hony. Secy., Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, P. O. Kankhal, Dt. Saharanpur, or the President, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, or the Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1 Mukerji's Lane, P. O. Baghbazar, Calcutta.

PURNA KUMBHA MELA AT HARDWAR—AN APPEAL

The Purna Kumbha Mela, one of the greatest religious festivals of the Hindus, comes off at Hardwar after a lapse of twelve years during the next spring of 1927. On account of improvement and expansion of roads and railways, a far larger number of pilgrims are expected to congregate this time than during the previous Kumbha Melas. The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Kankhal, Hardwar, which has been silently rendering medical service to the poor patients of the locality and to the pilgrims who visit this sacred place, for the last quarter of a century, will try its level best to alleviate the sufferings of the sick and helpless pilgrims on this important occasion.

The work that will be taken up by the Sevashrama will comprise of the following items :—

(i) Permanent Hospital Relief Section—This will contain 1 doctor, 2 compounders, 1 dresser and several nurses. They will be in charge of the permanent hospitals, both indoor and outdoor, except the cholera section.

(ii) Temporary Relief Section—In this section, there will be, a doctor, a compounder and two nurses who will go round everyday from camp to camp to find out patients who are unable to come to the Sevashrama and treat them there. They also will inform the headquarters when they find cases of patients requiring removal to the hospital.

(iii) Special Cholera Relief Section—This department will consist of three groups of volunteers. One party of the volunteers will be in charge of the nursing department of cholera patients in a special ward throughout day and night. Another batch of workers will bring the cholera patients in ambulance cars and burn corpses. And the third group will consist of four workers who will disinfect the places from which the cholera patients are brought and in which others suffer from serious diseases.

(iv) Kitchen section—The workers of this section will take charge of the kitchen and stores and prepare food for the patients, workers and guests.

The Sevashrama with the limited number of workers and the funds at their disposal is rendering help to many helpless and poor patients. And more men and money will be required for giving relief during the Kumbha Mela, as a large number of pilgrims will flock on that occasion. Many trained doctors and volunteers will have to be brought from outside and medicines and other necessities will have to be purchased beforehand. The expenditure has been approximately estimated at Rs. 10,000. The Sevashrama appeals to the public for contributions. They may be sent to Swami Kalyanananda, Hony. Secy., Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, P. O. Saharanpur District, or to the President, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, District Howrah.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS

Sir P. C. Ray, the veteran educationist of Bengal, visited the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home at Mylapore, Madras on Tuesday the 30th November last. He was taken round the buildings of the Home, the Residential High School and the Technical Institute by Swami Saswatananda, the Resident Warden of the Home and Swami Devatmananda, the General Superintendent of the Technical Section. He took more than an hour to visit the several departments and evinced keen interest in all he saw. After attending the evening Puja he addressed the students on the impressions of his visit. In the course of his speech he observed :—"I have seen and visited many educational institutions in various parts of India managed by the public as well as by the Government; but nowhere have I seen an institution of this type. I have been taken by surprise and I could not even dream that I would see such things as I saw here to-day. Everything I have seen seems to be Maya—I could not believe my eyes. Wherever I go, I am struck with the spotless cleanliness of the place. You know "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," and I feel as if the whole environment is surcharged with a divine atmosphere. I consider this day of my visit to your institution a red-letter day in my life. And I congratulate you all on your good fortune in having come under the roof of a noble institution where you are trained to make no distinction between "high and low". One noble feature of this institution is the endeavour put forth to make you self-supporting. I have noticed with great pleasure that you are taught carpentry, weaving, carpet-making, smithy and rattan work here. I am also glad to note that every one washes his own clothes and plates himself. . . . Your duty is to carry the spirit which you have imbibed here to the world outside when you go away from this institution. The motto of your life should be "Service to your country". I am very glad that the Gita which is full of noble precepts is being studied here by you all. You should cultivate the spirit of patriotism—of genuine love for your

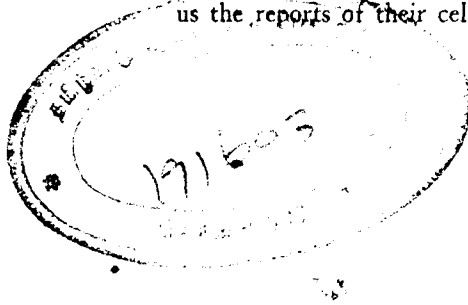
country. By self-sacrifice alone real patriotism will be aroused. In Japan, patriotism is the religion of the people. The same family may have members of diverse faiths but they one and all profess the same religion—patriotism. I have been really struck with the catholicity of view in this place, especially the puja-hall, where there are nice and beautiful paintings of the teachers of all religions. I am glad you are taught that in all religions the fundamental principles are the same." And before concluding Acharya Ray exhorted the students in an inspiring manner by saying: "You live in a clean and moral atmosphere. Each one of you should rise as an electric light of unlimited candle power. When you go out after your training, I am sure you will, with your radiating effulgence, illumine the depths of darkness of the masses."

THE RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, KHAR, BOMBAY

The installation ceremony in the newly-built shrine of the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Khar, Bombay, was performed by Srimat Swami Shivananda, President of the Ramakrishna Mission, on Sunday the 26th December.

THE SIXTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF SRIMAT SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The Sixty-fifth Birthday Anniversary of Srimat Swami Vivekananda will be celebrated at the Ramakrishna Math, Brodies Road, Mylapore, Madras, on Sunday, the 30th January. We request all Maths, Ashramas and Societies observing the birthday to kindly send us the reports of their celebrations at an early date.



36. The Ramakrishna Kutir, Almora.
37. The Ramakrishna Tapoban, Dharchula, Almora.
38. Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Kishenpur, Rajpore (Dehra-Dun.)
39. The Vivekananda Ashram, Shamlatal, Tanakpur P. O. Pilivil.

BOMBAY.

40. Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Khar, Santa Cruz, P. O. Bombay.

MADRAS.

41. The Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras.
42. Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras.
43. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nattarampalli, (via) Jalarpet.
44. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Ootacamund.

MYSORE.

45. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mysore.
46. Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Basavangudi, Bangalore.
47. Sri Ramakrishna Students Home, Basavangudi, Bangalore.

KERALA.

48. The Ramakrishna Ashram, Trivandrum, Travancore.
49. Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Haripad, Travancore.
50. Sri Ramakrishna Mandir, Tiruvella, Travancore.
51. Sri Yogananda Asram, Allepy, Travancore.
52. Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, Quilandy, N. Malabar.
53. Premananda Ashrama, Muttom, via Haripad Travancore.

CEYLON.

54. Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Trincomali, Ceylon.
55. Sri Ramakrishna Vaidyeshwara Vidyalaya, Jaffna, Ceylon.

BURMA.

56. Sri Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram, East Rangoon.

FEDERATED MALAY STATES.

57. The Ramakrishna Math, Kuala Lumpur, F. M. S.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

58. The Vedanta Society, 34, West 71st Street, New York, U. S. A.
59. The Vedanta Society, 176, Marlboro Street, Boston, Mass, U. S. A.
60. Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, L. A. Co., California, U. S. A.
61. The Hindu Temple, 2963, Webster Street, San Francisco, California.
62. The Shanti Ashrama, California, U.S.A.
63. The Vedanta, Society, Portland, Oregon, U. S. A.

TEMPORARY RELIEF WORKS.

1. Famine, 2. Flood, 3. Plague, 4. Fire, 5. Earthquake, etc.
1. Famine Works.—In District of Murshidabad in 1896—97; 1908; (b) In the District of Devagpur in 1897; (c) At Devagpur in 1897, 1919; (d) Dakshineswar in 1897; (e) Kishanghar (Rajputana) in 1899—1900; (f) (C. P.) in 1900; (g) Tipperah, Sylhet, Nookali, and Faridpore Districts Khndwe, in 1906—07, 1915—16 and 1919; (h) Diamond Harbour, 1916—17; (i) District of Puri in 1908, 1919—20; (j) Bankura District, 1915—1916, 1919; (k) Midnapur, Garbeta, 1919; (l) Barisal, Faridpur, 1919; (m) District of Balasore, 1915; (n) Khulank District; (o) District of Manbhihoom, Bagda, 1919.
2. Flood Relief Works—
 - (a) Ghoga (Bhagalpur District) in 1899; (b) Behola Bishumpur, 1900; (c) North Bengal Flood Relief, 1918; (d) Ghatal to Hoogly District, 1909; (e) In Bankura, Hoogly, Howrah, Midnapur District, in 1913—14. (f) Birbhum, 1919; (g) In Muttra District in 1918; (h) Jenapur, Cuttack District, in 1918; (i) In Tanjore, Trichy, Coimbatore, Br. Malabar, Cochin and Travancore States in 1924.

PERIODICALS.

In English—The Prabuddha Bharata, published by the Adwaita Asram, Mayavati; (2) The Vedanta Kesari, published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras; (3) The Message of the East, published by the Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta Calif. (4) The Morning Star, published by Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Patna. (5) The Voice of Truth published by Sri In Ramakrish Ashrama, Kuala Lumpur, F. M. S. In Bengali—The Udbodhan. Tamil—Thena Ramakrishna Vijayam, published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. In Hindi—Samanway, published by the Adwaita Ashrama, 182A, Mukhtar Babu Street, Calcutta. In Malayalam—Prabuddha Keralam, published by Yogananda Ashrama, Alleppey, Travancore.