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The Upanishads and believe that ‘I am the Atman’ ”.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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### PRAYER

ॐ

ध्यायन्ते योगिनो योगात् सिद्धाः सिद्धेश्वराश्च यम् ।

तं ध्याये सततं शुद्धं भगवन्तं सनातनम् ॥

सेवे तं सततं सन्तो ब्रह्मेशोपसंज्ञकाः ।

सेवन्ते निरुणं ब्रह्म भगवन्तं सनातनम् ॥

निरुणं च निरीहं च परमात्मानमीश्वरम् ।

निरुणं सत्यं च परमं भगवन्तं सनातनम् ॥

सर्गाखामादिभूतं च सर्ववीजं परात्परम् ।

योगिनो तं प्रपद्यन्ते भगवन्तं सनातनम् ॥

वीजं नानावताराणां सर्वकारणकारणम् ।

वेदावेद्यं वेदवीजं वेदकारणकारणम् ।

योगिनो यं प्रपद्यन्ते तं प्रपद्ये सनातनम् ॥

Always do I meditate on that Being Supreme, who is eternal and pure, who is meditated upon in Samadhi by the Siddhas, Siddheswaras and the Yogins. I always serve that Lord Eternal, who is attributeless and unattached, without desires, and the Spirit Supreme, Truth itself and the Highest God who is always served by the Creator, Preserver and the Destroyer of the universe and other virtuous souls.

I salute the Eternal Bhagavan who is realised by the Yogins as the First-born in creation, the Seed of all, higher than the Highest, who is the Seed of various incarnations, the Cause of all causes, Unknowable by the Vedas, the Seed and the Cause of the Vedas and who is obtained by the Yogins.

SRI NARADA PANCH RATNAM.

## GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA\*

I

At 4 in the afternoon of Saturday, the 21st July, 1883, Sri Ramakrishna with Ram Lal and two more devotees was going in a carriage to Calcutta to pay visits to the houses of Adhar, Jadu Mallik and Khetat Ghosh. As he came out of the gate of the Garden, he found Mani approaching with a few mangoes in his hands and stopped his carriage. Mani came and bowed at the feet of the Master, and being invited to accompany him, took his seat in the carriage.

Mani is an English-educated gentleman, and did not believe in *Samskaras* (inherent tendencies derived from previous incarnations). He had however admitted to the Master a few days ago that Adhar's supreme devotion to the Master was due to his *Samskaras*. But on going home he found that he was not yet fully convinced of the truth of the theory of inherent tendencies. An elucidation of this point was the special objective of his present visit.

Sri Ramakrishna asked him, "What is your opinion of Adhar?"

Mani : I think he has great devotion.

Sri Ramakrishna : Adhar also holds a high opinion of you.

[Inscrutable ways of the Lord]

After a short silence, Mani said to the Master, "I do not find myself believing in reincarnation or inherent tendencies. Will that stand in the way of my devotion?"

Sri Ramakrishna : Enough if you believe that all is possible in His creation. Do not allow the dogmatism to possess your mind which says that 'I alone am true, all else are false'. The Lord Himself will see to the rest.

"What indeed will man understand of His ways? Infinite are his manifestations! I therefore make no effort to understand these. I have heard that nothing is impossible in His world. this is enough for me and I meditate on Him alone to the exclusion of all other thoughts. A man once enquired of Hanuman

\*Translated from the diary of M., a disciple, published originally in Bengali.

what day of the fortnight it was. Hanuman replied that he did not know what day of the week or fortnight it was, and that his only thought was Rama.

"Inscrutable are the ways of God! So near, yet so impossible to know Him! Even Balaram did not know that Sri Krishna was the Lord Himself!"

Mani : Quite true, just as you said of Bhishma.

Sri Ramakrishna : What did I say of him?

Mani : Bhishma was crying lying on his bed of arrows. The Pandavas said to Sri Krishna, 'How surprising! Our grandfather who is so wise, is yet crying in fear of death!' Sri Krishna told them to ask Bhishma the reason of his tears. Bhishma replied, 'I am crying at the thought of the mystery of the Lord's ways. O Krishna, though you yourself are ever moving with the Pandavas and protecting them, yet they have no end of their sorrows!'

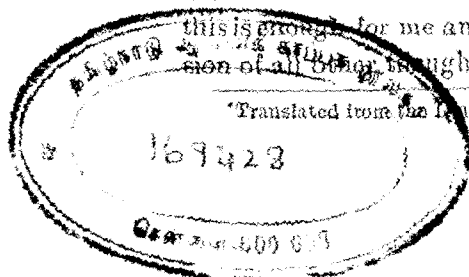
[A Revelation]

Sri Ramakrishna : He has covered everything with His Maya and does not allow us to know anything. What is Maya?—It is Kamini-kanchana. Whoever can remove this veil of Maya, can see Him. As I was once explaining this, the vision suddenly came to me of a large tank of my village, in which I saw a man drink water by removing the water hyacinth from over the surface. The water was crystal-pure. The idea was that the Sachchidananda was as it were covered by the hyacinth of Maya. He alone will have Him who would remove it.

"Listen, I am going to reveal a secret to you. Once going to answer the call of nature, I had the vision of a sort of secret door before me, but I could not see what lay behind it. I tried to make a hole with a nail-cutter, but every time the hole was made it got filled up. At last however I succeeded in making such a big aperture!"

But Sri Ramakrishna could not proceed further. After a while he remarked, "These are very high things. Just see some one is pressing close my lips!"

"His consciousness makes the world conscious. Sometimes I find the little fishes completely saturated with the same consciousness."



By that time the carriage had come to the crossing of the Sovabazar near Darmahatta. The Master continued "Sometimes I see that like rain waters His consciousness has overflowed and interpenetrated the whole universe. But in spite of all these visions and realisations, I do not feel the least proud."

*Mani* (smiling) : The idea of your being proud !

*Sri Ramakrishna* : Indeed I tell you I do not feel the least elated.

*Mani* : There once lived in Greece a man named Socrates whom the oracle declared to be the wisest of men. Surprised at the declaration, the man thought long in solitude and at last said to his friends, ' Yes, I understand.—I alone know that I know nothing, whereas all others knowing nothing think yet that they know.'

*Sri Ramakrishna* : Sometimes I think, ' What do I know that so many people come to visit me ? ' Vaishnavacharan was a great scholar. He used to say, ' What all you say can be found in the Shastras. Do you know why yet I come to you ? To hear them from your lips.'

*Mani* : Yes, all your utterances agree with the books. Navadwip Goswami also said the same thing the other day at Panihati. You said that when continuously repeated the word *Gita* hears as *tyagi*. Not exactly *tyagi* however, but *tagi*. Now, Navadwip Goswami said that both *tagi* and *tyagi* mean the same thing ; *tagi* is derived from the root *tagi*.'

*Sri Ramakrishna* : Do you observe any similarity between me and any other Sadhu or scholar ?

*Mani* : God has fashioned you with His own hands. Others he has moulded in a machine, according to fixed laws.

*Sri Ramakrishna* was surprised at these words and burst into a long laughter. At last he remarked, " But really I tell you I am not the least affected thereby."

*Mani* : Perhaps learning is of this much good that it shows that we know nothing and we are nothing.

*Sri Ramakrishna* : Quite true. Indeed, we are nothing..... Well, do you believe in English Astronomy ?

*Mani* : According to it, there can be new discoveries. By noting the irregular movements of the Uranus, they came to discover a new star (Neptune) through the telescope. An eclipse also can be calculated according to it.

*Sri Ramakrishna* : May be.

The Master's carriage was nearing the house of Adhar Sen, when he remarked to *Mani*, " Ever rest on Truth, that will bring you God-realisation."

*Mani* : You also gave another advice to Navadwip Goswami, to pray to God to remain free of His Maya.—' O God, Thee only I seek, do not bind me by Thy world-deluding Maya,—Thee alone I want !'

*Sri Ramakrishna* : Yes, you must sincerely ask this of Him.

## II

When *Sri Ramakrishna* reached Adhar's house, he was welcomed into his parlour. The devotees also seated themselves. Some neighbours came to see *Sri Ramakrishna*.

*Sri Ramakrishna* (to Adhar) : Have you not sent word to Rakhal ?

[Rakhal was at that time living with his father in the city.]

*Adhar* : Yes, Sir, I have.

But seeing the anxiety of the Master for Rakhal, Adhar sent his carriage and a man immediately to fetch him.

This present visit of *Sri Ramakrishna* to Adhar proved to be providential. There was no previous appointment. But Adhar, it appeared, had been very anxious to see the Master. And the Master came.

*Adhar* : You have not come here these many days. I called on you to-day and shed tears.

*Sri Ramakrishna* (smiling out of pleasure) : Is it so ?

Slowly it became dark, lamps were lighted in the parlour. And *Sri Ramakrishna*, having saluted the Divine Mother with folded palms, silently repeated the sacred Mantram. He then recited the sacred names of the Lord.—Govinda ! Govinda ! Sachchidananda ! Haribol ! etc. And such was the sweetness of his voice, that the hearers felt themselves absorbed in an elysian joy.

Ramlal, being asked, sang :

" O Delight of Siva, thou hast deluded the world ! Verily, the mystery is unfathomable !

" O Mother, I have heard that thy name dispels all fear. I surrender my burden unto thee, redeem me or not as thou wilt.

" Thou sustainest the whole universe and pervadest all beings. Who can know thee ? Who can say whether thou art Kali or Radha ?

" O Mother, thou abidest in the heart of every being, and as the Kundalini in the Basic Lotus.....

" Higher still in the throat, there is a sixteen-petalled lotus of the colour of smoke, which contains a void in its centre ; and when this lotus is transcended, it is all void."

When Ramlal sang the last stanza, the Master said to M., " Note this. This is what is meant by the realisation of the Formless. When the Vishuddha Chakra is transcended, 'it is all void.' Going beyond this relative world of Maya, Jiva and Jagat you attain to the Absolute. Transcendence of the Logos is the condition of Samadhi. You do it by continuous repetition of Aum and then you plunge into Samadhi."

### LESSONS OF HISTORY

Man has ever been confronted with a multiplicity of problems relating to the individual as well as national life, and the intelligence and energies of man have never ceased to unravel the tangled skein of human existence. The principles that govern and mould the life of an individual guide in no small measure the silent process of development in the collective life of a nation. The problems therefore in the life of an individual or in that of a nation are more or less the ever recurrent problems facing the cosmic life of humanity at large. Intricate as the problems are, they have presented themselves in every age in all their lurid variety, and even to-day they seem to baffle all human effort for solution by their complexity and magnitude. The Old Year has passed away and the New Year has stepped in, and it is indeed time that we must feel the hard realities on which we stand and try to evaluate the nature of progress that humanity has made in the name of 'peace and good will.' The Vedanta Kesari whose solemn function has always been to tackle the problem of human well-being, stands face to face with many a fresh complicated phenomenon that,

the altered condition of international life has brought into being. Every student of history is aware that two schools of thought have always stood side by side—one is the materialistic school of philosophy that appraises the values of life from the standpoint of its material advancement and emphasises the need of scientific manipulation of the material forces to multiply human happiness in the world. The West has been a staunch adherent of this school of thought, and today the spirit of competition has been carried so far in the various spheres of life that it has once more threatened the peace of the world as it had done so many times in the past. Whereas the other school—the school of the East—has stepped beyond the dead wall of material phenomena to 'plumb life's dim propound' and realised the true import and significance of the life eternal and placed the transcendent truth before humanity as the only solvent and determinant of human destiny. The Vedanta Kesari that enters today upon the sixteenth year of its existence has tried during this period to carry the message of harmony and peace to the earnest seekers of truth and has succeeded in no small measure in influencing human relations by an inculcation of the catholic and universal principles of the Vedanta. The magnitude of the task it has undertaken can hardly be realised unless the actualities are squarely faced. With the roll of years fresh problems are cropping up only to intensify the complexity of life. To place, therefore, before mankind an ideal that must comprehend all the aspects of human existence and effectively grapple with the living concerns of nations is surely one of the most stupendous of all human tasks. On the eve of this New Year we offer our salutations to the Lord and pray with all humility for strength and courage to cope with the sacred task and carry on our message of good will and peace to all irrespective of caste or creed, race or nationality. We take this opportunity as well to offer our cordial greetings to our readers, sympathisers and friends whose loving co-operation has stood us in great stead in every field of our activity. We sincerely believe that we shall also in future enjoy their ungrudging help and good wishes as we have hitherto done in the discharge of our sacred function.

The problems of the modern world have grown up to such huge proportions that they seem to defeat all human efforts for solution. To tackle the modern conditions of life with any amount of success one must have a critical study and analysis of the historical phenomena of the past and the present. History, as every one knows, is one of the most powerful moulding factors in the life of the nations. History has been a faithful record of the functionings of the living social organisms of the different ages from the earliest times, and even now stands as an eloquent interpreter to the intelligent souls of the

forces working towards the evolution of social order and the promotion of better understanding between man and man, nation and nation. But on the contrary it has also been urged that history is an unmitigated curse to humanity in as much as 'it keeps alive the memory of old enemies better dead, teaching that because a thing has been, therefore it always shall be; a sort of malignant old man of the sea, clinging to our shoulders and preventing us from moving to new and better things.' The history books should, in their opinion, be consumed in one vast *auto-da-fe* as did the Chinese First Emperor who wishing a new era to begin with himself, burnt all books in which were inscribed the annals of the past! But it must not be forgotten that it is not history which is the enemy of mankind but a mistaken and imperfect reading thereof. Our task is therefore not to destroy the most fascinating and humane of all studies but to understand its true implications so as to widen instead of to narrow sympathies—to find out the pervasive truth that has ever since guided the destiny of man. Unfortunately our imagination has become too dwarfed to stretch over the shining centuries of the past and cull the lessons history teaches from its pages rich with the spoils of time. It is therefore highly necessary that we should begin to study anew the history of the human race with all its synthetic bearings; for the proper study of history, says Mr. Eileen Power, must leave the student with a sense of community which is confined neither to his own class nor to his own nation, but explains his environment to every citizen of the world and thus makes him consider himself as part and parcel of humanity at large. This mentality is indeed the result of a true study of history, for it widens the visions of man and ultimately embarks him on a life that embraces the entire mankind in its catholic sweep. Rightly has Mr. Wells remarked: "There can be no common peace and prosperity without common historical ideas, and consciousness of a common history is one of the most potent of unifying agents." In fact in all our tall talks about peace and good will we studiously ignore the true lessons and implications of history and consciously or unconsciously forge new fetters for ourselves as well as for others in the sacred name of brotherhood and peace!

The craving for peace is imbedded in the very nature of man; and the philosophy of the different races is a living record of the struggle of the human mind to evolve out principles to cater to the peace and happiness of individuals as well as of nations. It is therefore no wonder that even in the midst of the clash and clatter of arms, a cry for peace would well up from the inmost depth of the human soul, and persistent attempts would be made to sing permanent truce to wars and battles. The modern world is astir with the question of

peace, and pact after pact is being formulated to cry halt to the orgy of bloodshed and violence. A careful analysis of the historical events of the European world shows that similar attempts were made by the ancient Greeks for world unity and their works were more or less based upon intellectual grounds. Their influence reached the world outside through the Romans and the Christian Church, and since the Renaissance, through all the leading ideas in art, philosophy and science. The Romans following in the wake of the Greeks contributed not a little to the fostering of a spirit of unity. Reason was conceived by them to be the basic ground for world-harmony; for reason, they argued, proclaimed that only by common action and community of thought could the growing variety and richness of human life be developed towards its natural end which the Greeks were the first to discern in the Western world. In the middle ages the conception of international life was all the more widened and it manifested a tendency to transcend the narrow bounds of race or nationality. It was eventually intensified by the forces of the French Revolution that asserted the equality of men and declared each one of them regardless of birth, colour or religion to be possessed of inalienable rights. And the ringing sentences in which Jefferson proclaimed the rights of man and of the people of America may be said to record the highest watermark the forces of European culture reached in the process of its evolution.

But how is it that inspite of such persistent attempts for world unity since the days of Greco-Roman civilisation the problem stands even now as enigmatic as before? What are then the reasons that have stood as insurmountable barriers in the way of attainment of the highest common measure of agreement among the different nations of the world? The efforts of the peace-makers of the present day, no less than those of the ancient and the medieval times have, to say the least, proved quite nugatory. The modern conception of 'nationalism' has moreover given an utter lie to the forces brought on the stage of human affairs by the French Revolution. "The schools of all European countries at the present time", says Mr. Wells, "teach the most rancid patriotism; they are centres of malignant political infection. The children of Europe grow up with an intensity of national egotism that makes them, for all practical purposes, insane." Thus time has totally narrowed down that professed idealism into rabid Jingoism which is antithetic to the growth of an international mind or universal brotherhood. To crown all, the world is vibrant with the solemn notes of Western Imperialism and all sacred professions of liberty, equality and fraternity have got inextricably sunk in the morass of commercial life. The reason for this tragic sequence in the history of European civili-

sation is indeed not far to seek. For there is evidently a woeful lack of proper recognition of the spiritual values of life in the Western idealism and this has more or less taken away from that cohesive force which is sorely needed to unify all disruptive elements and to rally them on a common platform. Rightly did Dr. Rabindranath remark in one of his speeches at the Imperial University of Tokyo: "The political civilisation which has sprung from the soil of Europe and is over-running the whole world, like some political weed is based upon *exclusiveness*. It is always watchful to keep the aliens at bay.....It is always afraid of other races achieving eminence, naming it as a peril and tries to thwart all symptoms of greatness outside its own boundaries, forcing down races of men who are weaker, to be eternally fixed in their weakness.....This political civilisation is scientific, not human.....It betrays its trusts, it enshrines gigantic idols of greed in its temples, taking great pride in the costly ceremonials of its worship, calling this patriotism. And it can safely be prophesied that this cannot go on." In fact the old Greco-Roman ideas that worked as formative forces in the world of European politics towards the creation of an international outlook have received a serious setback at the hands of the modern imperialists. And the signs of the times warrant us to believe that inspite of sweet and seasoned words of peace and equality, the imperialistic tendencies are daily growing by leaps and bounds and receiving a solid support in the actions of all the great powers of the world.

Various devices have up till now been resorted to in big political circles for the furtherance of the cause of peace. The activity of the Holy Alliance of the 19th century to maintain the integrity of political interests at the expense of weaker nationalities is still a history of recent memory. The League of Nations is the result of another gigantic effort for peace among the great powers of the world and every one knows how ineffectual do the blatant injunctions of the League prove when a nation's interests, commercial or political, are least affected. The world has of late made much of the 'noble' performance of M. Briand, Kellog and Austen Chamberlain, and has hailed the three 'peace-makers' as the greatest benefactors of humanity! Almost all the great powers including the Dominions and Dependencies have ratified the treaty and thereby lent their support to the Anti-war Paper Pact. But it must be interesting to know that America the arch-angel of this message of peace has just after the ratification of the treaty become much more engaged than before in making adequate preparation for war! The Fifteen Cruiser Bill has of late been passed by the Senate and 'a war with all its implications between England and America is not any more unthinkable today.....

The countries know fully well that they have to face this situation within the near future, and are making their plans accordingly.' The American Senate has already challenged the British command of the Seas and has demanded that even the neutrals must enjoy the right to trade with whatever nations they please without any interference from any sea power. Really 'it seems to be a case of approving the dove of peace and then welcoming the god of war'. Even Signor Mussolini while styling the Kellog Pact as transcendental, consciously or unconsciously blurts out the whole secret when he says: "They must have no illusions about the political state of Europe. When a storm is approaching everybody talks of peace. They do not want to disturb the European equilibrium but they must be ready. Nobody ought to be astounded if he called on the nation to make another sacrifice so that all their forces on sea, land and air, might be perfected!" The Armistice Day Address of President Coolidge is all the more interesting. "All human experience," said the President, "seems to demonstrate that a country that makes a reasonable preparation for defence is less likely to be subject to a hostile attack and less likely to suffer a violation of its rights which might lead to war. This is the prevailing attitude of the United States and one which I believe should constantly determine its action. To be ready for defence is not to be guilty of aggression. We can have military preparation without assuming a military spirit. It is our duty to ourselves and to the cause of civilisation, to the preservation of domestic tranquillity, to our orderly and lawful relations with foreign peoples, to maintain an adequate Army and Navy." In fact it has become the fashion of the day to talk of peace with war at the throat of other peoples. Rumbings of an approaching storm are being heard from all quarters of the globe and mighty preparations for self-defence and aggression as well as for keeping the subject races under the perpetual yoke of political thralldom are actively on foot. The relation between England and Russia, not to speak of British attitude towards Germany, Afganistan, Turkey and Persia, is one of deep-seated jealousy and suspicion. The recent developments in European politics betoken a strained relation between France and Italy. Japan is no doubt sitting on the fence but her commercial policy has been one of aggression and expansion, and as such is likely to clash with that of America and England. In view of the standing political condition of Modern Europe even an out-and-out optimist can hardly persuade himself to believe that the attitude of the British is in any sense favourable to the idea of 'practical disarmament'. And it is not an exaggeration to say that since 1914 inspite of vast volumes of pious intention hardly anything of practical value has been done to prevent future wars.

And yet we are every day being entertained from the platform and the press with highly seasoned homilies of peace and good will! Is it not a deliberate insult to the intelligence of humanity to talk of peace in season and out of season when every great power has been developed or is in a process of being developed into a huge gun-powder magazine ready to burst at the slightest spark of injured interest and when more than half the world are still being trodden rough-shod under the iron heels of European Imperialism and debarred from the enjoyment of elementary rights of man? The so-called evangelists of peace are proclaiming their gospel of freedom and equality on the one hand and forging new instruments on the other to stifle the quivering aspirations of the subject people! There is consequently an unusual stir and unrest all over the world, and this talk of peace without the necessary mental turn-over has served only to intensify human discontent and disgust.

Experiment after experiment was made in the past and is still being made in the modern world for inaugurating peace among mankind. But the history is a living witness to how all such attempts have ended in a huge fiasco. The European civilisation, as it stands to-day, is itself a deterrent force in the consummation of the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. Imperialism negatives the very idea of equality and cannot concede any such right to other powers however vaunted its professions may be. "The masses even are everlastingly duped, everlastingly martyred; they pay for others' misdeeds. Above their heads are exchanged challenges for causes of which they know nothing and for stakes which are of no interest to them. Across their backs takes place the struggle of ideas and of millions, while they themselves have no more share in the former than in the latter. For their part they do not hate. They are the sacrifice." As a matter of fact the spirit of combativeness has absolutely blinded these power-intoxicated imperialists to the true vision of life as well as to the line on which the human society should advance. Lately one member of the British Parliament, Lieut. Commander Kenworthy, in his book, "Will Civilisation Crash?" has suggested that the United States, Great Britain, Holland and Switzerland could prohibit war to all the rest of the world if they choose. For between them "they control the finance of the whole world. No nations breaking the peace could hope for any financial help against their combined boycott.....Without money, oil, cotton, wool, rubber, copper, zinc, jute, tin or edible fats, no war on the modern scale could be waged for very long. A very large proportion of the meat and wheat of the world would also be controlled by this group of peace-makers....." The writer anticipates in a mood of self-

complacency a union of America, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, France and Germany without actually facing the real issue. Is such a union at all possible without a surrender of independent action and the raising of the commonsense of those communities to the level of realising the amount of sacrifice involved? Economic interest is too powerful a wedge between nation and nation to allow a speedy rapprochement to fructify among the powers under the existing circumstances. And it is needless to state that unless people are prepared to accept the idea that the economic life of the world can be regarded and controlled as *one* system to the general advantage of the race, their aspirations for universal peace will remain the most unreal of all possible aspirations. Separate economic systems must compete, must jostle, must forestall, and must drive, for all their virtuous protestations, towards a tussle.

In fact the armoury of European politics has been emptied of its contents in the sacred name of peace and goodwill. And in the light of the experience we have gathered from the congregated historical phenomena of the Occidental world, we can emphatically assert that this world would ever remain a hellish theatre of militant nationalism unless the culture of the East comes to its rescue. For, "the completest happiness which can accrue to man henceforward will be derived from the intelligence of mankind as a whole, and from the multiple ways which man has discovered of attaining happiness.....For a long time to come, the intensest joy which man can know on earth, will be derived from *supplementing the ideals of Europe by the ideals of Asia*,"—says M. Romain Rolland in the Forerunners. And it is indeed in the East, especially in India that the ultimate principle on which world unity is to be broadbased was first discovered. It is only the discerning minds that have already recognised the truth. India—the homeland of spirituality—has always occupied the status of the Teacher of humanity in religion and various other branches of knowledge. The great philosopher Mr. Cousin truly says: "When we read with attention the poetical and philosophical monument of the East, especially those of India, which are beginning to spread in Europe, we discern there so many truths, and truths so profound and standing in so strong a contrast with those mean results which in these later days have satisfied European genius that we are tempted to bow the knee before the genius of the East, and see in that cradle of mankind the true home of philosophy." The European culture has taught the people to think in terms of the people of France, the people of England, the people of Germany, and so forth, and has thereby falsified all their professions of brotherhood and stood in the way of development of an international mind. But the glory

of Indian philosophy and culture lies in the recognition of the oneness of humanity, the unity of soul—the very democratic principle that eliminates all invidious distinction between man and man, nation and nation. There can absolutely be no room for the concession of equal rights and privileges to all irrespective of caste or creed, race or nationality, unless the fundamental unity of the universe and for the matter of that, of humanity is recognised. The Vedanta has been proclaiming this lofty idealism from time immemorial and in this present age when the need for it has been most urgently felt, it has come out with all the majesty and force of its universal principles and spiritual outlook to toll a death-knell to the conflicting interests of men and to furnish the basic ground for the establishment of human brotherhood on earth.

Many great minds have grown weary of competition, this struggle and brutality of this commercial civilisation and they are looking forward towards something better and nobler. 'Modern Christianity has utterly failed to satisfy the pressing needs of the age and the thoughtful men of the West find in our ancient philosophy, especially in the Vedanta, the new impulse of thought they are seeking, the very spiritual food and drink for which they are hungering and thirsting.' Swami Vivekananda pointed out in one of his lectures in India that the whole Western civilisation would crumble to pieces in the next fifty years if there were no spiritual foundation. "The rational West," he said, "is earnestly bent upon seeking out the rationality, the *raison d'être* of all its philosophy and ethics.....They want something more than human sanction for ethical and moral codes to be binding, they want some eternal principle of truth as the sanction of ethics. And where is that eternal sanction to be found except in the Infinite Reality, that exists in you and in me and in all, in the self, in the soul. The infinite oneness of the soul is the eternal sanction of all morality, —that you and I are not only brothers but that you and I are really one. This is the dictate of Indian philosophy. This oneness is the rationale of all ethics and all spirituality. Europe wants it to-day just as much as our down-trodden masses do." And it is not an exaggeration to state that unless this great principle is allowed to govern all the thoughts and activities of these so-called peace-maker of the world and unless all the social and political aspirations of humanity are moulded and shaped in the light of this Vedantic conception of the oneness of humanity, all attempts for peace, however organised they may be, must prove futile. Diplomacy and political camouflage can never adjust human relations and bestow lasting peace on mankind. Monsieur Clemenceau, one of the political veterans of France disgusted with politics speaks out from his retirement

at the ripe old age of 80 in the utmost agony of his soul: "No more of politics; don't talk of them. What does a man get out of it but ingratitude and grey hairs? Look at me for instance. Politics is a curse .....Once for all I want to tell you that I am through with politics. Some people think there is glory in it. I will tell you what it is, politics. It's rhubarb. Americans call it apple sauce. I call it rhubarb. Because rhubarb is worse." What a sweeping indictment against political life by a soul who has grown grey in it! Is it not still time that in the interest of peace and well-being of society, the entire mentality should be changed and orientated to the lofty idealism of the East? Mr. Eileen Power's suggestions for the promotion of such a sense of brotherhood among men are indeed worthy of attention: "A sense of the solidarity of mankind is stimulated by the teaching of world history as well as by an insistence throughout upon social history.....Social history necessarily lays more stress than does political history upon the likeness of nations, upon their independence, upon the debts which the civilisation of each owes to that of others." He further adds that every one must be taught to treat a country not as an isolated planet moving through space and at intervals colliding disastrously with other planets; but as part of a whole in which other nations are also parts. Besides, there must be a direct teaching in internationalism. "We have, for example," says he, "our Empire Day. Why not also our Humanity Day, celebrating not merely the great soldiers and sailors, who have been the glory of our nation, but all the greatmen who have conquered nature or disease, created beauty or won knowledge for the service of mankind?"

These are indeed some of the most practical suggestions coming from the pen of one whom the study of history with all its bearings has enabled to rise above all racial or national prejudices and to embrace humanity as his own. History, as already stated, is one of the most humane of all studies, and as long as humanity shall last, it, if properly studied, shall continue to exercise its wholesome influence upon the affairs of man. Is it not a pity that a boy or a girl who can reel off a long list of the wives of Henry VIII or of a host of other political figures of the different nationalities, stands sadly nonplussed when he or she is asked to name the historic figures—the figures that have proved real benefactors of humanity in every age and clime—the heroes who command the unstinted homage and admiration of humanity at large? The names of Machiavelli or Black Prince, Charlemagne or Saladin, Napoleon or Metternick are of far deeper interest to every student of history than those of Erasmus or Galileo, Froebell or Tolstoy, Buddha or Lao Tze! And the reason is not far to seek.

This attitude of mind has been developed through a long-standing educational policy that has subordinated the spiritual aspect of life to the material interests of the people. And it is a sad truth that a mental turnover cannot be expected to dawn all at once unless the human mind is trained to comprehend the spiritual values of human existence; for it is only this kind of education that would emancipate the vision of man from its narrow surroundings, raise him far above the pettiness of racialism and teach him to think and feel himself to be an integral part of entire humanity. The Indian culture, ever since the dawn of its history, has accentuated this lofty principle and has again stood before the world with all its grace and beauty to spiritualise human relations. To bring about a fresh start, to ensure the growth of an international mind, there must be renewed awakening of energy, vigorous upheavals which stimulate the will and break all obstacles into smithereens. Both the East and the West need such an awakening to the spiritual ideal; for to talk of peace and brotherhood without their proper implications is nothing short of blasphemy.

Some great minds have already shaken of their age-worn conceptions of human progress and have caught glimpses of a coming dawn of real peace and world unity on a basis of spiritual idealism. For says Romain Rolland: "Amid the warfare of the nations are being laid the foundations of spiritual peace between the nations like a light-house which reveals to widely separated vessels the distant haven where they will anchor side by side. The human mind has reached the gateway leading into a new road. The gateway is too narrow, and people are crushing one another as they endeavour to get through. But beyond it I see stretching the broad highway along which they will move and where there is room for all. Amid the encircling horrors, the vision comforts me. My heart suffers, but my spirit sees the light." If we really be sincere and act upon the universal spiritual ideal for the achievement of common good, the dreams of such visionaries, however chimerical they may seem at the present day, must materialise into action at no distant future. The human energy that is constantly being dissipated after the pursuit of material good and political rivalry, stands in the need of being mobilised and concentrated upon the ideal of common peace and happiness. Neither diplomacy nor political hypocrisy has any scope in the sacred task of peace-making. It is only sincerity and sacrifice that must be the guiding force in the re-shaping of human destiny. And if we sincerely crave for peace and harmony, equality and fraternity, we must develop an international mind through the assimilation of the sacred lessons the history teaches to mankind. Let the League or the Pact-makers profit by the teachings of history and guide and shape

their aspirations accordingly. And we doubt not if history is studied with its deeper implications and the peace-makers take full cognisance of the spiritual values of life in all their schemes for the adjustment of human relations, the question of peace and brotherhood would no longer be the figment of an idle brain but be a *fait accompli* at no distant date.

## SPIRITUALITY AND THE PROBLEM OF BREAD

By K. C. R.

Many a reader may be surprised at the title of this article. Nothing seems to be more vulgar than to talk of bread in discussing matters spiritual. Has it not been said that money is the root of all evil and that the first duty of all spiritually minded people is to turn away from all thoughts of bread? Yet one should do well to remember the beautiful parable in the Upanishads wherein a great truth is brought home to Svetaketu by means of fasting. Svetaketu did not take any food for full fifteen days and then went to his father who asked him to recite the Rik, Yajus and Sama Mantrams. "They do no longer reveal themselves to me," said Svetaketu. Then his father asked him to take some food. Svetaketu did so and came back to his father. Now he could solve every problem which his father wanted him to solve. Thus the father illustrated to Svetaketu the close interrelation between physical nourishment and the powers of the mind. When we talk of a people or of humanity, we are always concerned with "embodied" souls. So in discussing spirituality in relation to a people or a nationality, it would not be quite correct to ignore entirely the material cage in which the soul is imprisoned for the time being at any rate. It may not therefore be so fantastic to correlate spirituality with the problem of the bread. It has been said that the poverty of the poor is, in a quite literal sense, their destruction. "The study of the causes of poverty," wrote the great economist Marshall, "is the study of the causes of the degradation of a large part of mankind." It is admitted on all hands that India is at present one of the poorest countries in the world. It exports coolies to bear the whiteman's burden of 'opening' and 'developing' new countries—it is the country where half the population live beneath the subsistence level and where famine and epidemics take the maximum toll. What has been the result of this extreme poverty? Has it or has it not degraded the whole population? Some people seem to have doubts about it. There are many who think that India is the ancient home of spirituality—that though the people may have lost economic prosperity, the moral and spiritual wealth is ever on the

increase. Have not our ancient sages preached with fervour the ideal of poverty? Has it not been said that the men who wear loin cloth are the only happy men on the face of the earth? So, if 150 million people are able to put on only loin cloth and can provide only one or half a meal a day (albeit it be by necessity and not by choice), has there not been a real *en masse* achievement of spirituality? The answer is most decisively in the negative. Spirituality, if anything, must be indicative of strength—it must signify the power to rise above all temporal powers and not be crushed under them. Yet it is the latter that is happening in India, however much we may boast of our spiritual superiority over the West. If you consider the masses, they are simply being ground between the nether stone of ignorance and superstition and the upper stone of exploitation by the few. The economic condition of the masses is becoming worse day by day. This is not mere conjecture as some die-hard official economists would have us believe. Prof. C. N. Vakil lately proved in the columns of the *Young India* that according to all statistical calculations the economic condition of the country is steadily deteriorating. Where is the spirituality in a people who cannot clothe and feed themselves, who have to spend their meagre income on toddy and hemp to forget the miseries of their existence?

The plight of the English-educated few amongst the Indians is no better than that of the illiterate masses. The following appeared in the *Statesman* of March 29, 1928. *Young Bengali's Tragic Death: Unemployment Echo*:—"A pathetic story was told at the Coroner's Court in connexion with an inquest into the circumstances surrounding the death of Mrityunjay Sil (30), of Rambagan Branch Lane, Calcutta, of opium poisoning on March 14. It was stated that Mrityunjay lost his employment shortly after his marriage about a year ago. He went out daily in search of a job but in vain. In the meantime, the family, which was large, was faced with starvation and every day his mother pressed him to secure employment. After some time, he began to go out daily at 10 o'clock and return at 6, giving his mother to understand that he had obtained a situation. As a matter of fact, he had spent this period in making an unsuccessful hunt for employment. On March 14, he was found lying ill in his room. He could hardly speak but his mother gathered from him that he had taken opium. He was immediately removed to hospital where he died shortly after his admission. A letter was found in his handwriting, which contained the confession that, having failed to secure employment and being unable to bear the sight of his family's privations, he had poisoned himself. A verdict of suicide was returned." This account appeared in an

obscure corner of a daily newspaper; but probably it does give a better idea of the actual condition of the middle classes than the most sombre array of statistics. Just as one single tumour may be the outward indication of the poisoning of the whole organic system, so one single suicide of the above description may be the indication of a malady that is eating into the vitals of our social system. The unfortunate fact is it not only 'may be' but actually 'is'. If there was one Mrityunjay who actually committed suicide, there are thousands of Mrityunjays who think that life is an unbearable burden—who have neither the courage to live nor the courage to die. Our condition is one of "death in life" in the words of Coleridge or one of Living Death in the words of Mahatma Gandhi. One fails to see any spirituality in this condition—it is neither spirituality nor materialism, it is "Tamas" pure and simple.

What then must we do? If the people are to regain their powers of the body, of the mind and of the spirit, they must have food to eat. Again, this food was snatched away from their mouth because they had lost all spiritual and physical qualities. Verily, we are in the midst of a most vicious circle a people could ever be in. Poverty, moral degradation, foreign subjugation have all combined to form a morass in which the whole population is sinking deeper and deeper. There is a class of people who think that no improvement is possible till the country has shaken off the foreign yoke. Everything depends on the solution of the political question. On the other hand one can as well argue that it is impossible to improve the political condition unless there is an intense desire in the hearts of the whole population for the attainment of freedom. This desire cannot grow unless and until the people possess a minimum standard of education, morality and economic well-being. The saddest tragedy of an ignorant life is that the sufferer himself can never realise the misery of it—he can never perceive the necessity of a change. Again, there is no courage and dash in a people living below the subsistence level, and even if they have momentary visions of freedom, they cannot overcome their lethargy and work incessantly for the attainment of the goal. The situation is thus a most complex and critical one. There is obviously an impasse.

When such a crisis faces a nation, there is but one remedy. That remedy is to appeal to the God in man to rouse himself to dispel doubt and despair. The fall of the people began with the loss of spirituality. A false ideal of wordly renunciation did also probably play an important part. The philosophy of inaction or turning away from the weary walk of life found a most ready response in the hearts of

men whom a tropical and enervating climate does incessantly incline towards passivity and idleness. To fight this deadly disease nothing is more necessary than a preaching of the philosophy of Action or Karma Yoga. The great and eternal truths that impart strength and courage must be taught anew so as to breathe new fire and glow in the dying embers of spirituality in the people. Preaching from the texts is of no use; preaching to be of any use must be done through life. This preaching has already begun and we can already see the new ferment in national life. Those who think that religion has no place in politics hold an absurd position. If the body is already in bondage what is it that must revolt and throw off the yoke? It is undoubtedly the spirit. The soul is always free, and it can as well free the body whenever it wants to. Soul force is the ultimate force that overcomes all resistance. So, awake, arise and stop not till the goal is reached.

## INDIAN METAPHYSICS

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

### CHAPTER I: Introduction

"How charming is divine philosophy!

Not harsh and crabbed as some dull fools suppose,

But musical as is Apollo's lute.

And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets where no crude surfeit reigns."—Milton.

No subject in the world is or can be more fascinating than a study of the evolution of Indian Metaphysics. To Indian philosophy may well be applied the description regarding the Mahabharata: What is elsewhere is here and what is not here is nowhere else;—यदिहास्ति तद्व्यत्र यत्रहोस्ति न तत्रचित्. Indian philosophy is subtle enough to task the acutest minds and has at the same time a practical and pragmatic value as it is well and wisely related to ethics and religion. Professor Das Gupta says well: "Philosophy owes its origin to the deep-seated human longing after some transcendent finality and philosophy must be expected to satisfy this longing by ennobling and elevating humanity to its high moral and spiritual destiny." This function is most amply fulfilled by Indian philosophy. We can realise this if we have a grip of its central doctrines and see the wonderful pageant of its procession through the ages. Its bewildering variety which is however only the rich blossoming of a

central unity of life, its history extending over millennia, and its subtlety and complexity are such as may well daunt the most subtle and soaring intellects. It has of late been studied and expounded by many able men without and within India. This is a suitable occasion to sum up the studies of Indian Metaphysics and present in a brief form its orderly evolution.

The Indian philosophy, like the fabled Minerva of Greek mythology, was born in full panoply and with regal mien. It was the science of sciences (*adhyatma vidya vidyanam*—as the Gita says) and was the sun of the solar system of the Indian culture. It was a home-grown plant and was not a borrowed possession. Its distinction was that it was in vital alliance with religion and with ethics, and profoundly affected individual and social life. It sought the inner light and then, having found it, illumined by its aid the outer life. It has been decried as it is not pure speculation and has set pragmatic and spiritual values before its gaze. But it seems to me that this trait is not strength and not its weakness. In India philosophy is not a theory but is a *sadhana*. It has been further said that it is pessimistic. This again is an unfounded charge. Professor Bosanquet says: "I believe in optimism but I add that no optimism is worth its salt that does not go all the way with pessimism and arrive at a point beyond it." It is in this sense that Indian philosophy is pessimistic and yet optimistic. Professor Das Gupta has well shown "this optimistic nature of the Indian temperament". It alone has realised and revealed the core of Ananda (Bliss) in the sheath of evanescence.

Thus Indian Metaphysics is rooted in morality and blossoms in philosophic truth and bears the fruit of God-realisation. Morality and philosophy and religion are various aspects of at-one-ment with the universe. Philosophy deals with universal values, and Religion deals with absolute values and reveals the relation of souls and the universe to the First and Supreme Causes of All and links them up to Him in the unity of love or in perfect identity. Thus metaphysics is the liberator of the Infinite in the Finite. The Bible says: "Know the Truth and the Truth will make you free." I shall show how this function is adequately performed by Indian Metaphysics.

### CHAPTER II: The Sources of Indian Metaphysics

The eternal source of Indian Metaphysics is the Eternal Veda. It is not necessary for me to go in this work into the vexed question about the date of the Veda. Max Muller says: "Every verse, nay every word in them, is an authentic document in the history of the greatest empire, the empire of the human mind, as established in the second millennium B.C." The researches of Lokamanya B. G. Tilak

have pushed back the date by some more millennia. As I am concerned only with the metaphysical ideas, it is enough for me to state here that the Hindus believe the Vedas to be the eternal scripture and to have been taught by God for the salvation of humanity.

#### *The Vedas*

Though to the Western *savants* and critics the Vedas are the babblings of infant humanity groping towards the light, the Hindu thinkers as well as the ordinary Hindu people have regarded the Vedas as revelation and the Vedic sages as the revealers of the Eternal Truth and the transmitters of the eternal tradition. An exposition of orthodox Hindu philosophy will be incomplete if this view of the authority of *Sabda* or *Sruti*, i.e., the Vedas is ignored or is damned with faint praise. The Hindu philosophers alone have been able to reconcile revelation and reason and thus a rational account of revelation and a revelatory view of the real place of reason in life and superlife.

In regard to the religion of the Rig Veda we have had a great deal of mutually destructive interpretations. Some savants call it the worship of the powers of Nature. Some call it "an allegorical representation of the attributes of the Supreme Deity." Yet others seek to find secret doctrines and mystic philosophies there. The key to the Rig Veda must be sought within itself and in the Upanishads and it is indisputably apparent there. The Rig Veda declares in I, 164, 46: *एकं सदिमा बहुधा वदन्ति*.—(It is one: The sages describe it variously). It is the various partial manifestations of the Supreme Godhead—whether they are thirty three or more—that are hymned in the Rig Veda while the Upanishads reveal the nature and essence of the Supreme Godhead.

Dr. Radakrishnan and others follow the Western savants in calling the Vedic sages as primitive poetic souls. No one can disprove such a theory but it would have been in a book by an Indian philosopher to affirm that all schools of Indian philosophy unite in regarding the sages as the seers and revealers of Eternal Truth. The Rig Veda reveals according to them not "the process of God-making in the factory of man's mind" but the process of the self-revelation of God to man through the eternal sounds of scriptures. The Rig Veda reveals not polytheism or syncretism or henotheism (a word coined by Professor Max Muller) but the highest aspects of the Hindu religion in all its compositeness, though the systematisations of the religion came later on. We find in it not merely monotheism but monism, i.e., the realisation of the Blissfull Absolute which is the Oversoul of all. Human thought has not yet climbed higher than the height of the

golden declaration—*एकं सदिमा बहुधा वदन्ति*. Professor MaxMuller has well said in his *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*: "In fact, the Vedic poets had arrived at a conception of the Godhead which was reached once more by some of the Christian philosophers at Alexandria, but which even at present is beyond the reach of many who call themselves Christians."

In the Vedas we find clear references to the caste system and to the doctrines of Karma and Metempsychosis, and to the doctrines of Heaven and Hell, though it is the fashion of Western savants and their Eastern followers and admirers to deny these palpable facts. I have dealt with these questions elsewhere and refrain from going into them here from fear of undue elaboration. Dr. Radakrishnan and other scholars in India subscribe to the theories propounded by Western scholars about these matters, about Aryans and Dasyus, and about other matters of Western speculation. Dr. Radakrishnan thinks that the Atharva Veda represents aboriginal witchcraft and demonology absorbed by the Aryan faith! To him "the religion of the Yajur Veda is a mechanical sacerdotalism." He asserts: "A rigid soul-deadening commercialist creed based on a contractual motive took the place of the simple devout religion of the Vedas." We find in his book and other modern Indian works the cheap and stale Western gibes at Brahminical priestcraft. But it is enough to say that these theories and guesses are not the Indian views. They are not the views of the great thinkers of India's past or the bulk of the thinkers in India today. All the Vedas are primarily devoted to the revelation of the Supreme realisable in nature and in man, whatever other things they contain; because they seek to meet in a manifold way the manifold needs and desires and aspirations of the human spirit. The Gita says—*तैगुण्यविषया वेदाः* and also *वेदेषु सर्वरहमेव वेद्यः*—(The Vedas have the Gunas as their object; I alone am revealed by all the Vedas). After such a declaration by the divine lips, we do not want the mocking theories of mere men. I have already referred to the Rig Veda declaration and may also refer here to the Atharva Veda declaration (X, 8, 43):

"The lotus flower with nine doors,  
Bound with tricoloured strands  
What wonder resides within it  
That the Brahman-knowers enjoy."

#### *The Philosophy of the Upanishads*

In the Upanishads we find the sublimest of the spiritual ideas of the world. They clearly proclaim the One, Eternal, Infinite Supreme Godhead and describe it in terms of fervid rapture. I shall not

discuss here whether they inculcate Monism or Dualism or Pluralism. They elaborate the great truth already declared in the Rig Veda, (*Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti*). They take us from the outward self to Immanence, and Transcendence and eventually to the Absolute. They lead us to a realisation of the Eternal *Sachchidananda* (Being, Consciousness and Bliss). They analyse the three recurrent states of our consciousness and show how our true self is separate from them and shines with a steady unvarying light above all limitations of time and space and causation. The self is not an emptiness or an abstraction but the deepest and widest and highest consciousness. Its immediacy in pure experience is a matter of self-realisation. The Upanishads work out clearly the concepts of Brahman and Atman. It is not possible to discuss the great *Mahavakyas* or supreme spiritual utterances contained in the Upanishads. They enable us to reach that unity which unifies and transcends the dichotomy of subject and object. This is a spiritual fact which has to be discerned and realised spiritually. *Jnana* is the name given in the Upanishads to such spiritual discernment and realisation. The Absolute cannot be reached by the senses or by the mind.

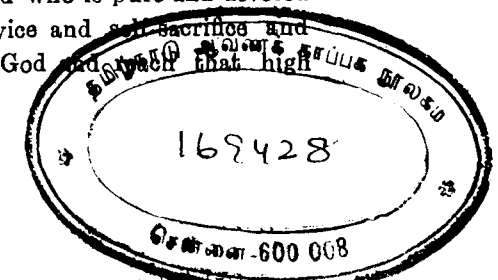
The Upanishads teach further that Brahman is both the material cause and the efficient cause of the universe. They state that "It alone existed at the beginning," that "It created Itself by itself," and that "It created the world and entered into it." The interrelation of the real unity with the apparent plurality is brought home to us by many symbols and images in the Upanishads. No school of Hindu thought—leaving Buddhism apart—declares the world to be an illusion. The search and attainment of the Blissful Absolute is the supreme glory of the Upanishads—a glory which they share with no other sources of Truth in the universe. A. B. Keith says well in his *Sankhya System*: "The Upanishads are essentially devoted to the discovery of the Absolute, and diverse as are the forms which the Absolute may take, they do not abandon the search, nor do they allow that no such Absolute exists."

Dr. Radhakrishnan says: "The Upanishads do not support an abstract conception of the ultimate reality. Their philosophy is not so much a monism as an adwaitism (not two-ness).....While it denies duality, it does not affirm that all things could be dissolved into one except in a figurative sense." This shows as much confusion of thought and language as the great scholar Thibaut's statement in his translation of the Vedanta Sutras that there are passages in the Upanishads "whose decided tendency is to represent Brahman as transcending all qualities, as one undifferentiated mass of impersonal intelligence." Brahman is not regarded as an abstraction or as a mass

of undifferentiated intelligence in the Upanishads at all. The highest Upanishadic thought does not approximate Brahman to a kind of spiritual nebula! Dr. Radhakrishnan detects some subtle difference between monism and adwaitism. On the other hand the Upanishadic declaration is *ekam eva advitiyam* (one only and without a second). There is not a mere figurative dissolution of the many into one. The affirmation of the phenomenal and relative (*vyavaharika*) reality of the many and of the absolute and noumenal reality of the One is the highest Upanishadic declaration. Brahman is One and there is nothing but Brahman. It is not correct to call it "an undifferentiated mass of impersonal intelligence." It is beyond all names and forms and transcends the categories of space and time and causation. But it is not an abstraction, because it is a realisation and whatever is a realisation cannot be called a mere abstraction. There is a stage or plane or level or type or grade of experience which is beyond what is known as the *Triputi* or Triad of Knower, Knowledge, and Known. We must use in regard to it any words which savour of the phenomenal world. The nearest approach to a description of its nature and being is contained in the famous description *Sachchidananda*. It is clear that Dr. Radhakrishnan and others are raising and laying a ghost when they intend that Brahman is an abstraction. Dr. Radhakrishnan is involved in a hopeless attempt to reconcile Vedanta and Bergsonism in an illogical manner by saying that "within the Absolute we have real growth, creative evolution" (Volume I, page 198). The doctrine of the experience as the One Self is not pantheism because pantheism excludes transcendence; it is not idealism but it does not say that the world is a mental creation but affirms the relative and phenomenal reality of mind and matter and declares also that the Absolute is above and beyond mind and matter and is the one and only true existence; it is not correctly describable as monism, because this word has become associated with the theory that the universe is an evolution of a material substance whose derivatives are matter and mind. It affirms that there is a supreme plane of absolute realisation of the One Brahman as *Sachchidananda*. I shall go more fully into this question later on in this work.

Let no one imagine for a moment that such an exalted view of reality could find no place for devotion or duty or altruism. The Upanishads are the source of all the *mantras* and the cults of later Hinduism and emphasise in unmistakable terms the need for adoration of God and the imperativeness of His Grace. They declare also that only one who is sinless and who is pure and devoted to his duty and who lives a life of service and self-sacrifice and renunciation can attain true devotion to God and that high

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level of Jnana or meditation and wisdom which will bring to us the realisation of the Absolute. Dr. Radhakrishnan says well: "The ideal of ethics is Self-realisation." Let no one stigmatise this view as selfishness. The self meant in the phrase "Self-realisation" is that supreme height of being which is the culmination of all purity, all love, and all wisdom. Morality is thus a means and not an end—a noble means to the noblest end. Dr. Radhakrishnan says well: "A life of reason is a life of unselfish devotion to the world." I would add that a life of unselfish devotion to the world leads to a life of unselfish devotion to God which leads to a life of ceaseless meditation on God which leads to the highest realisation of God as Self and of Self as God. Dr. Radhakrishnan says: "The end of religion is the transcendence of religion. Ideal religion overcomes the duality with which it starts. Religious worship starts with fear, passes through reverence, love and communion with the eternal, and culminates in the ecstatic life, where God and the soul melt into each other. Religious worship has to be accepted until the perfect condition is reached." The perfection is in the *turiya* state or the state of transcendental intuition where we realise the Absolute. This state is apprehended in dim and imperfect way in the following fine passage in Baron Von Hegel's *Eternal Life*, where he speaks of trance conditions "which appear to the experiencing soul, in proportion to their concentration, as timeless, i.e., as non-successive, simultaneous, hence as *eternal*... The eternity of the soul is not here a conclusion drawn from the apparent God-likeness in other respects, of the soul when in this condition, but the eternity, on the contrary, is the very centre of the experience itself, and is the chief inducement to the soul for holding itself to be divine. The soul's immortality cannot be experienced in advance of death, whilst its eternity, in the sense indicated, is or seems to be directly experienced in such 'this life' states. Hence the belief in immortality is here derivative, that in eternity is primary."

I must here stop my attempt to compress and express the wonderful doctrine of the Upanishads. Strangely enough Dr. Radhakrishnan says: "Its (Upanishad's) weakness lies in the fact that this synthesis is achieved not so much by explicit reason as by intuition." To arrive at this view after exalting intuition over reason and asserting the unfitness of reason to realise the Absolute is to let one's exposition go up like a rocket and come down like a stick. While the Upanishads are founded on the Vedic doctrines of ritual and prayer and devotion and take them towards their natural goal and fruition in the doctrine of the realisation of the Absolute, Dr. Radhakrishnan is in this fact a "temporising". He says: "They began as a movement

towards the liberation of the individual from the shackles of authority and excessive conventionalism. They ended in rivetting old chains. Instead of establishing new values for life, they tended to propagate the traditional one." This view is a mere echo of Western criticism. Dr. Radhakrishnan proceeds to say: "The lofty idealism of the Upanishads did not realise itself as a popular movement. It never influenced society as a whole.....It was an age of spiritual contradiction and chaos. The teaching of the Upanishads became so flexible as to embrace within it the most diverse forms of doctrine from a refined idealism to a crude idolatry. The result was that the higher religion was swamped by the lower." This is a thoroughly wrong and unhistorical estimate. The Upanishadic thought permeated the entire Hindu Society. There was neither contradiction nor chaos but a graduated ascent. The higher religion, instead of being swamped by the lower, sweetened and uplifted and transformed the lower.

Dr. Radhakrishnan was evidently swept out of his earlier mood by the tyranny of Western scholarship and by a love of antithesis and paradox and epigram. He says that a revolt was inevitable against the Upanishadic muddle, that the Buddhists and the Jainas and the Charvakas led a kind of radical revolt while the Bhagavad Gita led a kind of conservative revolt, in the company of the later Upanishads. He says: "It may be that these radical and conservative protests against the religion as it prevailed in the post-Upanishadic period were formulated in different parts of the country, Buddhism and Jainism in the east and Bhagavad Gita in the west, the ancient stronghold of the Vedic religion. It is to this period of intellectual ferment, revolt and reconstruction that we now pass." There is a school of thinkers today who think that the future is always better than the past and the present, just as there was a school of thinkers who held that the past is greater than the present and the future. Dr. Radhakrishnan wishes to be on the side of the future as against the past. It is, first of all, incorrect history to treat the Gita as belonging to the same time as Buddhism. Further, in the life of a nation's thought there are backward as well as forward movements. Buddhism was a revolt against caste and ceremonialism and dug its own grave by attacking also the finer aspects of Vedic religion and even negating God. But the Gita is, and has always been, rightly regarded as a fulfilment and synthesis of Vedic and especially Upanishadic thought.

(To be continued)

## WHERE ARE WE?

Svami Nirlepananda

## I

Tagore in one of his superb Bengali songs has very straightforwardly put the query—*Lo! the Great Day is at our doors, but where is Ind?* As a matter of fact this forms one of the most acid and crucial questions to ask ourselves at this present moment of living universal history.

From many a city political platform has this line been sung in a most touching and mournful choir-note. Amidst electricities, wirelesses, race-courses, cinemas, theatres, finely executed horse and human dances with their allied amusements, filtered tap-water, captivating trade-firms, aeroplanes, automobiles, buses, frequent panics and high-road accidents, constant commotions, mass productions, horse and electric street-cars, rickshaws, art galleries, universities, museums, Gothic arches, columns and other styles of architectural monuments, dockyards and mills, spaciouly lawned and graceful official and non-official series of buildings (leaving out of consideration of course the dirty and immoral hovels of the darkly contoured slum-quarters which are just hidden patch-spots in the moon-like faces of cities) and a constantly moving mass of temporising hotel-spenders, excitement-kept-up rabbles whose sole interest is dissipation,—one is apt to be thoroughly enchanted, *mesmerised* as it were by the magic-wand of a classical deity. The artificial glamour of a city-civilisation is apt to mislead us and bring in wrong impressions about the true state of affairs. But not certainly in all cases. It could not cheat a General Booth who had the stout heart to catch glimpses of *Darkest* England amidst the surface illuminations of British cities. He had trained his eyes to detect the reality amidst all enmeshing masquerades. That was just because he had a good amount of real *education* in him which ought to mean an expansion of heart. And his spirit worked undaunted. He was instrumental in creating all over the world gradually a net-work of institutions filled with a band of sincere, disciplined workers fired with what is now known as Salvation Army ideals and methods.

It is far from us to minimise city-workers for the uplift of the mass of sunken Indian humanity. Cities have played in our ancient culture-history quite an important part. They have been the repositories of knowledge, trade and fine arts. Outside pushes and

onward blows from their quarter have set whole villages astir. Villagers have very often received the stimulus of progressive idealism from them. Ideas have radiated and diffused from these live-barometers. Bharatavarsha's past was intimately connected and shaped by some of these famous city-centres—all very active and living factors—Purushapura, Takshashila, Mulasthanapura, Kapilavastu, Kusinara, Indraprastha, Jaipur, Ayodhya, Mathura, Brindavan, Varanashi, Prayaga, Gaya, Vaisali, Pataliputra, Kanoj, Malwa, Kamarupa, Nalanda, Champa, Tamralipta, Pratisthana, Nasik, Mangalore, Cranganore, Madura or the Southern Mathura, Kanchi, Kalyana, Badami, Mamallapura, Tamraparni—and a host of others. As a matter of fact, magnificent, *cultured* cities with a constantly moving population are not altogether new features in our land. Material improvements and a thousand and one facilities, comforts, amusements, etc., have naturally been on the increase as inevitable time-processes. As a nation we have boldly to welcome them. It would not do to nervously shake before these in unbeseeming awe and stupefaction. We must practically exemplify our inner capacities for a timely adjustment before the ever increasing onrush of the outside world. If it lies within our power, let us hail the day when like modern Japan we are able to extend benefits of education, sanitation, electricity, telephone, etc., to remotest villages. That day when we will be in a position to show befitting practical concern for the uplift of the distant village ploughboy, will be decidedly a red-letter day again in our national upheaval. Each and every life has its distinct function to fulfil in the social totality. For we must not forget to remember the glory that was India's. In our present morbidity and extreme lethargic temperament we are apt to overlook the secret of India's past pre-eminence. Indian civilisation extended zealously its light and culture ages after ages successively over the Eastern Seas to Java and Borobudur (—*Vara Buddha*), to the Mediterranean seaboard, to Mesopotamia, Central and Eastern Turkistan, Khotan, Tibet, China, Japan, Korea and other lands. In all these definite points of extra-Indian territorial jurisdictions one may, if he so likes, still tap and examine the huge mass of materials,—tangible, concrete evidences unearthed, which all testify to the happy blending in the Indian temperament of a collateral, twin spirit of *intense rest* and *intense activity*. It was an undying, rare sort of union accomplished on the Indian soil. The Vedas are our sole solace so far as the prehistoric or early historic periods of the extension of Indian civilisation is concerned. For the earliest strata, linguistic evidences must suffice under present circumstances. A comparative study of Hebraic and Avestic literatures reveal points of contact. For the next age, remains of Mesopotamian

art treasures, a few fragmentary early inscriptions like that of Boghaz Kuiu, Egyptian monuments and archaeological traces, Greco-Roman literatures, Saracenic culture-monuments,—all give us distinct traces of a healthy interchange of ideas and commodities between India and abroad. Indian civilisation and culture was a unique union of the eternal polarities of life,—at one end extremely pragmatic and at another, scrupulously idealistic. Perhaps it alone amidst the brilliant galaxy of ancient races showed to humanity the necessity of utilizing to our utmost gain the respective times at our disposal by dividing and sub-dividing them arithmetically into minutest scientific units like *Palas*, *Anupalas*, *Vipalas*, *Supalas*, etc. That was for the ordinary world. For the limited few again, it taught and enunciated still fuller schemes for merging completely one's mind in an ocean of transcendental realisation beyond name, form, space and time. The Indian yogis were too cautious to throw broadcast ideas of absolute continence and renunciation all too cheaply and indiscriminately. Later Buddhism and pseudo-Vaishnavism did this mistake in the too sacred name of religion and the result was our racial downfall. Some of the ancient Eastern Empires as well as the hegemony of Rome had to dig their own graves amidst a rank moral degradation. From a particular point of view Sahajiya Buddhism and a rotten Tantrikism stand condemned in bringing about a lamentable social enervation. But so long Indian civilisation could maintain its integrity and smilingly face all manners of external attacks just because it had evolved a strong ground of excellent moral adjustment. It had put the highest credit and fame most unstintedly upon perfect morality and the ideal was ever kept at a high pitch, above everything. *Nihisreyas* or *Moksha* or *Nivritti Marga* was ever for the few. Commonly *Trivarga*—*Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kama*,—the trio were to be pursued, to begin with. Swami Vivekananda clearly pointed out this distinction in his original Bengali thesis,—*The East and the West*. It is decidedly foolish or at best a very lamentable dearth of real knowledge which constantly dins into our ears that this land has been ruined for its tenets of *Vairaggyam*. To a student of ancient Indian culture it is a piece of scandalous lie. Extreme slothfulness and avoidance of labour were never in India mistaken for genuine spirituality. Look at the repeated, strong counsels of Sri Krishna to Prince Arjuna to be up and doing and fight out the enemy. *Abhyudaya* or worldly pre-eminence or progress was to be pursued.

## II

From talks on towns and our race-ideals let us come down to the lower level and face real India. We cannot forget the fact that our life and blood, our real kith and kin are really in the cottages however

much we may try to avoid their contact. Our dilapidated and disease-stricken villages are no longer thriving and smiling but very fast fading and dying away before our very eyes. And we are repeating a pseudo-fatalistic philosophy. Krishna taught us *activity*. We have too easily forgotten it. The West has taken it up. For our downfall and abjectly miserable condition we are entirely to be blamed. We have allowed our fair fields to be exploited by foreigners and are now ourselves crying piteously for food. Even Western historians have informed us that as late as 1813 India maintained its fame of wealth so far as Indians themselves were concerned. In fact, it still forms the merry exploiter's raw-material-supplying arena and a much-coveted dumping ground. At the beginning of the last century the British Admiralty placed its orders for battleships at the skilful hands of Indian shipbuilders of Bombay. We leave out of count of course India's good name for being internally a veritable *El Dorado* as mentioned by ancient extra-Indian historians.

Ninety-three per cent. of India's total population live in villages. So far as Bengal is situated let us call out some staggering, statistical figures. Our study of a single province as a typical example illustrating the condition of the whole country will suffice. It will serve as a figure-post in pointing out the true track we are in. Roughly speaking the first traces of malaria in Bengal come under living old memory.

In this province ninety-three per cent. of people again depend on agriculture. The recent Tenancy legislation is of vital importance to real Bengal. According to Sir P. C. Roy it has put unjust powers at the hands of Zamindars and other middlemen. Finally, it will enhance merely the misery of the ryots. But there are also some who hold the opinion that, whatever may be the vacant and absurd dream of equalisation of property from the camp of so-called sociologists, the Bengal Tenancy Act has been after all very equitable to all impartial judges, in spite of the one-sided tenant-sponsors. Do you mean to say that the large sums invested by the Zamindars and middle classes will not fetch any preference or privilege? The hard labour of the ryot has its own value, an *immense* one, no doubt. But the financiers are not to be neglected. The preferences granted to the Zamindars, do not appear to be an injustice, when the question of transference or sale of land comes up. Our illiterate, low caste ryots very often show want of worldly wisdom. In cases of a marriage or *Sradh* in the family they are sometimes most thriftlessly seen to mortgage their landed properties at exorbitant interests. To spend more than what one can afford to do on such social occasions is anything but desirable. I doubt whether the unreserved right of sale of lands of all kinds

granted to the ryots by the present piece of legislation, will ultimately come to their advantage. (But by the way, much also can be said against the doctrine of eternal minordom on the part of the ryots. The right to commit mistakes paves the way sometimes to a right use of prerogatives). The Santhals and other aboriginal races have been denied such rights by the law. And it still rightly continues in vogue.

As circumstances stand now the proportion of cultivated land is per capita  $1\frac{3}{4}$  Bighas. The total amount of the ryots' debts have come up to nearly sixty crores of rupees. Our average longevity is twenty-two years and seven months. Two boys out of every three have invariably some physical ailment. This is the sad extremity at which we have arrived. Out of Bengal Governments' total net income of about eleven crores nearly two crores and twenty lacs come from Excise. The educational expense per head per annum amounts to five annas and one pice, for health—three pice, for agriculture—two pice, and for industry,—one pice. The total provincial police expense comes up to nearly two crores per annum! And it is useful to remember in this connection that Bengal's total population is four crores and sixty-six lacs.

There are certain staggering disease death-toll figures. Deaths from Malaria,—two persons per minute, from Pneumonia,—one per three minutes, from Pthysis—one per four minutes, from Dysentery,—one per five minutes, from Cholera,—one per five minutes, from Puerperal diseases,—one per eight minutes, from Tetanus,—one per fifteen minutes, from Kala-Azar,—one per half an hour, from Typhoid,—one per hour.

Lengthy comments on the above are unnecessary. Let us remember comparatively with the above provincial-list some all-India figures. The chief cry of the country as a whole is—food, food! more food! Perhaps for the reason of being convinced satisfactorily of our lamentable backwardness and abject poverty the Swami Vivekananda has advised his young countrymen to go out by hundreds and thousands in order to realise where they are. And in some of his encouraging personal epistles he has profusely given vent to his full mother-heart's fill of pity and says point blank that the sole object of his western visits was to procure *roti* for his hungry countrymen in exchange for his spirituality. He does not hide his inner feelings. He boldly speaks out. Our main defect, says he, is that we have not enough to eat. Not less than forty millions of India's people (and that, important to remember, almost equalises the total population of Great Britain) do not know what is one full meal a day. Our cottage industries could not stand competition with the mass productions of

scientific factories and mills and consequently had to perish. Our mainstay now is agriculture. And it is known full well from the examples of materially advanced countries that their financial strength rests elsewhere. We know for example that only twenty-five per cent. of the national income of the United States of America come from agriculture. Again nearly sixty per cent. of our revenues are spent over India's defences. Side by side with this let us cast our eyes at other lands. The whole of India with a population of over two hundred and twenty millions spend on education only about one half of what the single State of New York spends on her one million citizens. Most shameful for us we have again created innumerable divisions in our social ranks most invidiously against all humanistic considerations. India's unsolved problem of untouchability is making itself piteously felt at every external pressure with compound interest. It is stupendously insulting to ourselves. It is our social body's sadly affected zone of moral leprosy. India's diseased mind speaks out from that quarter in dire agony. Only when we Hindus have received recently the enemy's cruel axes over our social body, we have been reminded tragically of our rank mistakes in perpetuating the untouchability problem. Many important and useful portions of ourselves have in time become positively antagonistic to the majority's welfare. If charitably treated these would have found our main bulwark. The blame is to be put on the shoulders of the higher classes. This problem is our own creation. It is one of the milestones on the road of our ruin. It has spelt ossification, atrophy, labefication—and all that. Where is the new social Archimedes who will discover a novel, health-producing way out of the present impasse and jubilantly cry *Eureka!*

Twenty-eight millions are still in the category of untouchables. The South has sinned far more than the North comparatively speaking. And it must pay. Until and unless the Pariah-electrons are totally neutralised from our social body our process of a new conversion and purging will not be complete. True that the U. S. A. with lesser population than ours, has her twelve million negroes. But the existence of evils in other lands is no ground why we should nurture them in our midst. While speaking generally, we are sinking down every moment, taken as a totality as well as in detailed national life-considerations.

The Department of Commerce in U. S. A. jubilantly announces its fuller lease of life. Figures indicate that the total wealth of U. S. A. has increased over seven-fold in the past fifty years. The number of wage-earners trebled. Since 1880, her population has

more than doubled. Individual deposits in Banks there, have increased by nearly twenty-four times and by the end 1927 the deposits amounted to the stupendous total of three hundred and twenty thousand million dollars. Last year America's foreign trade reached the highest level since 1920.

Where do we stand? Let us ask ourselves and do what lies in our power. The whole of India is not and was not and cannot be a camp of recluses. Money considerations must come when the general welfare is adjudged. In fact finance is the surest index which reveals the true state of land. As one travels from province to province and from country to country this contrast in theoretically set figures materialises and becomes obtrusively, and often sadly actual before our very eyes. And like Vivekananda it urges us to think fifty times before we advise renunciation to a mass which is extremely sunken in idleness and a poverty almost proverbial. Whenever a young man went to Sri Ramakrishna for becoming a monk he used flatly to inquire whether he had enough to eat. *Vairagya* by a famished soul is compulsory and decidedly spurious, not genuine.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**The Indian Teachers in China : by Phanindra Nath Bose ; published by S. Ganesan, Triplicane, Madras.**

The author tries to demonstrate in this book India's relation with China, how Buddhism penetrated into China, how the Indian monks established cultural centres there, and influenced the religion and literature of that country. Not only does he give us a list of Indian Buddhist monks who preached in China, and the Sanskrit books they translated into Chinese, but also interesting biographical details with regard to some of the most important of them. These monks, by the immensity of their numbers, by the missionary zeal they evinced, and by the intellectual vigour they displayed in acquiring mastery over a language like Chinese, will surely serve as an inspiration to the present generations of India, and as eye-openers to those who entertain poor ideas about the achievements of the Indians in foreign lands.

**The Doctrine of the Bhagavad-Gita : by Pandit Bhavani Shankar ; published by J. J. Vimadalal, Hummum Street, Fort, Bombay : Price As. 8.**

In this booklet the author gives a clear analysis and exposition of the Bhagavad Gita and brings its difficult doctrine within the easy comprehension of all. It will be a great help to all students of this scripture.

**The Wisdom of the Rishies : by T. L. Vaswani ; published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.**

This book by Sadhu Vaswani gives a vivid glimpse of the religious ideals that inspired the ancient seers of India. The Rishi's optimistic view of the world, arising out of his realisation of the fountain of Eternal Bliss, his reverence for the body for its being the temple of the soul, his theory of man-culture based on the idea of Atman, and his kinship with nature are some of the most striking features of this book.

**A Pilgrim's Faith : by T. L. Vaswani ; published by Ganesan & Co., Madras.**

The central ideas of Sadhu Vaswani's philosophy of life are presented in this book in a poetic garb. Though the writing is somewhat scrappy, it is nonetheless inspiring and attractive. A perusal of it will delight every one having a spiritual turn of mind.

**The Gita and Spiritual Life : by D. S. Sarma, M.A., Professor, Presidency College, Madras ; published by the Theosophical Publishing House.**

This is a collection of five lectures by the author, four of them dealing directly with the Bhagavad Gita, and the last one relating to the spiritual experiences of Sri Ramakrishna. The book represents the Bhagavad Gita as an inspiring book on practical ethics. All through the book special emphasis is given on the Gita as a gospel of unselfish action, and there are many passages where the author seems to discourage a life of exclusive spiritual contemplation. It may be true, as the author says, that many who try to lead the latter sort of life nurse within them a disgusting sort of spiritual egotism ; but it may be due to something wrong in the mentality of these men. The Bhagavad Gita does not deny the existence of such a path. On the other hand it is as much a gospel of pure spiritualism as of unselfish activity. There is however no wonder that a many sided scripture like the Gita appeals to a particular individual in one of its aspects to the exclusion of others. The book is a valuable addition to the stock of existing philosophical treatises in India and will be read with much interest and profit by every sincere seeker after truth.

**The Only Path : by R. V. S. Manian ; published by "The Parasakti Ashram," Dundumitta, Periyapolaiyam P. O., Dt. Chingleput. Price As. 8.**

This is a little volume with many quotations from Tamil classics. It is a useful hand-book of morals.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT THE VEDANTA CENTRE, PROVIDENCE, U.S.A.

The birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at the Vedanta Centre, Providence, R.I., U.S.A., on the 3rd of February 1929 with due eclat. A picture of the great Swami was placed on an elevated platform which was illumined with lights and tastefully decorated with ferns, garlands and flowers. The service was conducted by Swami Akhilananda before an enraptured audience, and Swami Gnaneshwarananda entertained them all with vocal and instrumental music at the beginning and at the end of the service, which made a profound impression upon all who joined the function. Service over,

Frederick A. Wilmot, the Editor of the Providence Journal and the Evening Bulletin, who had the good fortune of seeing Swami Vivekananda and listening to his speeches in America, delivered an illuminating discourse on the life and teachings of the Swami. Swami Gnaneswarananda and Swami Akhilananda also spoke feelingly on the occasion and in suitable words brought home to the audience the sacred message the great Swami had delivered to humanity. The attendance was so large that the hall could hardly accommodate all the devotees who attended the function. The ceremony was a splendid success.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF BHAGAVAN SRI RAMAKRISHNA  
AT DACCA.

The 94th Birthday Anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva was celebrated with due éclat in the Dacca Ramakrishna Mission Premises on Sunday, the 17th March, 1929. The ceremony continued from early dawn till 10 P. M. The principal functions of the day were Kirtan, readings from the scriptures, Mathur Padabali, musical concert, Kali Kirtan, and the general meeting of the Mission. In the afternoon a general meeting was held under the presidency of Babu Jagesh Chandra Das, Zamindar. Babu Manmatha Nath Roy, Munsiff, Babu Nilkanta Chakraverty, pleader, and Prof. Atul Chandra Sen, eloquently dwelt upon the life and teachings of the Master, which were highly appreciated by the audience.

Dr. Shahidullah, M. A., D. Litt. of the University of Dacca, then paid a glowing tribute to the hallowed memory of Sri Ramakrishna. He said that the people were creating artificial barriers between man and man by their religious wrangling. Truth is one, men call it by various names. Everybody is uttering the holy name of One Supreme Being. Difference in names matters nothing. To find out unity in diversity is the greatest of all achievements. It was Ramakrishna who himself realised different religions of the world and came to the final conclusion that all religions are true. Sincere and whole-hearted devotion to each leads ultimately to the same goal. It was Ramakrishna who sounded the death-knell of religious dissensions and established harmony in diversity. Ramakrishna Deva realised Mohammedanism and during his Sadhana had even gone the length of undergoing all sorts of formal ceremonials and penances of Islam. He had the vision of a luminous figure having long beards—the Prophet Mohamed himself, whom the Mussalmans call "Nur Nabi". Ramakrishna was a Saviour—that was why he had the visions of Mohamed and Christ. Ramakrishna heralded the dawn of a new era—an era of religious harmony and toleration. He is called by the Hindus an Avatar, and incarnation of God. It is all the same whether we call Him an Avatar, a Prophet, a Messenger, the Enlightened One, a Tirthankar, the Nur Nabi—all convey the same meaning. Ramakrishna Deva had catholicity and toleration because he had seen the whole of the Absolute Truth. It was through his worthy disciple Swami Vivekananda of world-wide fame that Ramakrishna propagated the gospel of the serving of the poor as Narayanas even to the furthest corners of the globe. The speaker alluded to some incidents from the Quran and Jalaluddin Rumi showing that Islam also preached the serving of the poor. In his opinion the most attractive feature of the Ramakrishna Mission was the serving of the poor, the diseased, and the decrepit as Narayanas, irrespective of caste, creed and colour. Ramakrishna would be enthroned in the hearts of all the people only when they would accept his service of humanity. Finally the speaker on

behalf of the Muslim community tendered his sincerest homage and congratulations to the selfless band of Sannyasins of the Ramakrishna Order who had dedicated their lives to the service of humanity irrespective of caste, creed, and colour.

The President then rose and heartily congratulated the monks of the Math on their efforts to build a temple of Unity where they had all assembled to pay their respective homage to the hallowed memory of Ramakrishna. The President said that it was an age of synthesis. Ramakrishna was the embodiment of this synthesis. Romain Rolland, the great French literateur and the greatest European thinker of the day has said, "Ramakrishna is a river of Love, while Vivekananda a dynamo of spiritual force." The Westerners are now sick of the orgies of warfare—they earnestly hunger for peace. Romain Rolland in his true prophetic vision, finds a voice of eternal peace in the message of Ramakrishna Vivekananda. The speaker made a fervent appeal to the rising generation to follow in the footsteps of the great Saint.

In conclusion Pundit Heramba Nath Tarkatirtha while offering a vote of thanks to the chair, the speakers, and the audience, said that they could all accept the religion of Ramakrishna as his was a universal religion.

With a concluding song the meeting terminated late at night.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENT'S HOME, MYLAPORE,  
MADRAS

We have received for review a copy of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras, on the working of the Institution during the year 1928. The outstanding needs of the Home, viz., the building of quarters for the teaching-staff of the Residential High School and the development of the Industrial section received practical shape. The starting of a magazine for the Home by the old boys formed another important feature of the year. The number of students on the rolls at the beginning of the year was 121; and the numerical strength was 137 at the end of the year. There were 27 students reading in Arts Colleges, one in the Medical College, 89 in the High School classes and 25 in the Industrial School attached to the Home. It should be remembered that the Residential High School attached to the Home prepares pupils for the School Final Examination and follows the Departmental syllabuses with a few necessary alterations. The Laboratory and the School Library are decently equipped and the School Museum is a great help to stimulate the interest of the boys in nature study. Manual training in carpentry, weaving, rattan-work, and goldsmithy, is compulsory for all boys. In the Industrial School the 3rd year classes in carpentry and cabinet-making and mechanical foreman and fitters' work were opened during the year. Articles of furniture and models made by the boys in the workshop were exhibited at the All-India Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition held in December 1927, and the exhibits elicited appreciation from the public, and the Exhibition Committee also awarded a silver medal. The results of the Examinations were also highly satisfactory. Fifteen pupils were sent up from the High School for the S.S.L.C. Examination and 12 were declared eligible for College course. Four out of five passed the Intermediate Examination in Arts.

The Tutorial Staff consisted of 8 resident teachers each of whom was in charge of about 15 to 18 boys generally of the same class. The household management of the Home including the gardening was as

usual in the hands of the boys themselves. The duties and responsibilities were distributed among the boys according to their age and capacity. Religious classes were held in the mornings and evenings. On the Gita Day held at Madras in the Sanskrit College premises, several boys of the Home secured medals and prizes for Gita recitation. Physical training class was also held thrice a week in the mornings. Facilities were opened for the mental, physical and spiritual development of the students. The Home has a medical ward of its own with necessary outfits. The services of the distinguished medical practitioners of the locality were available for the boys whenever required during the year. 260 books were added to the Library, and the Reading Room was enriched with a large number of magazines during the year. The total receipts of the year amounted to Rs. 43,854-10-0 and the expenditure to Rs. 44,101-5-5, showing a deficit of Rs. 246-11-6. A sum of Rs. 33,445 was added to the Permanent Funds of the Home. The Students' Home has in short proved to be one of the most prominent and useful educational institutions in the Presidency of Madras, and we doubt not that in view of the sympathy and support it has hitherto received from the public, the management would not find it hard to secure funds for the further development of the Industrial section and the strengthening of the Permanent Endowment Fund. The management express their heart-felt thanks to all friends, sympathisers, subscribers and donors but for whose ungrudging help and co-operation, it would not have been possible to make the institution as it is to-day.

#### THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, CALCUTTA

The Annual Report of the Society for the year 1927, shows that the Society arranged thirty-two religious lectures on Saturdays in the hall of the Bengal Theosophical Society in the year 1927. The birthdays of Lord Buddha and Vivekananda were specially celebrated in the public meetings. Three monthly conversaziones were held under the presidency of eminent Sadhus of the Ramkrishna Order in different localities of the City. Religious classes were held once a week in the Society room, and were conducted by Swami Vasudevananda in which the Bhagavat Gita was read and explained to the public. From the public Charitable Homeopathic Dispensary 634 cases were treated with free medicine, several widows were also helped, 18 students were helped with monthly stipends to the amount of Rs. 167. And Rs. 50 was paid to the Orissa Relief Fund through the Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission. Hundred books were added to the Library and Reading Room, totalling 3,294 books at the end of the year. The Corporation of Calcutta paid a grant of Rs. 150, towards the Library Fund, and 2,677 volumes of books were issued from the Library during the year under review. The total number of members on the 31st December, 1927, was 425, including one Hon., and 12 Life Members—(one dying during the year). The total receipts of the year amounted to Rs. 2,260-15-0. Total cash in hand, including previous year's balance (which was Rs. 2,270-6-9) was therefore Rs. 4,531-5-9. The total expenditure of the year was Rs. 2,024-1-6. Balance in hand was Rs. 2,507-4-3; of the balance Rs. 1,818-3-0 belongs to the Building Fund.

The first and foremost want of the Society is the proposed Vivekananda Memorial Hall and a habitation for its office, library and dispensary, etc. At present the Memorial Hall Fund, including interest, amounts to Rs. 1,818-3-0. Besides this, Rs. 3,000 have been promised by two of its sympathetic members. The Society appeals for encouragement, sympathy and support from the public and we

hope Calcutta will soon be adorned with a fitting memorial of the great Swami—the prophet and patriot-saint of modern India.

#### THE R. K. MISSION BRANCH CENTRE, BARISAL

The Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Branch Centre, Barisal, for the year 1927 gives a brief outline of the works done by it during the year. Two weekly sittings were regularly held, one in the Mission-House and another at Alekhanda, and the number of such sittings came up to 90. Sacred books were read and discussed on those occasions. Volunteers from the Mission were also deputed to nurse the sick at their houses, to pick up the helpless from the streets and send them to the hospital for proper treatment, and the number of such persons was 94. A small Reading Room and a Library were conducted; the Library contained 446 books at the end of the year. Occasional monetary help was rendered to the School and College students. The Students' Home of this Mission located at Alekhanda accommodated 7 students, of whom 5 were free and 2 paying. There was adequate provision for the physical and spiritual development of the students and all the household duties of the Home were performed by the boys themselves. But unfortunately the Mission has not yet been able to procure a land of its own and the Students' Home is still located in a house rented for the purpose. We hope the public would generously respond to the appeal of the Secretary and remove the outstanding needs of the Mission at an early date.

#### THE R. K. MISSION, SONARGAON, DACCA

The Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission, Sonargaon, Dacca for 1927 is to our hand. The Mission held a religious class on every Sunday on the works of Swami Vivekananda and the sayings and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. The library contained 514 books and 5 Monthlies for the use of the public. Two hundred and thirty books were issued in course of the year under review. Five boys were paid their schooling fees and 5 poor boys were accommodated in the Students' Home. The Mission ran a Dispensary with both Allopathic and Homeopathic departments for the poor, and altogether 1,980 patients received free medicine from the Charitable Dispensary. House to house relief was also rendered by the workers of the Ashram and useful work was done by the volunteer corps organised by the Ashrama authorities during the Langalbund Mela days. Besides, the Mission responded with promptness and regularity to the call for relief from time to time. Funds permitting, an Industrial Annexe to this Home for vocational and technical training of those interested is now under contemplation. The Mission proposes to extend its activities, for which adequate financial support is essentially necessary. We hope the appeal shall not go in vain.

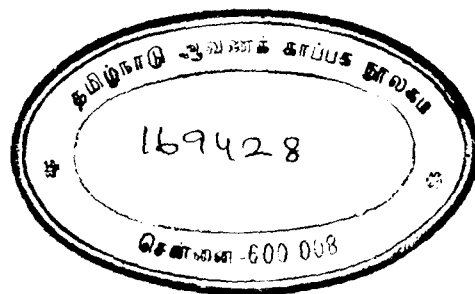
#### THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, JAMSHEDPUR BRANCH

The Annual Report of the Society for 1927 shows that religious classes were regularly held in the Society's premises and occasional lectures were also arranged during the year. The Birthday Anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and the Holy Mother were duly observed. The Society's library contained 1018 books and a good number of Monthlies and Dailies, which were properly utilised by the reading public. The Society ran three primary schools and one night school. The total expenditure on the schools during the year

was Rs. 868-13-6. The Students' Home of the Society accommodated 13 boys against 9 of the previous year. The entire cost of messing which amounted to Rs. 655-9-0 was met from the Society's Funds. There were 13 regular workers in the Workers' Home, available for the work of the Society. The activities of the Society extended also over the nursing of patients in the Hospital, cremation of the dead, giving of occasional help to the needy and the helpless. The Society's workers undertook relief work as well. A centrally situated building for the location of the L. Town Branch and a building for the Students' Home are matters of urgent necessity; and we believe, in view of the Society's multifarious works, the appeal for help shall be generously responded to.

#### THE PUBLIC LIBRARY, BANGALORE

The Thirteenth Annual Report on the working of the Public Library Seshadri Memorial Hall, Bangalore, for 1927-28 gives a detailed account of its workings during the year. The number of members on the rolls at the end of the year was 904. The year opened with a total of 13,841 volumes on the shelves. One thousand two hundred and fifty-seven books were newly added as against 1,111 in the previous year. The total number of books issued to the readers came up to 72,043 as against 64,295 in the previous year. The library received during the year 144 periodicals of India and of the foreign countries. The popularity of the Vernacular Home Circulating Section for ladies continued to increase and the number of lady members on the rolls was 98 as against 72 in the preceding year. The subscription collected during the year averaged Rs. 726 a month against Rs. 668 in the previous year, showing an average monthly increase of Rs. 58. Having regard to the growing usefulness of the institution, the Committee hope that the enlightened City Fathers will be pleased to enhance their grant to the library in the coming year. The Institution has been playing an important part in the intellectual and moral elevation of the people, and it is earnestly desired that it must have a sound financial footing so as to carry on its work of educating the public.



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