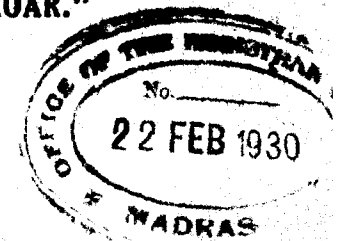


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THE VEDANTA KESARI

"LET THE LION OF VEDANTA ROAR."



VOL. XVI, No. 10 : FEBRUARY, 1930.

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SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Vol. XVII]

FEBRUARY 1930

[No. 10

PRAYER

ॐ

मनस्त्वं व्योम त्वं महदसि महत्सारथिरसि
त्वमापस्त्वं भूमिस्त्वयि परिणतायां न हि परम ।
त्वमेव स्वात्मानं परिणमयितुं विश्ववपुषा
चिदानन्दाकारं शिवयुवति भावेन विभूषे ॥
ददाने दीनेभ्यः श्रियमनिशमात्मानुसहशी-
ममन्दं सौन्दर्यस्तवकमकरन्दं विकिरति ।
तवास्मिन् मन्दारस्तवक्रसुभगे यातु चरणे
निमज्जन् मञ्जीवः करणचरणैः षट्चरणताम ॥

Oh, youthful consort of Siva, Thou art mind, ether, air, fire, water and earth. Indeed there is nothing beyond Thee who hast explicated Thyself into this world of phenomena. By Thy will dost Thou manifest Thy consciousness and bliss in the body of the universe.

Oh Mother, may I with my six organs as my feet be, as it were, the six-footed bee and seek Thy feet which ever give prosperity to the poor in fulfilment of their own desires. May I seek refuge in Thy feet which, beautiful with bunches of Mandara flowers, shed the honey of loveliness.

ANANDALAHARI

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA*

THE MASTER'S VISIT TO THE RESIDENCE OF SRIJUT JAYGOPAL SEN

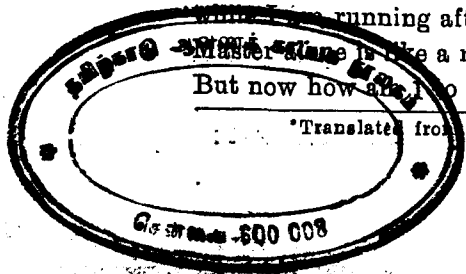
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It is the 20th of November, 1883. To-day at about 4 P. M. the Master visited the Lily Cottage—the residence of Srijut Keshab Chandra Sen in Calcutta. Keshab is seriously ill and is going to depart from the world soon. After seeing Keshab the Master has come in the company of a few devotees to the house of Srijut Jaygopal Sen on the Mathaghasa Lane at about seven in the evening.

Many are the thoughts that are arising in the minds of the devotees,—“The Master remains in the God-intoxicated state night and day. He is married but does not live with his wife like the ordinary householder. He respects her, worships her; with her he talks of God, sings of God, worships and meditates on God. He has absolutely no worldly relation with her. He sees that God alone is real and everything else unreal. He cannot touch a coin, nor anything made of metals like pots and cups. He cannot also bear the touch of woman. If he happens to touch any, he feels an excruciating pain in the part of his body that is so touched, as if he has been stung by a cat-fish. If he takes a silver coin or gold in his hands, the hands become bent and distorted, and he finds it impossible to breathe. After the thing is thrown away he is able to breathe normally.”

These and many other thoughts are arising in the minds of the devotees. “Is it necessary,” thinks one, “to give up the world? Is there any use in proceeding with my studies further? In case I do not marry, I need not accept any service for the sake of earning money. But should father and mother be forsaken?” “I am married,” thinks another, “and have got children too. I am to maintain my family. Like the Master, I too wish to remain steeped in Divine love. When I see the Master, I am made to think: what am I doing? He is thinking of God night and day without any break like the flow of oil from one cup into another, while I am running after worldly thoughts! The sight of the Master alone is like a ray of light in a corner of the cloudy sky. But now how shall I solve the problem of life?”

*Translated from M's diary originally published in Bengali.



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“He has shown us the way doing things himself. Why then do I cherish doubts still?”

“‘Breaking through the sand-dam let me satisfy my heart's wish’—so sings the poet. Is the world really like a sand-dam? If a person comes to get the right sort of love for the Lord, he will not have worldly calculations any more. If the river is in high floods, what is there to check it? The love that made Sri Gauranga put on the loin-cloth of the monk, the love that made Jesus live in wilderness with his mind fixed in God and made him give up his life looking up to the face of the ever-loving Father in Heaven, the love that made Buddha renounce his princely enjoyments and take to the life of a monk,—if a particle of that love rises in the heart, this unreal world would be left far far behind!”

“Well, what is the course left to those who are weak, who have not been endowed with Divine love, who are leading the life of a worldly creature, whose feet are fettered by the shackles of Maya? Let us see what this lover-ascetic tells us.”—Such are the thoughts that are occupying the minds of the devotees.

The Master is seated along with the devotees in the parlour of Jaygopal Sen. In front of him are sitting Jaygopal, his relations and neighbours. One of the neighbours is ready to carry on a discussion with the Master. He comes forward and begins the conversation. Jaygopal's brother Vaikuntha is also present.

HOUSEHOLDER'S LIFE AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA

Vaikuntha: We are all worldly people. Please give us some advice.

Sri Ramakrishna: First know the Lord, and then hold His feet with one hand and do your worldly duties with the other.

Vaikuntha: Sir, is the world unreal?

Sri Ramakrishna: It is unreal so long as the Lord is not realised. During this period man forgets Him and becomes swayed by the thought of “mine”. He gets entangled in Maya. He is enchanted by the objects of lust and greed, and sinks into worldliness more and more. Being deluded by Maya he forgets himself so much that he cannot escape although there is the way out. This is what is said in the song:—

“The Maya of the Great Enchantress has cast such a spell that Brahma and Vishnu are overpowered; so what can the poor Jiva do?”

Men set the fishing trap in the water, and fishes get into it. There is the way out but still they cannot escape.

The caterpillar makes its own cocoon; it can, if it wants to, come out of it. But deluded by the Great Enchantress, it brings about its own death by the product of its own secretion.

"You yourselves are seeing that the world is unreal. Don't you? Just consider this. Many were the people who came into the world and then went away. Many were born and then passed away. Things in the world exist in this moment, and in the next they cease to be. They are unreal. Those whom you call your very own, cease to be yours, the moment you close your eyes (for the last time). A person may have none to stand in his way. But still, it may be, owing to the attachment for his grandson he cannot retire to Benares to spend the last days of his life. He thinks, 'What will become of my Hari!' So you see—'There is the way out, but still the fishes cannot escape'. 'The caterpillar brings about its own death by the product of its own secretion.' This kind of world is false, unreal."

Neighbour: Sir, why should we place one hand on the feet of the Lord and the other on the world? If the world is unreal, why should we place even one hand on the world?

Sri Ramakrishna: If after realising God you live in the world it will not appear to be unreal. Just listen to a song:—

'Oh my soul, why dost thou not learn of the ways of farming. What a precious human field thou hast left fallow? Hadst thou cultivated it, it would have yielded a crop of gold.

Put up as hedge the name of Mother Kali and the crop will not be tampered with. That strong fence of the name of the Divine Mother even Yama the King of Death does not dare to approach.

Know this, that either to-day or a century later the field will be forfeited. So, oh my soul, reap a harvest from it to your heart's content, so long as it is in your possession.

Sow the seed thou hast received from the guru and sprinkle on it the water of devotion. If thou canst not do the work alone, why not take Ramprasad (the Psalmist) also along with thee?"

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON THE UPLIFT OF THE INDIAN MASSES

A nation, like an individual, runs through a process of periodic rise and fall. This is an invariable law of Nature and its subtle working is more or less witnessed in the life-history of all the nations in the world. After a period of expansion there is noticed a period of depression. The music of life is not heard for a while, but with the passing away of that wave of inertia the collective life of the nation rebounds anew to its normal key and strikes a note of harmony adding more vigour and coherence to its diversified activities. The course of Indian life is not an exception to this universal phenomenon. The history of India stands chequered by such periodic ups and downs, and at every juncture of her career we invariably meet with some striking personalities standing head and shoulders above the rest and animating the people with their revolutionary ideas. The closing years of the 19th century witnessed in India such a galaxy of heroic figures whose master-spirit sent a thrill of inspiration through the country and galvanised the Indian minds with a current of new life and enthusiasm. Foremost amongst these stood Swami Vivekananda who, as a living embodiment of the lofty idealism of India's cultural life, fulfilled in ways more than one the aspiration of her soul. A life of absolute renunciation, crowned with the deepest realisation of the eternal verity of human existence and consecrated at the altar of humanity was an imperious need of the age; for India was never so forgetful of her glorious traditions and culture as then. The whole outlook on life underwent a miraculous transformation; the Western thought and idealism sat like a mighty incubus on the Indian mind, stifling as it were the very play of its living forces. And in the new ferment the spiritual note of India's collective life was completely lost sight of. It was Swami Vivekananda who with his penetrating vision was able to realise the process of slow suicide the nation had been subjected to with the acceptance of the Occidental philosophy as the determinant of its future destiny. Enriched with the wealth of his spiritual realisation he set himself to the herculean task of rebuilding the nation on the basis of indigenous thought and culture. In his own life he made it distinctly clear that India must stand on her own culture rooted in the past but supplement it with the incoming ideas of the West in so far they contribute to her healthy growth and progress along the orbit of her wonted traditions. He pointed out that a full-fledged nation could never be expected to come into being until the sleeping masses were roused from their age-long slumber

and enlightened to realise their legitimate position in the corporate activity of the nation. It is the unfailing testimony of history that no nation has ever been able to build its destiny on a stable foundation where there has been an attempt to ignore the claims of the toiling masses. For it is *their* labour and life that constitute in short the very warp and weft of the fabric of national existence. In India where more than 90 per cent. of her population are steeped in the darkness of rank ignorance and can hardly understand their place of importance in the grand process of national reconstruction, it would be a sheer travesty of patriotism to launch schemes of national regeneration without an adequate provision for the safeguard of their interests and the awakening of their souls to the actualities of the situation. It is the masses that build up a civilisation and again it is they that level it to the dust. And it cannot be denied that without the strengthening of the national backbone, the country shall hardly be able to stand the fiery ordeal that confronts it in its grim struggle for emancipation. That is why Swami Vivekananda shed the last drop of his life blood for the awakening of the sleeping Indian Leviathan; for he realised that once it was roused, no power on earth, no persecution, no coercion could resist its strength and check its unfettered march to the goal.

The heart of Swami Vivekananda made the quickest response to the bitter agony of the suffering souls of India. His whole life is, in fact, a burning example of maddening solicitude *for the uplift of the sunken masses*. His writings and speeches breathe an all-consuming passion of love for his voiceless countrymen who have been grovelling for centuries in the mud-puddle of superstition and been denied all the healthy advantages in society, that open out channels for a free expression of life. As a matter of fact it is the upper classes of the Hindu society, who are primarily responsible for this regrettable state of affairs. The countless millions whose labour and life have contributed to the affluence of the upper classes, have, by a mysterious combination of circumstances, been reduced almost to the level of inarticulate brutes and forced to lead a life of utter stagnation in their own land. They have, moreover, been made to serve as footstool to the persons in authority in every age and eventually knocked down when they demanded a fulfilment of their legitimate claim to the rights and privileges! We shall try to show from the writings and speeches of Swami Vivekananda how bitterly did he feel the injustice done to this suffering and ignorant humanity in this country. Exclusiveness has been the bane of our collective existence and has proved in no small measure the ultimate cause of our ruin and downfall. So did Swami Vivekananda make the poignant remark in his *Modern India*: "Such

is the strange irony of fate, such is the queer working of Maya, that they, from whom this power is directly or indirectly drawn, by fair means or foul,—by deceit, stratagem, force, or by voluntary gift,—they soon cease to be taken into account by the leading class. When in course of time, the priestly power totally estranged itself from the subject masses,—the real dynamo of its power,—it was overthrown by the then kingly power taking its stand on the strength of the subject people; again, the kingly power, judging itself to be perfectly independent, created a gaping chasm between itself and the subject people, only to be itself destroyed, or become a mere puppet in the hands of the Vaishyas, who now succeeded in securing a relatively greater co-operation of the mass of the people. The Vaishyas have now gained their end; so, they no longer deign to count on help from the subject people, and are trying their best to dissociate themselves from them; consequently, here is being sown the seed of destruction of this power as well." No truer words have so boldly and eloquently been spoken and no truer diagnosis of the disease of our national organism has been more correctly made. The sad spectacle of a giant race dying of starvation and vegetating in the filthy atmosphere of a caste-ridden society, clinging to myriad superstitions born of ignorance and sinking rapidly into a life of hopeless inactivity, haunted his imagination day and night and gave him no rest till the last moment of his life. A patriot and a saint combined in one, Swami Vivekananda pressed his spiritual wealth to the service of his motherland. "When I was in the Western countries," said the Swami once to his brother monks at Belur, "I prayed to the Divine Mother, 'People here are sleeping on a bed of flowers, they eat all kinds of delicacies, and what do they not enjoy? While people in our country are dying of starvation. Mother, will there be no way for them?' One of the objects of my going to the West to preach religion was to see if I could find any means for feeding the people of this country." He wanted a heroic band of young men who fired with the zeal of holiness and renunciation and a deep-seated faith in the Lord, must go out in batches from village to village with the message of love and toleration, equality and brotherhood and implant in the minds of the people an unshakable conviction of the greatness of their life and culture and awaken them to the consciousness of their infinite possibilities. The treasures of Indian life are a sealed book to them. And to open their vision to the richness of their cultural life, nothing is more potent than the spread of education among the masses. But such is the irony of fate, it is this education of the masses which has been most severely left alone. No sincere effort has hitherto been made to pool our scattered energies and divert them to this aspect of our national problem. The education the coun-

try needs is not the type of education which is being imparted to the Indians to-day under the British imperialism. For, "the education", says the Swami, "which does not help the common masses of people to equip themselves for the struggle of life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion,—is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on one's own legs. The education that you are receiving in schools and colleges is only making you a race of dyspeptics. You are working like machines merely, and living a jelly-fish existence."

Swami Vivekananda dreamt bold dreams of a national federation wherein the masses quickened into self-conscious beings must participate to mould their social and political destiny. But the intelligence of the people could hardly be stirred up into a living force unless they were admitted into the store-house of culture to feed their famished brain and heart. The education must therefore be on indigenous lines so that their natural aptitudes may be developed and their vision directed to the deeper springs of individual and collective life. They have for ages been denied the benefit of culture, and they have moreover been characterised as 'dense and slow' and too conservative to receive new explosive thoughts and ideas. But it cannot be ignored that this condition of existence is not their own seeking. It is the tyranny of social life that has served to extinguish the last spark of enthusiasm for a higher idealism in them. The vision of a new life instinct with infinite possibility must be held anew before them. For nothing is more powerful to stimulate dormant energy and to electrify human imagination than the consciousness of one's own intrinsic greatness and capacity to move the world by one's power and thought. The masses have lost all sense of self-respect, not, because there is no vitality in them but because they have for ages been treated like beasts of burden and taught dog-like to lick the feet of the higher classes. Any education that fails to call forth the real 'man' in the individual but serves only to stifle the free manifestation of the sterling qualities of head and heart stands self-condemned. The people are still potentially great and it is the duty of the leaders in society to open facilities and provide means for the stirring up of the dormant powers in them. In this blessed land of ours the centre of life is religion and if education is divorced from it, it shall invariably fail to bring out the latent forces of their life and produce the desired result. "Touch him on spirituality, on religion, on God, on the soul, on the Infinite, on spiritual freedom", says the Swami, "and I assure you, the lowest peasant in India is better informed on these subjects than many a so-called philosopher in other lands." For religion is the very breath of her national being and the training

to be rendered effective must appeal to the spiritual instincts of the people. They must be made to think that they are potentially as great as the most powerful in the world and that their capacity for action is lying dormant in them. Besides, the eternal grand idea of the spiritual oneness of all must be brought home to their minds; for this is the only principle that would enable them to get over the inferiority complex; and this is the dominant idea that must stand as the background of all our teachings and schemes for imparting education to the masses. It was for this reason that Swami Vivekananda once said, "I will rouse them through the infallible power of Vedic Mantras.....Go over from village to village, from one portion of the country to another, and preach this message of fearlessness to all, from the Brahmin to the Chandala. Tell each and all that infinite power resides within them, that they are sharers of immortal Bliss. Thus rouse up the Rajas within them—make them fit for the struggle for existence, then speak to them about salvation hereafter."

But along with the unfolding of this spiritual idealism before the people, there must be a consolidated effort to impart secular education to the masses. Education must not be limited to the knowledge of the religious truths alone, but must be comprehensive enough to embrace all the aspects of human culture both secular and spiritual. To translate his ideas into action Swamiji desired to cover the country with a net-work of two types of institutions for training workers who would be both spiritual and secular instructors to the masses. The people should be taught history, geography, science, literature, along with the profound truths of religion. For, the purpose of education would be defeated if it aims merely at manufacturing bands of clerks or officials. "What nonsense have you learnt?" said the Swami indignantly. "Getting by heart the thoughts of others in a foreign language, and stuffing your brain with them and taking some university degrees, you consider yourselves educated! Fie upon you! Is this education?.....Open your eyes and see what a piteous cry for food is rising in the land of Bharat, proverbial for its wealth". ".....The common people have suffered oppression for thousand years—suffered it without murmur and as a result have got wonderful fortitude. They have suffered eternal misery which has given them unflinching vitality. Living on a handful of oatmeal they can convulse the world; give only half a piece of bread, and the whole world would not be big enough to contain their energy.....Besides, they have got the wonderful strength that comes of a pure and moral life, which is not to be found anywhere else in the world. Such peacefulness, such contentment, such love, such power of silent and incessant work, and manifestation of lion's strength in times of action—where else will

you find these?" Swamiji pointed out that Western science must be pressed into service for the discovery of new avenues to production and the masses must be admitted to the knowledge that has so long been considered to be the monopoly of the higher classes so that the people may gain back their lost individuality, stand on their own legs and march forward on the path of progress as a self-conscious unit of our collective life.

But the poverty of the masses is an insuperable barrier to the attainment of a wholesome education. It has almost robbed them of all their enthusiasm for a higher vision of life. But these discouraging circumstances notwithstanding, education of the people cannot be deferred in expectation of a better situation in the near future. The political and social reconstruction of the land is inseparably wedded to the task of educating the country and 'if the mountain does not come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain. If the poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him.' The ideas must be imparted in the language of the people. But Sanskrit education must not at the same time be tabooed. The history of our country shows that though the attempts of Ramanuja, Chaitanya and Kavir to raise the lower classes of India attained to a considerable degree of fruition during their life-time, the people sank back as rapidly as they rose, into a state of utter ignorance within a few years of their passing away. The reason is not far to seek. The people were raised but this uplifting process could not be sustained for long as it lacked the backing of the ennobling vigour of Sanskrit culture. In India Sanskrit and culture go hand in hand, and there is an ineffable dignity and prestige inherent in this sacred language. Even Buddha the greatest champion of the submerged sections of humanity made almost the very same blunder. Sanskrit was put under a ban as it were. 'Knowledge came but the prestige was not there.' So did Swami Vivekananda point out: "Teach the masses in the vernaculars, give them ideas; they will get information, but something more is necessary; give them *culture*. Until you give them that, there can be no permanence in the raised condition of the masses." Besides, the only effective means to break down the citadel of caste-pride, conservatism and exclusiveness of the higher classes is to diffuse Sanskrit culture among the masses. For, when the culture is appropriated by the people, the artificial barrier between the high and the low must inevitably crumble to pieces, and there would grow up a feeling of toleration and sympathy as a result of the removal of this long-standing wall of cultural separation. The signs of unrest are already in the air. The masses themselves shall not suffer this kind of iniquity to persist for long. The rising of the Sudra class is but a natural

sequence in the succession of historical phenomena in India to day. The Brahmins and the Kshatriyas had a full run of their sovereignty in the past; the Vaishyas—now the ruling power in India—have already dug their own graves by dissociating themselves from the Sudras—the primary source of their elevation. 'The first glow of the dawn of this new power has already begun to slowly break upon the Western world, and the thoughtful are at their wit's end to reflect upon the final issue of this fresh phenomenon.' The sleeping Indian Leviathan has also been manifesting unmistakable signs of an awakening. And it is time that exclusiveness should be eliminated to accommodate this indispensable element in the arena of our social activity for a healthy and orderly growth of our manhood.

Another galling feature of our life is the curse of untouchability. It has served in no small measure to undermine the solidarity of our corporate life. "To what a ludicrous state are we brought?" says the Swami. "If a bhangi comes to any body as a bhangi, he would be shunned as the plague, but no sooner does he get a cupful of water poured upon his head with some mutterings of prayers by a Padri, and get a coat to his back, no matter how threadbare, and come into the room of the most orthodox Hindu—I don't see the man who then dares refuse him a chair and a hearty shake of the hands!! Irony can go no further!!" Nothing has indeed done more harm to the nation than this spirit of Don't-touch-ism. It has alienated a huge section of Indian population from the higher classes who have become the self-constituted leaders in the society to-day. "Alas!" exclaimed the Swami in the bitterest agony of his heart, "nobody thinks of the poor of the country. They are the backbone of the country, who by their labour are producing food,—these poor people, the sweepers and labourers, who if they stop work for one day will create a panic in the town. But there is none to sympathise with them, none to console them in their misery. Just see, for want of sympathy from the Hindus thousands of pariahs in Madras are turning Christians. Don't think this is simply due to the pinch of hunger, it is because they do not get any sympathy from us. We are day and night calling out to them, 'Don't touch us! Don't touch us!' Is there any compassion or kindness of heart in the country? Only a class of 'Don't-touchists.' Kick such customs out." Indeed, the well-being of the land demands that such a pernicious custom should at once be kicked out of the bounds of Hindu society. This is one of the greatest evils that have resulted from the tyranny of the priestly classes in India. Hinduism in its purest form is incompatible with this spirit of exclusiveness. The ultimate object of Hindu religion is to carry humanity beyond the pale of this petty-minded intolerance and to establish brotherhood

among mankind by an advocacy of the unity of all life and the potential divinity of man. Sankara left this essential feature of Hinduism—the religion of the Vedanta—in the hills and forests. It is Swami Vivekananda who has again brought it out within the easy reach of the work-a-day-world. He has bequeathed to his countrymen an undying sympathy for the poor and the helpless and a high-souled love for the untouchable—the backbone of our country. For he knew that if India was to rise, she must rise through the elevation of the masses.

It was the object of the Swami to rouse the masses to the dignity of their own position and to make them shake off their inferiority complex; for he realised that with the acquisition of knowledge a fisherman would be a better fisherman, a peasant a better peasant, and the people, instead of giving up their respective calling in life, would, moreover, be able to apply their knowledge to the better performance of their work. Already the signs of a new awakening are discernible in the horizon of Indian life. The purple dawn has cast its lovely hue all over the land, and the masses are slowly but surely moving onward to bathe in the full splendour of a meridian sun. The rays have penetrated into their humble huts and cottages and have maddened them with the vision of a cloudless sky. It is no use blinking at facts. The grovelling masses are out to break the fetters and to rise to the full stature of manhood. Time has come for them—the oppressed and the downtrodden—to stand once more in the full glory of a rejuvenated life and to wring out freedom from the hands of destiny. "You, the upper classes of India,—" said the Swami in righteous indignation, "do you think you are alive? You are but mummies ten thousand years old!.....It is you who are the real 'walking corpses'. Your houses, your furniture look like museum specimens, so lifeless and antiquated they are;.....You represent the past tense with all its varieties of form jumbled into one.....You are the void, the unsubstantial nonentities of the future. Denizens of the dreamland, why are you loitering any longer?.....Aye, in your bony fingers are some priceless rings of jewel treasured up by your ancestors, and within the embrace of your stinking corpses are preserved a good many treasure-chests... ..In these days of free education and enlightenment, pass them on to your heirs, aye, do it as quickly as you can. You merge yourselves in the void and disappear, and let New India arise in your place. Let her arise—out of the peasant's cottage, grasping the plough, out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler and the sweeper. Let her spring from the grocer's shop, from beside the oven of the fritter-seller. Let her emanate from the factory, from marts and from markets. Let her emerge from the groves and forests, from hills and mountains..... Skeletons of the Past, there, before you, are your successors, the

India that is to be. Throw those treasure-chests of yours and those jewelléd rings among them,—as soon as you can; and you—vanish into air, and be seen no more,—only keep your ears open. No sooner will you disappear than you will hear the inaugural shout of Renaissance India—ringing with the voice of a million thunders and reverberating throughout the universe—"Wah Guru Ki Fafeh"—Victory to the Guru!"

ALL ROADS LEAD TO ROME

By Swami Gambhirananda

All roads lead to Rome; but are they fixed as regards their position and shape, for all ages to come? That question did not certainly arise when Rome was a living city and exhibited a dynamic enthusiasm all around. The whole country throbbed with new hopes and was ever in the travails of new births. The roads then stood as landmarks in the progressive history of a living people and ever and anon they changed and developed. A new group enamoured of the city's glory and attracted by the tempting promises chalked out a new path along still undefined tracts, while still others joined themselves to these highways by short village roads. That was the picture of Rome as she sat among a people surging with ever increasing love for her; and as in a 'Swayambara' of old, ever and anon new princes threaded their way through the multitude, only for a look of the beautiful—and if possible, to receive the much-valued garland of love. In response to these pressing demands, the country under went kaleidoscopic changes. Roads were then no roads but stood as concrete expressions of the spirit that stirs the hero in man and sets open the springs of action. All roads led to Rome because they were dynamic and pliant realities that responded to the will and aspiration of the people. But obviously there was a limit to this road-making, because people could not for ever maintain this sustained activity and the roads in time became rigid and fixed.

In the field of the spirit the same principle is at work and as there is no limit to unexplored regions the possibility of novelty is infinite. But is this always recognised? In religion there is every possibility that any attempt for new consummation will be branded as heresy and subjected to persecution—and why not? The last interrogation is knocking at our door with added vehemence just at the present moment when new ideas and institutions have like Aladin's magic lamp transformed society overnight. Religious forms that grew up in response to the challenge of certain definite problems

have been suddenly transplanted into a new soil and now lack vigour and adaptability. The success of material science and class-struggle for reaping its advantages has for a moment diverted all energy from the field of religion, and stagnation and death are looming large in the horizon. Should religion now leave its accustomed grooves and seek new fields of self-realisation? The existing religions of the world shrink from bravely facing this huge problem and have not yet manifested a tendency to do so in any active or successful form. The orthodox are positively against any such attempt, while the more vigorous in their eagerness to move with the time have either made a ship-wreck of their creed or turned it into a bundle of ethical dogmas that answer only to the immediate social, political and economical needs. The spirit is thrown overboard and creeds have become synonymous with opportunistic adjustments. If religion is to be a living force we cannot certainly accept either of these extremes. We cannot part with the spirit nor can we overlook the needs of time. The best solution is a combination of the two.

What is religion? Is it not in essence an attempt to see the ultimate reality through ever-shifting environments or the magic veil that ignorance ever weaves around us? Anthropologists have failed to discover why new cultures come into existence and clash with each other and remould themselves. But changes take place nevertheless. We call this inexplicable element, the inscrutable power of God. It has a universal bearing and an individual bearing too. Thus religion admits of an adjustment not only from the point of view of groups but also from the standpoint of their component parts. So religion has a dynamic character from the temporal standpoint, for environments change from age to age and from second to second. Conceived as a struggle it is of the nature of a constant flux. But people are loath to admit this. They argue that since spiritual men cannot afford to be volatile, religion should not be so flexible. Besides, the supermen alone can know what is good, and the determination of spiritual forms should not be left to the tender mercy of the commonalty. Let us see what these supermen do!

How is a change introduced? There is a consciousness of a novel situation,—the difficulty of arranging new problems in the old pigeon holes. There are two ways open—either to ignore them and court stagnation and perchance death or face them and ensure a new lease of life. Fortunately for the progress of mankind, living societies have long discovered that expansion is life while contraction is death. The shock of new cultures at first seems to arrest the natural progress of the race, but suddenly the pent up vitality sallies forth into new creations. The need for the novel first appeals to the few. They give

the social lyre a shake and try to bring forth the natural symphony—they fail. Others at once take up the task, but retire only half-satisfied. At last comes the Master in whose success is fulfilled the will of the whole congregation. The wondering multitude at once recognise this and join him with great enthusiasm.

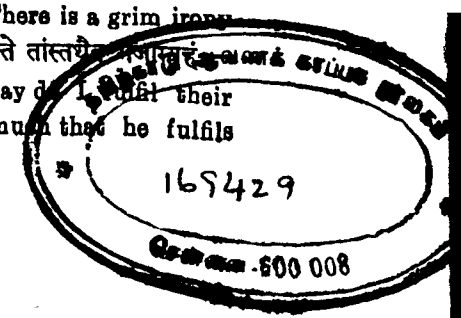
But the real task only begins with that great discovery. The advent of a prophet symbolises only the solution of an intricate puzzle. He demonstrates that no difficulty is unsurmountable for a determined people. He spends his life as a living example of new achievements and thereby shows the sure means of grappling with our immediate social and personal problems. He breathes into us a faith in human destiny that no veil of ignorance is strong enough to keep unrevealed. When darkness envelopes all around and hope is not—he shines forth as the beacon light—for that is exactly the situation that calls in the Messiah. The veil of ignorance is no more able to enthrall an expanding soul than a dreadful dream is able to smother the creative mind. But we mortals in our innate lethargy miss the real significance of a great life and conveniently think that a blind imitation is enough to save the race! Every hero acts in response to some particular situation. Thus every little act of his has a relative value and a relative significance. To isolate him from his natural environment and idolise and idealise him for ignorant fools, is to make a parody of the greatness that was a living reality only by its very limitations. It may be of great immediate service to deify a hero, but unless the man in him is also equally recognised, humanity will only be poorer by it.

We take it then that the real worth of a superman is that he enfranchises the hero in others and thereby opens the door to perennial achievements. He acts out of the spontaneity of his heart and orders his environment with a definite purpose. He takes matter as he finds it, but his struggle to see the spirit through it gives it a new orientation so that each little act synchronises with a spiritual idea and seems quite natural. From the subjective standpoint again, his acts stand for two distinct mental tendencies, or rather two different manifestations of the same tendency. He not only accepts passively, but also creates actively. There is a conscious effort to evolve new forms for self-manifestation and reject unnecessary ones at every stage of his life. A superman, when studied in this light, can only be a fountain of inspiration. We should remember that this inspiration is effective only in proportion as we recognise and desire it. There is a grim irony in the words of Lord Sri Krishna—ये यया मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजिष्याम्यहम् (In whatever way men worship Me, in the same way I will fulfil their desires). Verily the Lord loves his devotees so much that he fulfils

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their desires with a scrupulous exactitude. We are not here concerned with the spiritual fact that the most deluded person, when he seeks God sincerely, is ultimately rewarded with beatitude. What invites our immediate attention is that such ignorant sincerity is a rare thing and cannot be prescribed for the generality of mankind. God being the essence of knowledge crude ideas are more compatible with pseudo-religion, than with spiritualism proper. We do not overlook the fact that most people advance by following some leader, but even then the play of initiative is perceptible everywhere. Progress lies in stimulating this power of initiative and not in achieving a temporary success by following a chance leader. Any creed therefore that tends to sap this driving force must necessarily be approached with care. Thoughtless imitation is doubly mischievous. It makes the man less than he really is and the model greater than its real worth. A soldier does well to obey the general and within his narrow domain exert his personality. But he will be a silly ass to ape the general or think himself a human automaton.

Let us come to more concrete spiritual facts. The ancients have discovered several ways of reaching God, *viz.*, Karma, Bhakti, Yoga and Jnana. But we have yet to find a man who can fully satisfy the conditions laid down by any of them. Still are there people who endeavour to transform themselves, all of a sudden, into Jnanayogins, Rajayogins and what not. Because Caesar reached Rome from a certain place by a certain path, Antony from quite a different place hopes to do so again! The question arises—should a man have no chosen path of his own to reach the ideal? We say emphatically that it is exactly with a view to keep the ideal bright that we want to divert the attention from set paths. The surer guide in such a case is to intensify the desire for the goal. When that is satisfied all roads will necessarily lead to it. What becomes then of the several modes of worship and the different paths of spiritual practice? Well, they are either types and models that help us in our endeavours or are a scientific presentation of the spiritual phenomena that took place in the past. Let us take an example from Art. There are models from master artists and there is a science of Art. The model and the science have an indispensable value, but their application need not necessarily be uniform. Arts—Grecian, Egyptian, Gothic or Indian—are a constant source of pleasure to this day, either in the original or in their reproductions, but there is no sense in confining the activities of artists within their short limits. A vigorous nation will ever blend them and express its desires in a thousand new creations. Religious forms, springing as they do from real lives, also change and intermingle in response to new circumstances.

Now this broad statement goes directly against all our accepted notion of spiritual progress. Spirituality suggests more or less a 'settled' life which is the very opposite of motion. According to 'orthodox' view a spiritual man must be literally dead to this world. All his activities must be in the region of the spirit. Social forms therefore matter little with him. His worldly existence is tolerated only because self-immolation is a greater sin. Stereotyped forms may therefore be quite beneficial to a spiritual man, though from the social point of view it is a definite loss. Now, as we have already hinted we are not concerned here with extra-ordinary possibilities. Society can ill-afford to remain stationary. "Motion is not a bad thing; it is life as opposed to stagnation, paralysis and death. It is novelty as opposed to monotony; and novelty is so necessary to us that if you take the best thing within your reach (say the best food, the best music, the best book, the best state of mind or the best anything that remains the same always) and if you stick to it long enough you will come to loathe it." But "Motion is delightful when we can control it, guide it and stop it when it is taking us into danger; uncontrolled motion is terrible."—(Bernard Shaw). Motion is not, as many suppose, the result of a selective and conscious process, but oftener comes unsolicited; nor are the laws of the advent of new cultures well-defined. The real point at issue, therefore, is not whether we can afford to remain stationary but how to control this motion. It is exactly here that from the social point of view, religion becomes a necessity. Religion from this standpoint is a controlled motion towards the best possible goal. When revolutionary people cry about pulling down all religions, what they really mean is to emphasise this feature of flexibility. Stereotyped forms without a new interpretation and without a new setting are positively harmful.

Neo-Hinduism, therefore, stands not only for synthesis of existing creeds, but also for bringing religion into line with life itself. In all social, religious and political problems the main attention must be kept on *man* and not on a mere perfection of *forms*.

GURU NANAK AND A GREATER INDIA

By T. L. Vaswani

"Happy", says a French thinker, "are the nations whose sacred sources are not exhausted." Man lives by love and reverence. To abolish religion would be to abolish India. But religion must not be confounded with ceremonies, creeds or controversies. Religion is life. Spiritual evolution may well be represented as a Tree of Life and

love is the rich fruitage of this Tree,—Love of God and man. Religion came to harmonise and humanise the diverse activities and relationships of human life. And Guru Nanak Dev, a prophet of harmony, was a hero of religion,—one of the greatest in Indian history; nay, in the history of humanity.

Born in 1469, 14 years earlier than Luther, he passed away in 1538,—8 years earlier than Luther. Like Luther he laid the basis of a new reformation. But Nanak's reformation unlike Luther's did not turn to princes for its support and progress. Guru Nanak's reformation was in a true sense democratic. Guru Nanak initiated a people's movement in religion. Like Buddha, Nanak left the house of his father who was a land steward and merchant to join the Brotherhood of the Poor. Indeed, in fellowship with the poor, in service of the weak and fettered is that true freedom which modern democracies have missed. Some have called Guru Nanak the Luther of India. But to us the Guru was greater than Luther. Two of the greatest figures of Europe were Luther and St. Francis. These two master-spirits seemed to have come together in Guru Nanak. He had Luther's zeal to reform religion,—to lift it from the formal and the conventional to the simple and practical. Guru Nanak was like Francis of Assisi, a poet. Each taught through simple songs and stories. Each had a rich vein of humour. Each was a wanderer, a troubadour of God,—travelling from place to place singing the sacred name. Each was a mystic. And in each we hear the authentic voice of Jesus the Blessed. For Jesus said :—"God is Love." And early Christianity was a Bhakti Marga, a way of faith, devotion and love. And did not Guru Nanak sing again and again :—

"His Love is infinitely inexpressible,
How shall I write it?"

One of the greatest mystics of history, Guru Nanak put emphasis on direct experience of the Divine. Not hearsay, not tradition, not ceremonialism, not books, priests, creeds but *direct* experience. The Guru was a Singer of the Open Secret, a Teacher of the God within. He travelled widely. He visited Hindu pilgrimages. He went to Muslim countries and visited Mecca. He travelled in Turkestan and Russia. Everywhere he sang and preached the truth of the simple way to God; for God is not a distant Deity. "Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands and feet." As Lao-tzse said :—"Without going out of doors, we may know (the Essence) of the whole world." This Essence, the Guru called the NAMA, SAT NAMA, the Eternal Verity. In the revelation that came to him at the time of his immersion in the water,—according to a beautiful story in the Janmasakhi,—he saw God as the "Eternal Verity" and the Word that came

to him was :—"I have given thee My Name : to That be thou dedicated!" And Nanak's life was dedicated to the Name. His father rebuked him for not "walking after the manner of the other people". Nanak was still true to His call. He sang the Name : he rejoiced in the Name : to multitudes in many countries he preached the Name. He saw the people were unhappy : he preached to them the truth that in the Name was the healing of all ills.

If Modern India could but listen in her heart to the teaching of Guru Nanak! "I have renounced all sects", he said at Baghdad. He loved alike Hindus and Muslims. On his travels, he took two singers,—one a Hindu, the other a Muslim. Sheikh Farid was a devoted friend of the Guru; and Muslims called him "Shah"—a title given to great dervishes and saints. His synthesis of religion transcended and therefore included the Hindu and the Muslim ideals. He gave his love freely to all, and set at nought conventions of creeds and castes. He was a brother of the poor, the criminal and the outcaste. His socialism was not atheistic; it grew out of a vision of God's love flowing into the hearts of men. We are brothers,—in God. And the more we think of it the more we feel that a new Indian nation should be built not in blind imitation of the West nor in recent socio-economic theories of European thinkers but in the vital message of India's seers and prophets and saints.

One great truth preached by Guru Nanak is of great value to modern thought. This truth may be expressed thus :—The power of God is not *dynamic* : the power of God is *sacrificial*. God comes to us not as king but as the servant of servants. He is the "power" of love. God comes to us as sacrificial *shakti*. He comes to us in humility,—in the guise of the simple and the poor. He comes to us not in thunder but in silent sacrifice. From this follows a truth of profound significance. Not the power of kings and conquerors but the sacrificial *shakti* of silent servants of the poor will conquer the world. The shouts and noises of these days will pass away : the distinguished of to day will be the extinguished of to morrow : our big men and big organisations will pass into oblivion. The survival-value belongs to the little ones, to them who worship the Lord in the little ones, the broken ones. The Infinite has become the infinitesimal : so may we learn of Nature and her Lord the lesson of humility. And builders of a new India, a Greater India, will be found not among the trumpeters nor the titled ones but among the simple and unknown who clothed with poverty and covered with dust will give to her children the message of her saints and Rishis and worship her with toil and tear.

THE ASHRAMAS

*(Continued from the last issue)**By Sir John Woodroffe*

According to Dattātreya the fourth Ashrama is only for Brāhmanas: the Kshatriya has three: the Vaishya two: and the Shūdra, the Grihastha (household) Ashrama only. But in practice it is not necessarily so. Further the fourth stage is properly realised through the third. It has however been said:—(Yadāhareva virajet tadāhareva prabrajat Brahmacharyādvā grihādvā vanādvā sannyasyashrinuyāt)—“On whatsoever day dispassion (Vairāgya) springs, upon that day let him wander (take the fourth Ashrama). Having entered Sannyāsa either from the student, household or forest Ashrama let him listen to Veda”. Today there are in general two Ashramas, the second and fourth. When absence of thirst for worldly things (Trishnā) arises then the Sannyāsa Ashrama may be adopted and not before without danger of fall. For if after a man has attained Vairāgya he again falls into the clutches of desire (Rāga), he goes to Hell. The test of competency then is whether a man is detached (Virakta). There are sayings which appear to exclude from Sannyāsa, Shūdras, women and eunuchs. This is on the ground that the two former have no sacrament (Sangskāra). Other sayings of a broader character allow it to the two former where there is a firm (Tivra) Vairāgya. Vyāsa merely prohibits to Shūdras the use of Svadhā (in Tarpana), Svāhā and Vashat (in Homa), etc., (See Yatidharmanirnaya II. 161, but at p. 172 it is said women and Shūdras are excluded. As to eunuchs and the uxorious see ib. 177). Thus the great women Maitreyī and Gārgī and the Shūdra Vidura were knowers of Brahman (Tattvavit)—(In Yatidharmanirnaya II. 162 it is said that women and Shūdras may adopt Viramārga though at p. 160 ib. it is stated that Viramārga is forbidden in the Kali-yuga). Looking at the matter from a broad point of view we must consider what Sannyāsa is and how it arises and who therefore is competent therefor. In the Yoga Shāstra it is said that knowledge (Jnana) which leads to and in its complete form is liberation is the characteristic of Sannyāsa, the renouncing life of the ascetic (Sannyāsi). The adornment (Bhūshana) of a Yati is knowledge which is to be given to the deserving only (Jñānam sannyāsalakṣhanam). By simply giving up action or ritual (Karma) one does not become an ascetic. Knowledge is realisation of the identity of Jīvātmā and Paramātmā. Competency arises for Sannyāsa when all wordly desire is given up; when dispassion (Vairāgya) arises through the knowledge that all the universe is Brahman and therefore no part of it is an object of desire. He is a Yati and a

Deva who knows Atmā to be alone the self-illuminating (Svaprakāsha), attributeless (Shūnya), mass of Bliss (Anandaghana). Agni Purāna (ch. 161) says the fourth Ashrama is that which exhibits Jñāna and Moksha (Jñānamokshādīdarśhakam). Such an one is self-controlled within (Shānta) and without (Dānta), a renouncer (Uparata) to whom all opposites whether of heat or cold, praise or blame are alike (Titikṣhu), self-centred (Samāhita) (See Yatidharmanirnaya II. 108.), an enjoyer with Atmā (Atmarati) whose play is with Atmā (Atmakrida), whose union is with Atmā (Atmamithuna) and whose bliss is Atmā (Atmananda). Maithuna is coupling or union of any kind including the action of the lips in Japa and sexual union. The union of the Yati is within his body with the divine Shakti who is the spouse of Atmā. He is without “mineness” (Nirmama), egoity (Nirahangkāra) and seems to ordinary wordly folk (Vishayātmā) to be dumb (Mūka) and out of his mind (Unmatta), as in one sense he is. For he speaks not of this world and his mind is withdrawn therefrom and centred on the Bliss until it is merged therein. He is void both of desire (Rāga) and aversion (Dvesha) for he sees all things with equal eye (Samadarśhana). For what he sees in them is not external form or quality but the one Atmā therein. He is forgiving (Kṣhama) and fearless for the knower of Brahman has nothing to fear. Fear springs from duality—which has gone. He cares not whether he lives or dies. He seeks not to live nor to die.—(See Yatidharma II 209 *et seq* and 215 citing 41 ch. of Skanda Purāna...Jīvitang maraṇang vātha nābhikāṅkshet kvachit: he should not wish to die or to live). He by renunciation (Tyāga) has content (Santosha) having like the tortoise withdrawn his limbs within himself, that is, those physical and mental functions in which desire inheres; and abides within the blissful Self. He must be the same to friend or foe being one and the same to all beings (Samah sarveshu bhūteshu) and be indifferent to honour and dishonour and careless of what the day or morrow may bring. (‘He who is wise must be without care and not a hoarder for the morrow’—upekshako sanohayiko munirjnāna samanvitah—Yatidharma II. 209 *et seq*.) He is Nirapeksha, that is, without expectation (ib. 215) subduing in all ways his senses. He must have no greed. A pebble and a piece of gold are the same to him. (For what follows see Yatidharmanirnaya II 209 *et seq*.) Nor must he have pride (Dambha); and in such an one not even a hundred expiatory rites (Prāyashchitta) can expiate lewdness (Lāmpatyā). He must not seek to be honoured of men, speak words which displease or get angry with any one. He should avoid all disrespect, hurting the feelings of others and random talk. He thinks of himself as in everything (Akhilasangsthita) and must not cause hurt (Hingsā) to anything. It

is the Yati also who 'offers the other cheek'. But all men are not Yatis; therefore this Ashrama is not imposed on them.

There are ten kinds of Hingsā which are prohibited,—causing fear and trouble, pain to or hindering others, to draw blood, to act prompted by jealousy, to destroy the happiness of another, to excel, to stand in the way or obstruct others, confinement and any other form of action unfavourable and productive of hurt to others. (Udvegajananam, santāpajanam, ruddhakaranam, shonitotpatanam, paishunya-karanam, sukhāpanayanam, atikrama, sangrodhah, bandhah, viparīta karma.—(Yatidharmanirnaya II. 284).

It is said in the Vāyu Purāna that sacrifice (Yajna) is better than gift (Dāna), and spiritual striving and austerity (Tapas) than Yajna (or in the latter there are always material ingredients or Dravya and Tapas includes fasting and the like) but Sannyāsa (which involves Jñāna) is better than Tapas.—(Yatidharma, II- 108 *et seq.*). Therefore Jñāna is greater than all. The same Purāna says that Sannyāsa is the giving up of Karma (Sannyāsah karmano nyāsah). The meaning of this is that there is no Karma (action, ritual or otherwise,) when Sannyāsa has borne its fruit in Jñāna, that is, when the Sādhaka is liberated (Jīvanmukta). Below that stage there is an increasing surrender of Karma, only such Karma being retained as is appropriate for the fourth state. For all on this stage are not perfect and for them as explained later some form of Karma is necessary.

Competency for the fourth Ashrama consists in the four Sādhanaś known as discrimination (Viveka) between the eternal and non-eternal, dispassion (Vairāgya), that is, renunciation of all fruit whether in this or the next world, that is, on earth or in Heaven. He withdraws himself from the objects dear to each of the senses (Sarvendriya-*priti*ni-vartaka—Yatidharma III. 45). A desire for liberation (Mumukshutva); and a desire to learn the Supreme Truth (Tattvajñānechchā)—(Yatidharma II. 108)—all his thinking should be about Atmā only (Adhyātmachintāgatamānasa).

He should contemplate the eternal Deva Nārāyaṇa who is Atmā. That Deva is without duality (Nirdvanda), without Egoity (Nirmama; Mamatvashūnya), is Peace (Shānta), beyond Mayā (Māyātita), the Eternal (Sanātanam) in whom all things are (Paripūrṇa), the stainless (Amala), changeless (Avikāra), supreme Light (Parajyotiḥ), without beginning or end (anādyanta), the cause of worldly consciousness (Jagatahaitanyakāraṇa), the supreme attributeless consciousness (Jñānasvarūpa).—(Yatidharmanirnaya II. 209 *et seq.*).

The work of the Sannyāsin is the search to know Atmā and for this he should ever read the Upanishads and investigate the meaning of Veda (Markandeya Purāna 28 Ch. Yatidharma II

207 *et seq.*). At p. 215 of the last work the four acts (Karmāṇi) to be done are meditation (Dhyāna), purification (Shaucha), begging (Bhikṣā), living solitarily (Ekānta śhīlata). He should study the science of the self (Adhyātmikadarśana *ib.*) He must thus be Atmavidyāparāyana.—(See *ib.* III 247). The cause (Hetu) of knowledge is Shruti, Smṛiti, Purāna, commentaries (Bhāṣya), explanation of Vaidik words (Vedānuvachanam) and sacrifice (Yajna), (Yatidharma II); but this last does not mean material sacrifice (Dravyayajna) but recitation, meditation, fasting, and so forth all of which are Yajna such as Japayajna, Dhyānayajna, Upavāsayajna. So again sexual continence (Brahmacharya) is a Yajna. (As to daily study of Veda and Vedānta see Yatidharma III, 45, 62, 97, 247, where he is spoken of as Vedābhyāsarata but not as to the ritual portion).

The Pūjā or worship of the Yati is not the ordinary external ceremonial worship but Yama, Niyama, Shaucha, Santosha, Tapah Svādhyāya, Asana, Prānāyāma, Japa, Dhairyya (Pratyāhāra), Dhyāna (such as the meditation on Om, mental offering and the latter: that is, without the ordinary external ceremonial), Samādhi (*ib.* II, 212). He must thus be Atmavidyāparāyana (See *ib.* III 247). Prānāyāma is of two kinds with or without Mantra and Dhāyana, that is, Sagarbha and Agarbha. He practices the eight limbs of Yoga, the virtues of his state, devotion to Dharma with certain religious observances, posture, breath control, restraint of senses, centering of the mind, meditation, communion. (Samādhi in Vedānta is Abhedena avasthānam, i. e., the state of not being different from Brahman).

It is said that when the householder's skin begins to shrivel and his hair grows grey and when he sees the sons of his sons then he should go to the forest (Vānaprastha). He may be accompanied by his wife though they will not then cohabit; or if not she will be entrusted to the care of her children. No one should take up this life or that of the Ashrama which follows it in whom desirelessness (Vairāgya) has not arisen otherwise as the Purāna says there is likely to be a fall.—(See as to this Ashrama, p. 192 of Yatidharmanirnaya; and the authorities there cited such as Mahābhārata Rājadharmā Shāntiparva 66 Ch. Ashrama Upanishad; Vishnusanghitā ch. 95; Atri-sanghitā: Prāyashchittavidhi and others.) Yadā manasi vairāgyam jātam sarveshu jantushu tadaiv sannyased vidvān anyathā patito bhavet —(Brihannāradya Purāna, 25 Adhyāya). The life is one of austerity and Vedantic contemplation in which the world and its enjoyments are put behind without regret as things of the past. He must be ascetic (Brahmachāri) without sense of "mineness" (Mamata). The dress, life and food of the Grihastha is given up. Skin or old cloths and sometimes only the Kaupina (a very exiguous loin cloth) were worn.

The hair is tangled (Jatā), the beard and nails uncut. He may at first live in a simple hut and then afterwards in the open, protected only by the trees of the forest. His couch is grass and the earth. He must be without other companions and not wander beyond the forest. Giving up all laziness and restricting sleep he must weaken his body by austerities. He must not eat meat nor drink wine nor even other food grown in the villages; but should restrict himself to forest nuts and fruits. If he eats both in the morning and evening he should cook but once so that the less time is taken up in this matter. He should bathe morning and evening. His food should be limited to a certain number (thus eight) of mouthfuls (Grāsa). This term (Grāsa) is defined as either the measure of a fowl's egg (Kukutānda-pramānam) or so much as is capable of being taken at one time into the mouth (Yāvan vā pravishet mukham). There were also special austerities (Vrata) in the way of food, such as the four months' fast (Chāturmāsya), eating at night only (Naktāsi) or at intervals of one, two or three days; eating for three days in the morning, three in the evening, and then not at all (Prājāpatyavidhi), drinking only the water to be collected from leaves and plants and so forth. Thus subsisting on 6 spoonfuls (Pala) of water, then three of milk, then one of ghee is Taptakrichoharavrata: living for 21 days on a little water and 12 days fasting is Parākavrata. In heat of summer he should expose himself to the five fires (Pancha-tapah), four around him, one above and in winter his cloth should be wet (Ardravāsah) so that he may feel the cold more acutely and learn to suffer the "opposites" with indifference. He should read Veda (Svādhyāya) and Upanishad and worship, for he is as yet not free from ritual Karma. He must do libation (Tarpana) to the fathers (Pitri) and worship (Pūjā) of Devatā with Charu (rice, milk and sugar) and Homa on Parva days. The first two are Pitri-yajna and Devayajna. He must also do Bhogayajna, that is, give food to men and animals though as he progresses in this Ashrama towards the last he is without fixed abode or sacrificial fire (Anagni). He then abandons the Guru fire and sets its flame in his Atmā. He must give alms to ascetics (Tapasvin) and be hospitable according to his means to all and succour the distressed. He must be externally (Dāntā) and internally (Shānta) controlled (Samāhita), friendly (Maitra) and have compassion (Dayā) for all beings (Sarvabhūtānukampaka). His life is one of spiritual energy (Tapas) which maintains the world since it is the virtue of men and Devas which upholds it. Tapas can accomplish what is difficult (dushohara), hard and far (Dūram), inaccessible (Durāpam). As the Vishnusanghitā says—Tapomūlamidam sarvam daivamānushajam jagat—(The whole world is based on the Tapas of Devas and men).

"He should be attached to the study of Vedānta, his senses controlled within and without, indifferent to the opposites, without selfishness or egoism. Free of lust and anger let him regard all beings as one." (Vedāntābhyāsanirataḥ shānto dānto jitendriyah nirdvando nirahangkāro nirmamah sarvādā bhavet samādhigunāniryuktah kāmakrodhavarjitah.)

The Ashrama Upanishad speaks of four classes in this Ashrama viz., (1) Vaikhānasa (2) Udumbara (3) Bālakhilya (4) Phenapa, the distinctions however between which are not of sufficient importance to require detail here.—(They may be found at pp. 195 *et seq* of the Yatidharmanirnaya.)

(Concluded)

THE STRENGTH OF TRUTH AND FAITH

By M. Gnanasambandam, B.A.

Truth is nothing short of Eternal Existence—Knowledge—Bliss, the attainment of which is the aim of every thinking man and woman. It is the pure and perfect soul dwelling in every human body. Its chief characteristic is Anandam or happiness. This happiness is possible of achievement only by the spiritual nature of man and not by his material cravings. It is wrong to suppose that happiness is only in Heaven which is beyond this life. Heaven is in us if only we are heavenly in our thoughts and dealings. To be heavenly is to be absolutely truthful, which is the most blessed state of life. The instincts of Truth are implanted in each human being and it requires sincere effort and firm will to reach and remain in Truth.

"True happiness is his whose tranquil mind

Virtue has raised above the things below."

Manu says about Truth as follows :—

"The soul is its own witness, the soul is its own refuge;

Offend not thy conscious soul which is the supreme internal

Witness of man! The sinful have said in their hearts,

'No one sees us'. Yet the gods distinctly see them,

And so does the spirit within the breast."

The holy Bible says, "The lip of Truth shall be established for ever but a lying tongue is but for a moment." There is indeed nothing in man which is his own save his conscious Self or Soul. It is noteworthy that none is conscious of his own birth or death. Whatever is not within one's own personal knowledge is not direct testimony and it cannot be a fact so far as he is concerned. This

points to the soul not being subject to birth and death—only it changes bodies as bodies change garments. The immortality of the soul is proved by its not being conscious of birth and death experiences. It transcends time and space and caste and creed and always is.

" Small souls inquire, ' Belongs this man
To our own race, or class or clan ? '
But larger-hearted men embrace
As brothers all the human race."

The ancient Vedas deal with this deathless soul which is the true property of human beings. Those sages who lived soul-lives declared that all visible objects being in their nature destructible (destruction is nothing but change of name and form) the material world which is subject to changes is not the pure Truth. They did not say however that the world is untrue but they in their wisdom postulated the existence of the Cosmic Self (Paramatman) which though invisible is beyond the reach of name and form and is indestructible. Whether a man believes in God or not, he cannot but believe in the existence of his own self which perceives and knows the world. This they say is the Atman (individual self) which is an offshoot of Paramatman but subject to bondage (Avidya) unlike the Paramatman which is Infinite—all-knowing. If the action of the Invisible can be guessed approximately from that of the visible, the following observation may not be out of place. As the sun gives out warmth and light unsolicited by the world, and maintains and purifies by his essence every object that his rays touch without himself becoming affected in the process of purification, similarly, the Universal Being—the One who is in all space and in all time—generates consciousness and discretion in men making them feel and think and finally draws them into Himself by His own pleasure and grace without in any way becoming involved in their follies and vices. Each man's deliverance from his narrow egotism which is his own self-woven bondage is a pure matter of time and every one is bound in the long run to realise the impersonal Self or God by breaking asunder his own personal limitations after continuous journey through good and bad experiences and occasional visions of the inner light. The Shastras lay down that 'Nishkama Karma' or the doing of service with no other motive than the pure happiness which comes of every disinterested work leads to the purification of the mind. With mental purity comes concentration. With keen concentration comes true realisation, or the perfect contemplation of the glory of God.

Truth is not an imaginary thing for sweet conversation and pleasant dreaming. It is an abiding creative force. It not only informs but inspires, not only builds but guides, not only thinks but shapes

and elevates. The world is but the product of the thought of God or Paramatman who is Truth personified. " In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Truth gives and sustains without suffering loss or change. It is like the flame of a burning lamp which is not affected when it lights another lamp or any number of lamps. Knowledge is like flame and does not get diminished when it is imparted to others. The property of knowledge belongs to the knower who can distribute that property without incurring any loss. This never-decreasing property of knowledge which is the possession of the Soul is the Truth. " Truth is like a torch, the more 'tis shook, it shines." Nothing can be added to nor taken away from truth which can never be blotted out of existence as all things already known to man and still remaining unknown exist in it.

The Universal Self or Parmatman cannot successfully be brought fully into sects or religions in all His glory any more than the light and heat of the sun can be compassed in particular places and confined there permanently. It is open to each man to reflect and make his own religion and form his own ideals in calmness of spirit and in the light of proper understanding. True spiritual realisation cannot be gained by repeating some formulas and performing some ceremonies which may have their own places in the early stages of spiritual development. True religion which is a condition of the mind which ever remains God-conscious, can be attained only by a change of heart which is the outcome of sincere honest work and cheerful sacrifice. In fact it is the joyous mental attitude towards our immediate surroundings, our conscious relationship with God in all the moments of our daily life that really enlightens us. It is necessary to free ourselves from meaningless superstitions and uninspiring customs by not conforming to them and to boldly tear up and destroy all vanities and false sense of honour which are nothing but so many lifeless ties which keep us bound miserably in ignorance. A true and honest man is the noblest work of God. On the strength of what we truly and heartily believe to be right, we must act, irrespective of consequences, pleasurable or painful. We should maintain a happy mood of harmony with Nature which is the visible garment of God and which expresses His perfect Law. We should serve all creatures, tending plants and trees, feeding birds and animals and helping our neighbours by thought, speech and service and thereby we must learn to feel completely the Immense Life which lives in the elements which serve us and in the luminous bodies overhead which guide our paths. Armed with the powers of self-restraint which is implied in the practice of benevolence to all we can get a glimpse of self-knowledge.

Endowed with self-knowledge we shall realise the Eternal forces of the great Life which are sympathy of life for life and universal love. It is this Universal love which sustains the worlds in perfect harmony and peace. To reach this great Life, one must necessarily pass through suffering and suffering is an impressive teacher silently moulding us in the right way. The bitterest suffering will be gladly borne if we are blessed with the consciousness of Truth revealing to us the spiritual nature of the work we do. Such a consciousness will take us above our ordinary life and adorn us with the dignity of the Eternal, transmuting our very suffering into a glorious and pleasant enjoyment.

In the heart in which the self merges completely in God's love, the personal pains and sorrows must lose their sting and become perfectly harmless. In such an extraordinary condition of mind lighted by God's love, Prahlada of old cheerfully bore all his excruciating pains even without a groan at the hands of his tyrant father. In a similar state of mind which is far above the reach of ordinary human life, Jesus, the Son of God, when bleeding on the cross prayed imploringly on behalf of his most wicked persecutors, "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." If each and every subject living in a State must be presumed to know the law of the land, and cannot legally be excused for ignorance of the law, is it not necessary for every living man to know the law of God that good will come of good and only evil out of evil? In the face of this grand truth and law, Jesus pleaded in favour of his inexcusable persecutors. What else can be greater proof of divine love than this? Here was the greatest and noblest conception of the idea of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. The feeling that we are absolutely in God, our common Father and the true one, in all conditions of life and can have no existence apart from Him, must encourage us to face the different situations of life with the utmost resignation which is the result of undoubted faith in Him. Oh! What a mighty life-giving power it is even to contemplate for one moment that we have no place except in God who is everywhere! Jesus himself explained this truly by saying that the birds have nests, the foxes have holes, but the son of man has no place to rest his head (except in God). Prahlada also expressed the same thought when he answered his enraged father that there is no place where God is not present and that He exists even in the pillar which was pointed out to him by Hiranyakasipu. This is bliss, pure and true. This is the real sharing of that great Life. All else is sordid, mean and base. In solemn silence let us reflect and remain fixed in never-shaken faith and piety. It is by means of this alone that we can come to the knowledge of the ultimate goal. Let us therefore awake, arise and stop not till the goal of bliss is reached,

There is another aspect of Truth. God being Almighty, His cosmic will is not subject to change. God's will being in its nature absolute, man's duty is to love and respect God and bow before His will without a murmur trusting firmly that whatever comes to pass by His will is for his best. The world will not be upset by certain unexpected happenings nor by the viciousness of wicked persons any more than rotten apples can end the world by bad odour. Sri Krishna the divine teacher taught Arjuna the warrior prince when he refused to fight that he was merely an instrument in his hands and that everything is ordained by Him in his own way, but that when man begins to work with the idea that he himself is the sole doer he at once becomes bound by his own thought and feels miserable egotism. Against this kind of egotism which many presume to be responsible for the progress of the world, all the religions join together in the common prayer "Let God's will be done". Strength, love and light are needed to bring home to the mind of erring man the profound truth contained in the above holy prayer of mankind as a whole. It was erroneously at one time thought that man's prayer would change the will of God but the truth flashed on him with the increase of faith and devotion that it was the will of man that had to be modified and taught to adore the will of God because it was rightly recognised that the kindness and the severity of God both meant for the man of insight one and the same thing. Far higher than pain and pleasure which are the toys of man, lies the blessed throne of righteousness. In that lofty sense of righteousness which is the spiritual mightiness, man must find full reward of doing right.

It is a common experience that no man neglects to thank his brother man when he is given food and water and a flickering light at time of need but how few of us have thought of God and considered it our duty to thank Him for the abundant rains and fertile crops, for the glorious sun and the silvery moon? Although we daily see that God makes the sun shine on the earth folded in the darkness of the night, yet how few of us even dimly perceive that He graciously illumines our ignorant minds? Though we find that He sends sumptuous rains to save His creatures, both good and wicked, yet how few of us are able to feel that He similarly extends His definite mercy to every one of us who are living in ignorance of His laws? The All-merciful God saves and succours men despite their bad mentalities by taking them through several stages of experience and lands them finally on the shore of bliss and perfect knowledge. A recent inspired messenger of God in the person of Swami Rama Thirtha wrote truly, "If a man suffers from any want it is due to his own want of faith in God. It is far better for such a man to die than to live a miserable life

wanting in faith in the Creator." Yes, faith enters right into the soul while reason simply stands outside arguing and trying to convince.

With devotion and pure light, we must make our lives sublime and with hearts of faith and love we must clasp the feet of the Lord as children cling innocently to their mother's arms. Hanuman, through faith in Rama, crossed the vast ocean without a bridge. Irresistible is the power of faith! With faith in God we become the pure children of Divinity. Let us live in Truth and faith because,—

"The will is free
Strong is the soul and wise and beautiful
The seeds of God-like power are in us still
Gods are we, bards, saints, heroes if we will."

THE LARGER MEANING OF EDUCATIONAL METHOD

By Dr. G. S. Krishnayya, M.A., Ph. D. (Columbia)

The physician's method of treatment of his patient is determined by diagnosis of his case. So it must be with the teacher and his class. Diagnosis is the first step in method. The word 'diagnosis' is derived, we are told, from Greek forms which mean 'to know through or thoroughly'. We must know thoroughly the facts of the teaching situation before we can help pupils with their learning processes. If teachers attempted diagnosis as a method they would not be so often lost in dealing with cases of obstinate disobedience or of little children who write '3' and '7' backwards.

Diagnosis implies also judgment, or evaluation of the natural and acquired tendencies and the needs which they are likely to satisfy. Not all impulses are of equal worth. We have also to know what impulses count most at a given stage of life, as well as to know which have largest present strength. The eager enthusiasm of the adolescent for all that is new in style and in manners is the reflect of an impulse that leads to the rapid socialisation of the individual and his free and easy incorporation into the world of adult interests and activities. Knowing the significance of the impulse we can pardon some of its crudities and exuberances and assist it to develop in right lines.

If all that had to be taught was certain subjects—arithmetic, reading, writing,—it would suffice to know what procedure would most efficiently get them into the heads and hands of these ignorant candidates. But if it is true that the purpose of education is the changing

of conduct, and if it is true that the school should concern itself with the whole child, then it would seem that the problem of method is deserving of some more thought. Hitherto, appraisal of the effect of class-room procedure has generally been concerned with only a part of what usually takes place. "Has the child learnt multiplication?" The annual or periodical examination answers the question. But what of the total effect upon the child of this class-room procedure through which he is supposed to learn multiplication? During that time the child was forming attitudes with relation to multiplication, arithmetic, teacher, school, himself and so on. He was learning several things besides multiplication. His character was being built by his action and reaction with his environment. 'Well, if all arithmetic is of this type, I do not mind learning it'; 'I never thought arithmetic could be as bad as this'; 'No more arithmetic for me';—these are expressive of what is more than can be measured by the usual examination. In fact so impossible is it to be forming likes and dislikes that it would be safe to say that the reader is even now forming attitudes as to whether to go on in the same old way or to venture on a definite departure!

The fact is that there are concomitant learnings as well as primary learnings. The latter are those that have to do directly with the subject in hand,—multiplication, sewing, gardening, poetry, etc.,—and the former with the judgment of the worth of the work being carried on, and with the relationship to the factors involved. Concomitant learning is a by-product of school activity. In any school-room procedure the pupils are actually engaged in making multiple responses to the multiple stimuli of their environment. Willy nilly, some habits are being strengthened, and some appreciation of the good and the beautiful, or satisfaction with falsehood and evasion, is being provided.

What sort of a person a boy will be is determined by the attitudes, habits and appreciations which are being built up through the method—in this larger sense—adopted by the school. This recognition that while a particular subject is being taught certain other learnings are going, more than doubles the possibilities and responsibilities of the school.

SELECTIONS FROM THE ADHYATMA RAMAYANA

BALAKANDA : CHAPTER V

AHALYA'S PRAYER

अहो कृतार्थास्मि जगन्निवास ते
पादाब्जसंलग्नप्रजःकणादहं ॥
स्पृशामि यन्पद्मजशंकरादिभिः—
विमृश्यते रंधितमानसैः सदा ॥ ४३ ॥

43. Ah ! I have been blessed, Oh the Lord Supreme, by the touch of a grain of dust of Thine lotus feet. I have touched those lotus feet which, with distressed heart, are ever sought after by Sankara (Siva), Brahma and others.

अहो विचित्रं तव राम चेष्टितं
मनुष्यभावेन विमोहयन् जगत् ॥
चलस्यजङ्गं चरणादिवर्जितः
संपूर्णआनन्दमयोऽतिमायिकः ॥ ४४ ॥

44. Ah ! How wonderful are Thine doings, Oh Rama ! Though Thou art devoid of feet and art omnipresent, ever-blissful and above Maya yet Thou deludest the world with Thine human form by moving about in infinite variety of ways.

यत्पादपंकजपरागपवितगात्रा
भागीरथीभवविरिचिमुखान्पुनाति ॥
साक्षात् एव ममदृग्विषयोदस्ते
किं वार्यते मम पुराकृतभागधेयं ॥ ४५ ॥

45. How should I describe my meritorious deeds done in the past when He (the Lord),—by the dust of whose feet Bhagirathi (the Ganges) (herself) being sanctified is purifying Siva, Brahma and others—has manifested himself and has made himself perceivable by me?

मन्यवितारे मनुजाकृतिहरिं
रामाभिधेयं रमणीयदेहिं ॥
धनुर्धरं पद्मविशाललोचनं
भजामि नित्यं न परान्भजिष्ये ॥ ४६ ॥

46. Sri Hari who has incarnated Himself on earth in the form of a beautiful human being known as Sri Rama of broad lotus eyes and adorned with bow—Him ever do I worship and none else.

यत्पादपंकजप्रजः श्रुतिभिर्विमृश्यं
यन्नाभिपंकजभवः कमलासनश्च ॥
यन्नामसाररसिको भगवान्युरारि—
स्तं रामचद्रमनिशं हृदि भावयामि ॥ ४७ ॥

47. Ever do I contemplate Thee in my heart, Oh Sri Rama !—Thee the dust of whose lotus feet is sought after by the Vedas, Thee from whose lotus-navel Brahma was born and in the sweetness of whose name-essence Lord Siva remains ever inebriated.

यस्यावतारचरितानि विरिचिलोके
गायति नारदमुखा भवपद्मजायाः ॥
आनन्दजाश्रुपरिशिक्तकुचाप्रसीमा
वागीश्वरीच तमहं शरणं प्रपद्ये ॥ ४८ ॥

48. I seek refuge in him the life incidents of whose incarnations are sung in Brahmaloaka by sages such as Narada and by Siva, Brahma and other gods and in singing which (i.e., the life incidents) the nipples of the breasts of Sarasvati (the Goddess of speech or learning) are drenched with tears of joy.

सोऽयं परात्मा पुरुषः पुराण
एषस्वयंज्योतिरनंतआयः ॥
मायातनुं लोकविमोहनीयां
धत्ते परानुग्रहएव रामः ॥ ४९ ॥

49. This ¹ is the supreme, ancient Being, the self-effulgent, the Infinite and the Primal cause that hast, for the good of the world, taken the all-enchancing illusory form ² of Sri Rama.

[Note : 1. She is referring to the form of Sri Rama visible before her eyes. 2. As distinguished from the form of ordinary creatures that are made of the five elements].

अयं हि विश्वोद्भवसंयमाना—
मेकः स्वमायागुणविविक्तो यः ॥
विरिचिविष्वक्वीश्वरनामभेदान
धत्तेस्त्वतंतः परिपूर्ण आत्मा ॥ ५० ॥

50. This is the one self-dependent and perfect Atman, the cause of the origin, preservation and destruction of the universe and which being reflected in its own Maya consisting of the Gunas ¹ goes by the various names of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

[Note : 1. Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas.]

नमोऽस्तु ते राम तवाग्निपंकजम्
अग्राधृतं वक्षसि लालितं प्रियात् ॥

आक्रांतमेकेन जगत्रयं पुरा

ध्येयं मुनींद्रिभिमानवर्जितः ॥ ५१ ॥

51. Salutations unto Thine lotus feet, Oh Sri Rama!—the feet which Lakshmi (the Goddess of prosperity) holds in her bosom and caresses with fondness: in days long gone by, with one of which feet Thou coverest the three worlds and which (feet) (again) are meditated upon by sages devoid of egoism.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

INDIA'S DREAM OF INDEPENDENCE

The Indian National Congress has broken away from its old traditions and has declared 'Independence' to be its creed. But why did India lose her independence in the past is a very interesting question at this juncture when her sons have again begun to dream of it. The reason will be very clear if we compare the histories of India and Europe. Perhaps there is no feature in Indian history that is so remarkable as the ease with which big empires have crumbled to pieces before a rebel leader or a foreign invader. These empires were for the most part forced associations of various peoples who were always left conscious of their differences. The rulers cared very little to share the responsibilities of Government with the people, or to establish common points of contact with them by a system of universal education. The result was that the people lived completely detached from the State and when dangers threatened the latter they did not feel it as any concern of theirs. When foreign invaders attacked the country they were faced by the king and his standing army, but the consciousness of danger seldom raised any mighty national opposition. The inevitable consequence was that when the king's army received one or two defeats and was annihilated, there remained nothing to stand in the way of the invaders, and the people tamely submitted to the new rule as they did to the former, often quite oblivious even of the fact that the Government of the country had changed hands. But unlike this the history of Europe shows instances of countries surviving successive defeats and foreign invasions which seemed for a time to blot them out of existence. A France may be crushed and partly conquered by a Henry V, but at a point the national enthusiasm rises up and sweeps away the conqueror before its mighty force. So also a Spain may for a time be wholly conquered and occupied by the Moors, but the Spanish nation that survives in the mountain fastnesses remains unsubdued and eventually succeeds in expelling the foreigners from the fatherland. A Napoleon may crush the powers of Europe in a series of brilliant victories, but yet we see the wonderful spectacle that the nations remain unsubdued and after persistent attempts humble the pride of the world's greatest general. It is an astonishing fact that the national opposition of even such a small country as Holland could successfully resist the long series of aggressive attempts on its liberties by the great and powerful Hapsburg and Bourbon families. The secret of this undying vitality of countries in Europe seems to be the fact that the masses were in a way made to feel for the country. Although the modern form of democratic Government did not exist in

Europe in those days, yet the people were in certain ways taken into partnership with them in matters of administration by the rulers, and were made to feel that their success or failure was interlinked with the well-being of the people. Moreover, there was the great Catholic Church in its full vigour acting as an organisation for the spread of universal education. Through its functionings the classes and the masses, though separated in many matters, were given certain common interests and traditions to stand upon and were saved from developing that spirit of exclusiveness and ideas of privilege even in sharing the Lord's love, which became so marked a feature of India's social and religious organisation. India has to learn this great lesson that any form of stable Government can be formed and managed by Indians themselves in this country only when they establish a greater co-operation between the classes and the masses. A living interest in the State has to be created in the minds of the people and this can be accomplished only by bringing them into greater contact with the State and by an efficient system of universal education which could bridge over the gulf that exists at present in the cultural level of the classes and the masses, of the educated and the illiterate of modern India. At the same time religion, especially Hinduism, has to throw open its doors to scriptural learning and spiritual progress to all people without any invidious distinction of caste or creed. For a spiritual democracy actualised at least in rituals and forms of worship shall furnish a solid foundation for a social and political democracy in India.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

The Golden Verses of the Pythagoreans : by the Editors of the Shrine of Wisdom, London ; price 2s.6d.

The present book contains an English translation in verse form of the Golden Verses of the Pythagoreans and a commentary thereof. Although the authorship of the verses is doubtful, they certainly express the quintessence of the moral teachings of Pythagoras. The moral precepts embodied in these verses form an excellent epitome of the rules of conduct that should form a part and parcel of the life of every pious man, and are calculated to confer happiness here and hereafter on their faithful observers. They are beautiful both for their sublime wisdom as well as the universality of their outlook.

Sir, Teach Me Brahman : by Father J. F. Pessein, Catholic Mission Press, Pondicherry.

This small book is a clever missionary attempt at bringing home to the minds of the Hindu the shortcomings of his religion and the superiority of Christianity over it. In place of condemning the Hindu's faith as a whole, the learned writer admits that there are certain truths, which the Hindu holds in common with the Christians of the Catholic fold, but proceeds to add that Christianity has in it other truths concerning the nature of God like the doctrine of Trinity, which are not found in Hinduism and without a belief in which there is no possibility of salvation for the human soul. He further gives an account of the chief features of Christ's life, teachings and personality along with testimonies of eminent men, both Indian and European, to his greatness, and concludes by saying that it would not do for

Hindus to admit Christ as one of the Avatars and profess him and follow his teachings privately, but that they should accept him as the only Son of God and declare themselves publicly as his followers. He also gives a catalogue of the principal articles of faith held by the Catholic Church.

The book is, we should say, very misleading in many respects. The author's presentation of the resemblances between the Hindu and Christian religions is likely to misguide Hindus who have not made a proper study of their religion, for most of them are unreal and cannot stand scrutiny. In order to bring about these fancied resemblances the author does not hesitate to misinterpret the doctrines of Hinduism in the most arbitrary fashion and to shift his ground from Advaita to Dvaita and vice versa as convenience suits him. The Christian doctrine of Trinity, as the author has interpreted it, may be a special feature of Christianity but we feel sure that few Hindus will find any fascination for the "mystery" that surrounds it or the "splendour" that the author attributes to it. The very statement that the doctrine of Trinity is an explanation of Brahman as He is in Himself would be jarring to the ear of an Advaitist who holds that the nature of the Supreme Being in his essence is beyond the ken of human thought and much less of human language and is realisable only by complete identification in the Nirvikalpa state when the individual mind and personality have vanished. We perfectly agree with the author in his appreciation of the personality of Jesus Christ, and few Hindus would refuse to do honour to his blessed person; but when the author says that he is the only Son of God or that there is no salvation without this belief or that Christianity contains the whole truth no Hindu can suppress a smile of pity at the exclusiveness and fanaticism of the Christian Father.

Mental Healing : by K. L. Sarma, The Nature Cure Publishing House, Pondicherry ; price 2 annas.

The booklet may be considered an original writing on the subject. The author considers the usually recognised methods of mental healing like autosuggestion and suggestive healing as unscientific and unnatural. According to him the correct method of mental healing consists in a truly religious life which is the same as complete resignation to the divine will. He shows by a clear analysis of the idea of resignation how it can act as an aid to nature cure. It is written in simple and lucid English and contains many important principles of religion and health.

Pranayama : by K. L. Sarma ; The Nature Cure Publishing House, Pondicherry ; price 2 annas.

The author gives in this brochure the elementary principles of Pranayama which forms an important part of his scheme of nature cure. His exposition of the subject is very scientific and contains cautious directions to remove the dangers that are generally attendant on the practice of Pranayama without the direct guidance of an expert. We recommend the book to all who are interested in the subject.

NEWS AND REPORTS

BIRTHDAY OF BHAGAVAN SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The Ninety-Fifth Birthday of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna comes off on Sunday the 2nd March, 1930. The Anniversary celebration shall be held at the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras on Sunday the 9th March, 1930. The usual feeding of the Poor-Narayanans will form the special feature of the function on the Anniversary Day.

BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT THE R. K. MATH, MADRAS

The Sixty-Eighth Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was as usual celebrated with great eclat at the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras, on the 26th of January, 1930. In the spacious hall of the Math a large size photograph of the Swami was placed on a raised platform tastefully decorated with ferns and rose garlands. Bhajana parties coming from various quarters of the city filled the Asharma premises with the soul-stirring notes of their devotional music to the great edification of the large number of devotees who began to assemble at the Math from early hours in the morning. As usual in the noon took place the feeding of the poor-narayanans in the R. K. Mission Students' Home premises. This year over 2000 poor people were sumptuously fed, and about 500 devotees who had assembled at the Math for taking part in the celebration received Prasadam. Next, there was a Harikatha which was very much enjoyed by the assembled devotees. In the evening a meeting was held under the presidency of the Hon'ble Dewan Bahadur Justice Sir C. V. Kumaraswami Sastriar. Mr. N. Subramanya Aiyar, B.A., L.T., of the Students' Home first delivered a lecture in Tamil depicting the spiritual genius of the Swami, and showing how his life was a synthetic fulfilment of the ideals of spiritual life as embodied in the Hindu Scriptures. This was followed by an eloquent address in English by Mr. I. Narayana Menon, M.A., B. Litt. (Oxon), Professor of Philosophy, Presidency College, Madras, on "The Message of Swami Vivekananda to the Modern Conscience". In the course of his speech he pointed out those features of the Swami's message that chiefly interested the secularly minded men of modern times. He specially emphasised upon the new interpretation that the Swami has given to the ancient Indian ideal of renunciation which according to the Swami does not mean a sort of quietism as it is wrongly understood by many, but implies active service of humanity and culture of self abnegation. He also referred to the Swami's ideals about the harmony of religions and the education of the Indian masses. The Chairman, in the course of his learned and inspiring address reminded the audience of the Swami's repeated exhortations to his countrymen to cultivate strength, physical as well as mental, and said that the only sure way of progress for India was to follow the teachings of that dynamic personality. The meeting terminated with the usual vote of thanks to the Chairman and the speakers. The proceedings of the day came to a close with Mangalarathi and the distribution of Prasadam at 8 P.M.

THE VEDANTA SOCIETY, PORTLAND, OREGON, U.S.A.

The annual meeting of the local Vedanta Society held on the 3rd December, 1929, was one of the most enjoyable since the Society was first started four years ago. It served the double purpose of

celebrating the anniversary of the Society and also establishing the work in the newly decorated rooms of the Wheeldon Annex.

The meeting was presided over by Mr. Ralph Thorn, President of the Portland Organisation. The programme committee had arranged a varied programme of music, readings and talks. One of the most enjoyable numbers was a description, by Swami Vividishananda, of some of his experiences on a pilgrimage to Manas Sarovar and Kailash in Tibet.

The meeting was viewed by many of those present as a farewell party to Swami Prabhavananda, who is departing soon to continue his work in Hollywood, California. However, in an intimate talk to his students during the serving of refreshments, Swami Prabhavananda said they should not look upon his leaving as a farewell, since he would continue to have an active interest in the Portland Centre, and would no doubt be with this group from time to time in future.

The new quarters are of ample proportions, attractive and comfortable, and should serve the Society well during the coming winter months. Considerable thought has been given to the possibility of building a new home for the Vedanta Society in Portland and the possibility will continue to receive the thoughtful consideration of the Board of Trustees.

The love and good wishes of the entire Society go with Swami Prabhavananda to his new field, while their loyal support and spirit of co-operation remain with Swami Vividishananda.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION AT THE R. K. ASHRAMA, RAJKOT

The holy occasion of Christ's nativity was celebrated with great eclat at Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Rajkot. About two hundred people took part in the celebration. The function began with a song by a Christian devotee followed by an interesting lecture in English by Swami Iswarananda in which the Swami showed with the help of quotations the resemblance of the Gospel of Christ with the message of the Bhagavad Gita. Then Mr. H. N. Pandya, a leading Vakil of Rajkot, addressed the audience in Gujarati and emphasised the fact that Christ's message was nothing but an echo of Vedanta. The function came to a close with a short speech from the chair and the distribution of prasadam.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION (CEYLON BRANCH)

The work of the R. K. Mission in Ceylon has of late rapidly expanded, and a number of educational institutions have already been established at Jaffna, Trincomalli and Batticaloa. The Ceylon Branch of the R. K. Mission in India had been experiencing many legal difficulties in the effective transaction of its business. To remove them the Ceylon Branch of the Mission applied to the Government of Ceylon to get it formally incorporated by an Act of the Govt. We are glad to announce that this was done by an Ordinance passed in the Ceylon Legislative Council and it received the sanction of the Governor on the 17th of July 1929. According to the Ordinance the Ramakrishna Mission (Ceylon Branch), as the Association is styled, will hereafter be administered by a separate Board of Management, consisting of the President, the Vice-President, the Secretary, the Treasurer and other members numbering not more than 36 nor less than 12. The Ordinance, however, provides that all rules and resolutions other than those relating to finance or property made by the Board of management shall be subject to the approval of the President of the R. K. Mission at Belur, and that except so far as is provided in the Ordinance

any dispute or doubt as to any matter affecting the principles or policy of the Ramakrishna Mission shall be referred to the Governing Body of the Mission in India whose decision thereon shall be final.

BHANDARKAR ORIENTAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE, POONA

The report of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute for the year ending with March 1929 shows a creditable record of work done in the cause of Oriental learning. The report shows in separate sections the work turned out by the various departments of the Institute. The Mss. Department has a collection of 20,000 Sanskrit manuscripts which are freely lent out to scholars all over the world. The Mss. Library was inspected by a special Government Officer whose report shows that there was not even a single case of a manuscript being lost. The Library Department completed the work of carefully arranging and cataloguing both the R. G. B. Library and the Institute's own Library of printed books. No less creditable has been the activity of the Research Department which, although of only two years' standing, has won ungrudging recognition from the public press and from the student world in general. The number of students regularly attending the class has increased from 9 to 14, and the number of lectures given, from 114 in 1927-28 to as many as 212 during the year under report. The Publication Department has actually issued three volumes in the course of the year under report including among them the valuable Nyaya Kosha, 3rd Edition, pp. 1136. Several other works in the press are in various stages of progress, the pages printed during the year under report being 1276. The Mahabharata Department which has undertaken the publication of a critical edition of that great epic has put forth two fascicules, besides completing the average collation of two lacs of verse-units. It is however a matter of keen disappointment that the financial position of the undertaking continues to be as unsatisfactory as ever, the outstanding deficit of the Department having gone up from Rs. 11,500 to Rs. 13,500. The Sales Branch of the Institute has increased its total sales from Rs. 6,490.10-6 in 1927-28 to Rs. 7,794.12-3 during the year under report.

The general financial position of the Institute has improved by about Rs. 4,000 as is evident from the statement of accounts and of assets and liabilities appended to the report. But this slight improvement is mainly due to the economy and the efficiency of the general administration. The outstanding liability of Rs. 13,500 with which the Mahabharata section is confronted is a matter of anxious concern for the management, while the inadequacy of funds makes it necessary for the Institute to put off the carrying out of many schemes of admitted urgency connected with the improvement and extension of its buildings. The sort of work that the Institute is doing is of immense importance to Indian culture and therefore deserves the liberal patronage of the princes and people of this country. It will indeed be a blot on India's reputation if an undertaking like this suffers for want of funds.

AN APPEAL OF THE R. K. ASHRAMA, SHELLA, KHASI HILLS

At the instance of a few Khasi friends some monks of the Ramakrishna Mission started educational works in these hills in 1924. The object of this movement has been to present to our Khasi friends the fundamentals of true Indian culture as evinced in the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. It is

needless to say that these great men exhorted people to rise superior to narrow sectarianism by drawing their inspiration from the Vedanta Philosophy which has a universal appeal.

The work has expanded steadily and at present there are two Middle English, six Lower Primary and three night schools; nearly 300 boys and girls are reading in those schools; two boarding houses are maintained, one at the Ashrama quarters at Shella and the other at Sunamganij (Sylhet) where six boys are reading at the High English school. In the Ashrama and other localities weekly classes are held for adults and lantern lectures are occasionally arranged. The publication of non-sectarian religious literature and school books in the Khasi language has also been taken in hand. The needs of the sick and poor of all sects are also being attended to for which a stock of homeopathic and biochemic medicines has been kept. All these works are conducted by three monastic and twelve voluntary workers (Bengali and Khasi).

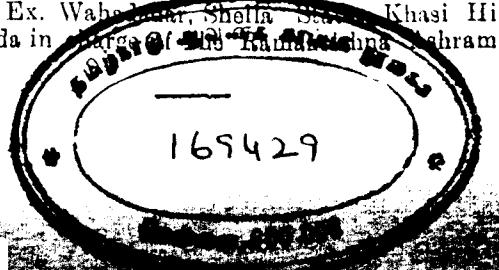
For the management and expansion of the above mentioned work a Committee has been formed at Shillong which has undertaken all responsibilities in this connection. In order to run the work efficiently and successfully the Committee is now anxious to raise funds for the following purposes for which they appeal to the generous public of all creeds and colour for sympathy and co-operation and for monetary contributions for the noble cause of awakening in the people of these hills the consciousness that they are, in common with the people of the plains, the inheritors of the glorious past and the makers of future India.

Our needs are as follows :—

- (1) Monthly recurring expenditure of Rs. 300 for the existing institutions.
- (2) Construction of a Students' Home and Ashrama for the workers at Shillong which is estimated to cost about Rs. 10,000.
- (3) Construction and re-construction of the schools and boarding houses at the existing centres in the interior of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills and the opening of new centres at other places for which requests are being received frequently. The cost of construction is estimated to be Rs. 10,000 for the present.
- (4) Publication of books at a cost of about Rs. 2,000.

Any help in cash or kind will be thankfully received and acknowledged through the Press by the Secretary to the Committee. Donors contributing Rs. 1,000 or more will be at liberty to suggest the perpetuation of the memory of their relatives and friends by having the schools, boardings and Ashramas named after them.

Sd. Birendra Kumar Mazumdar, Secretary to the Committee, Laban, Shillong. Sd. M. San Gupta, M. A., Dy. Comptroller of Assam (President to the Committee). Sd. Roy Bahadur Radhanath Phukan, Director of Agriculture and Industries, Registrar of Co-operative Societies and Registrar of village authorities. Sd. K. Manik, Siim Mylliem (King of Mylliem State), Khasi Hills. Sd. J. N. Chakrabatty, B. A., M. S. A. (Cornell), M. R. A. S. (Eng.), Dip. in Agri. Deputy Director of Agriculture, Lower Assam Valley Districts Circle. Sd. Jogidhon Roy, Ex. Wabar, Shella, Khasi Hills. Sd. Swami Prabhananda in charge of the Ashrama, Shella, Khasi Hills.



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