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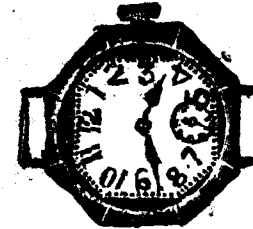
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PRAYER

ॐ

विधेरज्ञानेन द्रविष्यविरहेणालसतया
विधेयाशक्यत्वात्तव चरणयोर्याच्युतिरभूत् ॥
तदेतच्चतव्यं जननि सकलोद्धारिणि शिवे
कुपुत्रो जायेत कचिदपि कुमाता न भवति ॥

पृथिव्यां पुत्रास्ते जननि बहवः संति सरलाः
परं तेषां मध्ये विरलतरलोऽहं तव सुतः ॥
मदीयोऽयं त्यागः समुचितमिदं नो तव शिवे
कुपुत्रो जायेत कचिदपि कुमाता न भवति ॥

I have fallen from (my devotion to) Thy feet as a result of my incapacity to perform my duties owing to my ignorance of scriptural injunctions, poverty and laziness. O Consort of Siva, Thou who art the mother and redeemer of all, deign to pardon me for this. For wicked sons there may exist, but never a wicked mother.

O Mother, though in the midst of Thy numerous guileless sons in the world I happen to be a rare specimen of wantonness, yet, O Consort of Siva, it is not proper for Thee to forsake me, Thy child. For wicked sons there may exist, but never a wicked mother.

SANKARACHARYA

RENASCENT INDIA—II

The one thing that strikes us most in connection with these revivalistic movements is the stolid indifference and utter lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Muslim population in India at the outset. For, while the Hindu mind quickly responded to the time-forces and began to work them out to strengthen the national organism, the Muslims in India could not take kindly to the neo-cultural movement and keep pace with the march of events: they religiously pursued a life of self-centred exclusivism and developed a communalistic bias hardly to be reconciled with the spirit of nationalism or the ideal of universal brotherhood. The result was a complete intellectual stagnation. Even the historic event of 1904 was to them but a limitation of the territorial expansion of the Christian nations over the world's surface, though it seemed to the Hindu mind to be a signal triumph of the Asiatic genius over the West and revealed along with it a splendid picture of Asia's cultural possibilities. The Muslims formed a world of their own, close and compact, and in spite of their heritage of a useful culture, they could not adapt themselves to the new conditions and take advantage of the situation with the result that they remained entrenched in the stronghold of communalism and failed to develop a broader outlook.

But there are born souls in every race and nationality, who, by virtue of their inborn genius, can transcend the limitation of racial prejudice and look at the world situation from a higher perspective of life. Sir Syed Ahmed—the pride and glory of the Muslim world was the first among the Indian Moslems to realise the serious consequences of the studied indifference of his fellow-brethren to the world-forces. His sympathetic imagination raised him far above the petty-minded seclusion of his co-religionists and led him to break down the barriers that were raised round his community to ward off the impact of this cultural influence. And the Aligar College was the product of his high-souled effort for the widening of the Muslim outlook and the promotion of a healthy spirit of nationalism among the Muslims in India. As a matter of fact the history of India in the 19th century is crowded with the events of a similar nature: the Fergusson College at Poona, the Dayananda College at Lahore, the Central Hindu College at Benares and the Mahammedan College at Aligar, to mention only a few, were indicative of the revival of the spirit of nationalism and of the aesthetic and imaginative genius of the Indian people. It was a crucial moment and an ordeal of perilous severity for the Indians. A less vigorous life might well have collapsed under

the double weight of its old innate motives and a servile imitation of alien ideas. But India boldly stood the impact with all the serenity of her reposeful civilisation. Her intellectual genius flowered into the richness of detail in the domains of philosophy, science, art, literature, politics, and sociology. And every activity was marked by a tendency to deal with these various phases of life in the light of the Indian spirit, that shot not upward alone to the abstract but cast its rays outward as well to embrace the multiplicities of thought and richness of life. The Renascent India with the triumphant note of her spiritual wisdom thus emerged out from the ordeal unscathed, to wrest her liberation from the grip of Western imperialism.

The spirit of nationalism awakened under the shock of the new movement, received a concrete shape in the growth of the Indian National Congress. But times have changed and with it, the entire outlook of this national institution. A new life has been breathed upon the traditionalism of the past, and to-day what with the spread of education and a greater federation of Hindu-Muslim feelings and aspirations, the Indian political programme has assumed a huge proportion and become more comprehensive in its scope than it was some decades ago. Even in the field of politics we find the idea of democracy firmly based on the spiritual consciousness of the Indian mind. And consistent with the innate im-

pulses of the nation the political aspiration of India has crystallised into a sober religious movement with the note of absolute non-violence as its central creed. And nothing has become more effective as an instrument for liberation than this innocent principle which has behind it as its driving force the united and determined will of the people. And the very fact that the Congress Working Committee has now been declared to be an unlawful assembly by the Government of India shows the powerful hold the Congress has over the country as the accredited national institution voicing forth the aspiration of three hundred million souls of the country. It moves and acts with a telling effect in matters affecting the destiny of India to-day.

In every sphere there is now a beginning of a new stirring of life. The old social forms are crumbling away under the pressure of environment in proportion as the society is coming more and more in touch with the great facts and forces of a higher life. The barriers formerly built round the society to safeguard its spiritual interests have now proved in many cases to be standing obstacles to its further expansion and as such are being broken down to give it a freer field for further development. But it must not be forgotten that no stable structure can be built upon the quicksand of changing ideas—ideas that have no solid basis in the permanent realities of national life. As already indicated, India's present revival is not an exotic growth nor is this renaissance

a unique feature in the history of the Indian people. In days gone by when many races of the Western world were slumbering in caves and huts without the least trace of their present vaunted civilisation, India had created 'with an inexhaustible many-sidedness, republics and kingdoms and empires, philosophies and cosmogonies and sciences, and creeds and arts and poems and all other kinds of movements, palaces and temples and public works, communities and societies and religious orders, laws and codes and rituals, physical sciences, psychic sciences, systems of yoga, systems of politics and administration, arts spiritual, arts worldly, trades, industries, fine crafts.' The invaluable relics of a greater Indian life are still found in the distant parts of the globe. India like the mother-church stands as the symbol of unity from which had radiated at different periods of her history the lights of various systems of thought embracing all phases of human life. Even the sayings of the Buddhists and the figures of the Upanishads were re-echoed on the lips of Christ. Everywhere there was a superabundance of energy, and India has once more begun to create as she did in the past. So it is that the present Indian resurgence is not merely an accident nor a gift of the Western mind but a triumphant revival of the Indian genius from its long deep slumber. India has already discovered the springs and freshets of her life and begun to wash herself clean of all the debasing accretions of ages.

She has not blindly tabooed all the wealth of the Occidental culture but has taken advantage of it to set the house in order. And in this present march of her life one can foresee the time when she would stand as one of the greatest powers on earth and dominate the thought-world of humanity as she did in the past.

But life, national or individual, is not a smooth sailing. Clouds lour in the horizon when there is the greatest prospect of a glorious sunshine. There are still many in the country who tempted by the flotsam and jetsam of Occidental culture have swung like a pendulum from one extreme to the other and been caught in the trap. They are busy wearing the cast-off clothes of European thought and life. The camouflaged diplomacy of the white masters has already created a serious division in the rank and file of India's population and thereby has succeeded in no small measure in tightening their grip on the destiny of the people. But the history of the human race tells quite a different tale. The fire once kindled cannot so easily be extinguished. So says the immortal poet Kalidas, "When the faggots are stirred the flame leaps, when the snake is stirred it rears its hood. Through being stirred to action, people mostly attain their proper greatness." Man is the architect of his own fortune. The freedom of a nation as also of an individual can never be a free gift of a controlling authority. The fortune must be wrought in the fiery furnace of trials and tribulations, and a nation

to be free must boldly look the world in the face and wrest its own freedom from the hands of Destiny through sheer moral courage and soul-force. It is but vain self-delusion to look up to the outside world for help in the struggle for emancipation. The inspiration and strength must come from within, for the infinite power lies hidden in the dynamo of national mind. It is a hopeful sign of the times that the vision of India's potential glory has already kindled the juvenile enthusiasm and it is time that the Young India must judge for itself its own destiny. Various schemes of national advancement have also been kept before the county advocating different modes of national liberation. "To my mind," rightly suggested the Chairman of the Madras Youth Conference sometime back, "there is one and only one ideal that must guide our aspirations and influence our conduct. We find ourselves today not merely as inheritors of a rich and ancient culture but also as participants in an enlarged life of humanity seeking peace, contentment and prosperity. Isolated life of India as such would imperil her future and stay back her precious contribution to the world's higher life. An indispensable condition to this flowering of her genius is freedom. So long as she lives a humiliated and emasculated career by remaining in subjection deprived of those inalienable rights of directing and shaping her destinies, that genius cannot blossom and thus cannot contribute towards the

common riches of world-culture. *Her subjection is not only a national calamity but also a world disaster awaiting immediate redemption.*"

As a matter of fact the noble task of re-shaping the destiny of India rests with the millions of her youthful population. The ruddy enthusiasm of Young India must not be frittered away in party squabbles but should be conserved and intensified to be deployed out into the multifarious channels of our corporate activity. India must be made, as of old, the leader of an Asiatic Zollverein—an upholder of the rights of the coloured races throughout the world; for the destiny of India is inextricably bound up with that of the other Asiatic races of the East. The soul of Asia has been stirred to its inmost depth and a race-consciousness engendered by an affinity of culture has already linked together the destinies of the Eastern nations. Needless to point out that the pan-Asiatic movement must attain its fruition in the emancipation of India, for already most of the Asiatic powers have shaken off the nightmare of European imperialism and come into their own. And it is time for India to march abreast of her sister nations. India embodies in herself the very soul of Oriental culture and with the rise of India the long night of the Oriental world would come to an end. The dawn is at hand and the renaissance of Indian life has been preparing for the rise of the new sun. For when the white lights of the morn kiss the

woods and rivers and fall on the verdant hills and dales, and the rustling of leaves and twittering of birds are heard in suppressed under-stones of dreamy mystery, who can deny that in the cities and villages from one end of India to the other the sleeping soul of the country has been waking up after a long deep slumber? One who can read the signs of the times cannot fail to see that the New India is rising today out of the peasant's cottage, grasping the plough, out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler and the sweeper—from the factory and the markets—from the groves and the forest, from the hills and the mountains. The voice of Renascent India is ringing today with the peals of a million thunders. And in the prophetic words of Swami Vivekananda we can also say today: "The longest night seems to be passing away, the sorest trouble seems to be coming to

an end at last, the seeming corpse appears to be awaking; and a voice is coming unto us,—away back where history and tradition fail to peep into the gloom of the past, coming down from there, reflected as it were, from peak to peak of the infinite Himalaya of knowledge, and of love, and of work, India, this motherland of ours,—a voice is coming unto us, gentle, firm and unmistakable in its utterances, and is gaining volume as days pass away, and behold, the sleeper is awakening! Like a breeze from the Himalayas, it is bringing life into the almost dead bones and muscles, the lethargy is passing away, and only the blind cannot see, or the perverted will not see, that she is awakening, this motherland of ours, from her deep long sleep. *None can resist her any more, no outward powers can hold her back any more, for the infinite giant is rising to her feet.*"

ADWAITA-VADA IN THE RIG-VEDA

By Prof. Kokileswar Sastri, Vidyaratna, M.A.

I

WHILE discussing the relation which subsists between the cause and its successive effects, Sankaracharya in his commentary on the Brahma-Sutra introduced the idea of two stand-points from which this relation can be viewed, viz., the Paramarthika and the Vyavaharika. He says that from the former standpoint the effects are to be looked upon as Ananya (अनन्य) (not distinct) from their cause, although from the Vyavaharika view, we take them to be Anya (अन्य) (distinct) from the cause. About the exact significance of these two terms—'Anya' and 'Ananya'—much misunderstanding exists in various quarters and we would try in this paper to bring out the bearing of these two terms upon his entire theory in the light of what Sankaracharya has himself said about them.

We would here explain the idea with the help of an illustration which Sankara himself has used in several parts of his commentaries. मृत्चूर्ण, पिंड, घट (pot) are the effects or transformations or manifestations of the cause मृत्तिका (clay). Now, what is the nature of the relation that exists between these successive changes issuing out of the मृत्तिका—effects produced from the cause? This relation can be explained in two different ways. The ordinary common people of the world regard the successive changes thus produced as self-subsisting entities—existing *separated* or divided from their cause. The clay to their view, has transformed

itself as मृत्चूर्ण, and the मृत्चूर्ण totally transforms itself into मृत्-पिंड, and the मृत्-पिंड into the घट or the pot. One form is changed into another and that again into another and so on. One dies and another is produced. The preceding forms are looked upon as the causes, successively, of the latter forms. This is the empirical standpoint and our practical life is bound up with this view.

But it is otherwise when these are considered from the Paramarthika standpoint. This view never regards the effects as separated from or outside of the causal reality. They can never exist separated from their cause, *out of relation* to their cause. मृत्चूर्ण, मृत्पिंड, घट, etc., are not, to this view, so many self-subsisting entities, but only successive manifestations of the one causal reality मृत्तिका—lying behind them. Here, the clay or rather the nature of the clay finds its expression in the successive forms produced out of it. The real essence of the clay is not *lost* in these forms; it is present behind each of these successive changes: the identity of the cause is not lost but present in each successive change or difference. It does not itself change with those changing forms; it does not, in assuming these forms, become something else or अन्य. It is clear then that these successively changing forms do not altogether vanish, do not entirely lose their value in the eyes of those who are possessed of the पारमार्थिकदृष्टि

Sankara has told us that there is really no conflict or opposition (विरोध) between these two views¹. As there is no opposition, there arises no need for abolishing the things of the world, declaring them to be false or unreal. The परिणाम-वाद may be retained even when we emphasise the विवर्त-वाद².

But there are, unfortunately, several modern interpreters of Sankara's system who think otherwise. They regard all nama-rupas—the whole universe—as mere illusion, as unreal and false. But, as we have seen above, Sankara has found no necessity for denying the existence of the world altogether. Sankaracharya distinctly declares, "Nobody has the power to dissolve both the external and internal existences which are presented to our senses and to our consciousness." Here is how he expresses this idea:—

“कोऽयं प्रपञ्च-विलयो नाम?.....तत्र यदि तावत् विद्यमानोऽयं प्रपञ्चो देहादिलक्षण आध्यात्मिकः, बाह्यश्च पृथिव्यादिलक्षणः प्रविलापयितव्य इत्युच्येत, स पुरुषमालेख्य अशक्यः प्रविलापयितुमिति, तत्प्रविलयोपदेशोऽशक्यविषय एव स्यात् ।”
(वे० भा०, ३, २, २१)

In a famous passage in the Brihadaranyaka-bhasya, he raises a question—“If you hold all the nama-rupas to be real and not false, what would be the fate of your Advaita-Vada? Brahman has been declared in the Srutis as One and without a second. If you hold to this declaration made by the Sruti you cannot at the same time admit the reality of the difference of the

1. तेनायं हेतुना अस्मत्प्रपञ्चो न विरुध्यते तैः द्वैतैः (मंडूक्य-भा०, ३, १७-१८.)

2. अप्रत्याख्याय कार्यप्रपञ्चं परिणाम-प्रक्रिया च आश्रयति सूत्रकारः (वेदा० भा०, २-१-१४)

namarupa—the changes going on in the world.”—

“नामरूपोपायस्त्वित्वे—‘एकमेवाद्वितीयं’ नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन’ इति श्रुतयो विरुध्येरन् इति — न सलिल-फेनदृष्टान्तेन परिहृतत्वात्”
(वे० भा० ३, २, २१)

The reply suggested by Sankaracharya is very important. He says—“No; you need not deny the existence of the changes—the nama-rupas. The existence of these does not at all harm in any way the theory of Advaitism. Take the case of the relation between water and its productions,—the changes of waves, bubbles, foams and froth; the relation between clay and its successive transformations in the shape of मृत्चूर्ण, मृत्पिण्ड, etc.” No necessity arises to deny these successive changes, if we declare them to be (अनन्य) i.e., non-different from their cause. That these are non-separate (अनन्य) from their cause does not make them different अन्य or independent entities: neither does it abolish their respective forms. This is what Sankaracharya says in this respect in his Vedanta-bhasya:—

“न च समुद्रादुदक्तात्मनोऽनन्यत्वेऽपि..... फेन-तरंगादीनां इतरेतरभावापत्तिर्भवति ।

न च तेषामितरेतरभावानापत्तावपि समुद्रात्मनोऽन्यत्वं भवति । (वे० भा०, २, १, ४३.)

The sum and substance of Sankara's arguments may be thus stated:—

(a) Whenever the effects are produced, they are produced from their cause; they can never appear divided—separated—from their cause¹. Can you separate the pot from its cause, the clay? Can you separate the waves from their cause—the water? Can you, placing the waves outside the water, regard

1. यस्य च यस्मादात्मलाभो भवति, स तेन अभिभक्तो दृष्टः, यथा घटादीनां मृदा ।

(वे० भा०) !

them as something self-existent—as something अन्य ?

(b) The effects are, in reality, the manifestations of their cause,—the stages through which the causal reality expresses its nature. It is the cause which differentiates itself in these forms. It is the cause which holds these forms, sustains them. It is like the identity of the thread which holds the manifold flowers together and forms a piece of garland. Then how is it possible to abolish these successive changes or to separate them from their cause which holds them?

(c) The cause does not, in assuming these forms, lose itself in them. The movements of my hand, the walking, the uttering of words—all these are my states; they are mine, they belong to me. If you separate these from me, they lose their substance, they die; for, it is the cause alone which binds its effects. One can, without difficulty, recognise the identity of the cause in its different manifestations. A cow, when lying in repose and ruminating, is called a cow; but when it gets up and walks, will it now be called a horse, and not the same identical cow¹? The cause is thus the same throughout all its changing differentiations and does not lose its identity and become something different from its own self.

Brahman or the underlying Reality is not thus in any way affected by the changing nama-rupas, so that you need not deny the reality or the existence of the universe. It is the universe in which the Reality is expressing its

1 न हि लोके गौस्तिष्ठन् गच्छन् वा गौर्भवति शयानस्तु अश्वादिजातयन्तरम् इत्यादि ।

(वृ० भा०, २, १, २०)

nature. There is therefore no opposition between the world and its causal source. It is in this way that in Sankara-Vedanta the परिणाम has been retained, while emphasising the विवर्त. It is most erroneous to suppose, as has been done by many, that in order to retain the unity of Brahman, Sankaracharya has abolished the world as false.

Sankara's Advaita Philosophy is founded upon this relation of the cause and its effects. From the discussion given above we arrive at the conclusion that one cause is present behind its different manifestations in the world; that the cause itself is gradually realising itself in the different forms of nama-rupa. It will be a mistake to think the effects produced from the cause as something different from it.

One Reality manifests itself in the multiplicity of nama-rupas, and the true nature of this Reality has not been reduced to these successive effects. It is the connecting link of all these differences, and its own nature realises itself in and through these differentiations. There is no need in Sankara's system to declare the unreality of these differences, or to separate these from the underlying causal reality, taking them as self-sufficient entities.

It is our deliberate opinion—and this opinion has been formed by a deep and scrutinising study of the Rig-Veda itself—that the relation between the cause and its effect as expounded by Sankaracharya, the true import of which we have given above, owes its origin to the Rig-Veda. The popular conception that the hymns of the Rig-Veda are addressed to the grand and remarkable natural forces which captured the imagination of the primitive Aryan settlers of India,

in the shape of the Sun, the Moon, the Dawn, the Sky, etc., is altogether erroneous. We have, on the contrary, found ample material in the Rig-Veda which unmistakably proves that the theory of Non-dualism as interpreted by Sankara in his Vedanta system of philosophy runs throughout the work from the beginning to the end. This may sound strange to many ears, but would it not rather be regarded as remarkably strange that an intelligent race of people like the Hindus should exhibit such a lamentable lack of even common-sense in allowing the hymns and Mantras to inert (जड़) non-intelligent *natural* phenomena to form an essential part of their religion! Even at the present day, their daily devotions and prayers to God are performed by a hymn of the Rig-Veda. If the Rig-Veda contains nothing but certain measured lines meant to be addressed to the fascinating objects of nature calculated to inspire awe and admiration, then its value and importance are considerably diminished. To our view, the importance of the Rig-Veda lies in the fact that it is the original store-house of the Indian Idealism which supplied the materials of Advaita-Vada which subsequently gave rise to the admirable system of Vedanta.

We have found above that it is an important feature of the Vedantic causal theory that the effects produced by the cause can never remain separated from the cause and be regarded on their own account, to be independent and self-sufficient entities; and that the causal reality, in assuming these forms, does not become something else (अन्य), losing its own nature. It is only the nature of the causal reality which finds gradual expression in

and through these visible forms¹. Now, *this is also the position of the Rig-Veda itself*. The Vedic Rishis worshipped this causal Reality which operates behind these visible forms, knowing full well that these visible *सूक्ष्म* forms *by themselves* have no value at all. For, they can never be *separated* from the underlying causal reality and considered on their own account as if they are the only realities. The Vedic Rishis did not remain satisfied with these visible forms but behind the shifting scenes of nature they always tried to seek for and discovered a constant causal Reality which they worshipped.

There are quite a number of arguments by which this position has been established in the Rig-Veda. We would in this paper content ourselves with presenting *only one set* of arguments collected from different places of the Rig-Veda. If, to the Vedic Rishis the gods were no more than so many visible objects as they appeared to the senses, we would not have found mention of the *dual nature* of each of the Vedic gods so clearly and distinctly, as has been done in the Rig-Veda. The Agni, the Surya, the Aswins, the Soma,—in fact every Vedic god we find described as possessing a dual form, a dual nature of his own. As Brahman has been described in the Upanishads as प्राणस्य प्राणः, मनसो मनः, सूर्यस्य सूर्यः etc., so in the Rig-Veda, under the visible forms of the gods there is, in each case, an *invisible form* which constitutes the *true* nature of these gods. In the Vedic state of

1. ".....तथा मनुष्यादिष्वेव हिरण्य-
गर्भपर्यन्तेषु ज्ञानैश्वर्यादिव्यक्तिरपि परेण भूयसी
भवति"। (वे० भा० १-३-३०.)
vide also गी० भा०, १५-१२.

society people were not wanting whose cultured minds were busy discovering the presence of an invisible causal power working behind nature which they contemplated and worshipped, taking the shifting phenomena of nature as mere external expressions of

that hidden causal power. The very mention of the dual nature of the Vedic gods unmistakably bears witness to the fact that the actual visible forms of the gods were never recognised in the Rig-Veda as the *only realities*.

(To be concluded)

MULAVIDYA AND DR. R. SHAMA SASTRY

(A REJOINDER)

By Y. Subrahmanya Sarma

To the May number of the Vedanta Kesari, Dr. Shama Sastry has contributed an article "In defence of Sri Sankaracharya's Theory of Mulavidya," subjecting to a scathing criticism the work that I recently published under the name of "Mulavidya Nirasa," or a refutation of the doctrine of Mulavidya. Obviously what he found in my treatise has greatly put him out, and stirred his passions to their depths. This is a questioning age in which the reign of dead formulas is doomed. Reason is the only Goddess who will be suffered to occupy the Throne of Truth, and all other gods shall roll down in the dust before her. Vituperative terms like "the new gospel of Advaita", "his own patent," "a caricature," "a process of reasoning peculiarly his own," which the Doctor has showered on my work, are a poor device to keep back the advancing tide of the new spirit. Irony and sarcasm ill assort with a philosophic frame of mind. The Doctor himself won his laurels by his fearless research in the ancient lore of India. I do not pretend to his learning or ability, but I do expect from him some sympathy and tolerance in my research work.

The story of Mulavidya is soon told. The term *never* occurs in Gowdapada's, Sankara's or Sureswara's works. Notwithstanding the imposing array of passages quoted by the Doctor, he has not pointed out a single instance of its use. As to 'Avidya', I have never repudiated the term. How are we then to account for the needless display of texts to show that Avidya is the cause of Samsara—a fact that I never disputed? When the quoting is over, the Doctor seems to be satisfied that Sankara's Mulavidya has been vindicated. "This is a hasty inference," I should say. "You started with Mulavidya and you exert yourself unnecessarily in defence of Avidya, which I have never questioned. Meanwhile your Mulavidya has been left in the lurch." The fact is that deliberately or otherwise the Doctor has woefully confounded the two. I shall attempt to present them in their true lights for the usefulness of this controversy. Indeed, if the Doctor was bent on repeating passages containing references to Avidya, my own work in question would have served his purpose admirably. But I fear he has undertaken the criticism of a work whose inside is unknown to him. And

this suspicion gains ground from the fact that almost all his quotations are such as I have discussed at weary length in my work, a perusal of which would enable a dispassionate reader to see how far the Doctor's learned observations are relevant or original.

In dealing with a disorderly and conflicting mass of Vedantic literature, Sankara had to string up a number of doctrines on a single principle before he could evolve a harmonious system out of the whole. In his introduction to the Brahmasutras he paved the way to a correct understanding of the Vedantic position by defining superimposition (*Adhyasa*) which (as the Doctor has himself admitted on p. 17) learned men consider to be *Avidya*. In opposition to it "the ascertainment of the true nature of that (which is superimposed on the Self), they call knowledge (*Vidya*)".—Thibaut: Volume I: p. 6. "This natural beginning and endless superimposition.....appears in the form of wrong conception."—Ibid, p. 9. "With a view to freeing one's self from that wrong notion which is the cause of all evil and attaining thereby the knowledge of the absolute unity of the Self the study of the Vedanta-texts is begun."—Ibid, p. 9. If anywhere it is here that one might expect to find Sankara's heart disclosed. At the commencement of the stupendous task, which he undertook, of expounding a logical system of thought imbedded in the Sutras, he had to take up a crystal clear attitude. His doctrine must be rational, and his terms must be exact. The unity of the Self must be established. Hence he declared without hesitation that the only Reality was the Self, and everything else a superimposition on it, "appearing in the form of wrong conception." Sankara does not toy with his term, and he has never used it

in an altered sense. What is more, there is not the faintest reservation made in the interest of the Doctor's *Mulavidya*, a word unknown to Sankara. *Avidya*, then, means no more and no less than "superimposition," "wrong conception," in short, ignorance, the opposite of which is knowledge which removes it. Now, superimposition is all-devouring, all-absorbing. Being beginningless, it is no effect. Causes and effects spring out of it. Time is its eldest child. Even *Mulavidya*, if it claims to be other than superimposition, must come under the domain of the latter and part with its individuality. For what is not Brahman must be only something superimposed on it. Thus with this single principle of superimposition, Sankara has secured the Unity of the Self. When wrong conception shall give place to knowledge the travails of *Samsara* vanish, to return no more. While such are the facts, the Doctor's coupling *Mulavidya* with Sankara who is innocent of the very name seems to be an utterly unjustifiable act—almost culpable in a scholar of his attainments and fair-mindedness.

Irrespective of the consideration whether Sankara might have endorsed the Theory of *Mulavidya* if he had known it, let us examine the latter on its own merits, as its advocates proclaim them. What is *Mulavidya*? Is it Ignorance, or a positive primordial entity independent of it? In the former case, it is a state of consciousness desiderating an object and liable to be destroyed by its opposite, knowledge. Besides, as a state of consciousness, ignorance is only predicable to an individual organic being and is unmeaning without pre-supposing one. But *Mulavidya* is put forward as the cause of mentation itself. In other words,

mentation must precede *Avidya*, and the latter the former. How is an entity to be conceived, involving itself in such glaring contradiction? Is *Mulavidya* destroyed by knowledge? Does such knowledge arise during one's life time? If not, can knowledge appear after one is dead? The miracles quoted by the Doctor are out of place, when he has left Reason unsatisfied. If *Mulavidya* means simply ignorance which is stultified by knowledge, why should not a short term do, *Avidya*? How does its elongation by a prefix increase its significance?

Perhaps *Mulavidya* is an independent principle, the primordial matter of the Sankhyas, hiding behind a mask. In that case, Dualism is the inevitable outcome. Being not Ignorance, *Mulavidya* cannot be stultified by knowledge, either in or beyond life. For a positive principle and a knowledge of unity are not antithetical, and can thrive together for all time. In their metaphysical straits, the advocates of *Mulavidya* scruple not to serve God and Mammon. *Mulavidya* must be a distinct positive entity to evolve a positive world, while at the same time it must retain its character as *Avidya* or Ignorance to be dispelled by knowledge. Such opposed duties thrown upon poor *Mulavidya* must shatter its frame work to pieces and end its frail being.

I shall now advert to the Doctor's exposition of *Mulavidya* which is, certainly original, if not queer. "The theory (Original Nescience) is based," observes the Doctor on p. 9, "upon psychological facts of right and wrong sensation and is resorted to for explaining the nature of Brahman or Atma and the origin of the world. According to the theory, the world is a phenomenon of sensation, just as that of a snake is

on a rope." If sensations can be ethically classed as right and wrong, which is the faculty that plays the role of the Judge? Sensations are ultimate units of things given in experience. By what power can we transcend them to determine what they ought to be like, to order them into their proper places? Sensations are traced to the respective organs which are responsible for their occurrence. In any case they are no more than affections of the senses, as reported by the mind. Sensations of pleasant or unpleasant colours and sounds are familiar to us. But a right or a wrong sensation is something unknown to us. Even a sensation is real. Apparently the Doctor means perception by the term sensation. If so his psychology is inaccurate. "The world is a phenomenon of sensation just as that of a snake on a rope." Well, a phenomenon is an appearance; the world then is an appearance of sensation. Does sensation appear, or does an object appear? "Just as that of a snake on a rope." What does *that* refer to? To phenomenon or to sensation? In the former case, the expression will reduce itself to "just as the phenomenon of a snake on a rope". I am sure that is not what is meant. If, on the other hand 'that' refers to "sensation" which is likely, then the passage would read, "just as the sensation of a snake on a rope." What is conveyed hereby? The sensation of a snake? Who can make the snake reveal its sensation on a rope? What is sensation on a rope? By giving rise to so many alternative ways of interpretation the expression ceases to be intelligible. The Doctor knows, or he ought to know that in philosophical writings, perspicuity and precision are the fundamental virtues. What is meant by the Vedantins is "that Brahman is mistaken for the

world, just as a rope is sometimes mistaken for a snake." But for the Doctor's purpose that plain way of expressing the fact would not do. He wants somehow to smuggle in sensation, with what result, we see.

To proceed. "Just as a man coming across a rope may mistake it for a snake, he mistakes something real for the unreal world and thereby inflicts upon himself untold miseries." We may just remark that no one mistakes something for the unreal world, for no one thinks it is unreal. The fact is, one sees the world, and takes it to be real. "The sensation is a positive fact and not a negative one.....The sensation of a snake on coming across a rope is evidently a phenomenon of consciousness itself.....Like the above sensations, the world is a phenomenon of consciousness itself, and positive in its nature. Right sensations.....are termed right knowledge. Wrong sensations are termed Avidya or Tulavidya, individual wrong sensations. The sensation of the world on Brahman or Atma is termed Mulavidya or original or primordial Ignorance. All sensations with the exception of such negative sensations as 'There is no pot here' are positive.... Nor is Avidya either in its Tula or Mula aspects an hypothesis assumed to explain the world like ether waves to explain the phenomena of light. It is a positive psychological fact coeval with man himself." We shall pass over "the sensation of a snake on coming across a rope", for obvious reasons. "The world is positive in its nature." If this means that it is an object of positive experience, I concur. But the assertion is irrelevant. When, however, the Doctor proceeds to say that the sensation of the world on Brahman is a wrong sensation termed Mulavidya, I am unable to follow him.

What does "the sensation of the world on Brahman" mean? Is it Brahman perceived as the world? Is this perception Mulavidya or original Ignorance? I agree that our perception of the world before us is a positive fact, but does it entitle the Doctor to say that Mulavidya or Ignorance is a sensation or a perception, and that it is a positive fact and not a hypothesis? If so, he has forgotten the very heading of his article in which he refers to Mulavidya as a Theory. Is it then a Theory or a fact or both or neither?

The Doctor proceeds: Mulavidya "though a wrong sensation has two powers. It may either conceal things like darkness or it may generate other sensations like terror or attraction. Its hiding power is called 'Avaranasakti' and its creative power 'Vikshepasakti'." Let me put here a simple question. Has this doctrine the sanction of Sankara? Why does the Doctor omit to quote chapter and verse? How can he, after ridiculing my claim to know Sankara's heart, indulge in affirmations, without a shadow of authority, about Sankara's Mulavidya? Are his statements to pass unchallenged? On what authority can he claim to know what Sankara meant, more than any other? The days of unquestioning acceptance of unproven dogmas are unfortunately long past.

Referring to Kant, the learned Doctor observes: "According to his conclusions time, space, causality and categories such as qualities of things are all mental and that (?) the mind superimposes them on things perceived, and misrepresents them as being limited by time, space, causality and as being possessed of categories." Is this a faithful summary of Kant's discoveries? Are categories qualities of things? After such an exposition of Kant, what

value can be attached to the Doctor's subsequent claim that the seers of the Upanishads advanced further and held that the real form of things is Brahman or pure eternal sentience? But so do the Realists all over the world hold that behind the appearance of things, there are the things themselves, pure eternal substances. How does the Doctor show the superiority of the seers over Kant, or of both over the Realists?

I have already shown why Adhyasa or Avidya, "beginningless" as Shankara puts it, cannot bear to have an antecedent cause. Antecedence implies time, and time is the product of Adhyasa. It is for the lifting of Adhyasa to its rightful position in Shankara's system that the structure of Advaita is freed from the danger of collapsing like a house of cards.

The Doctor's metaphysical insight, logical acuteness and psychological accuracy are at their meridian when he deals with the three states on P. 11. Here are his prefatory remarks: "That the world is unreal and that the Self or Atman is affected with nescience or original ignorance.....is illustrated by Advaitins resorting to the examination of the three states, viz., waking state, dreamy (?) and dreamless sleep." So we naturally expect that the two points namely (1) the unreality of the world and (2) the persistence of Avidya, would be directly established. But in the next sentence, these fond hopes are belied. "Though the world is unreal in its own form and real in the form of Brahman the untutored mind of man in the waking state looks upon the world as real." This is an unlooked for somersault—a cool assumption in place of convincing proof. "The untutored mind looks upon the world as real." It would be profitable for us

to know what the right tutoring ought to be, or why the mind working in the waking state has to be regarded as untutored. He then proceeds: "The reality of the world is termed Vyavaharika or customary." "The things dreamed of in a dreamy sleep are called Pratibhasika, or notional or sensational as they are not caused by things of the objective world directly, but by their impressions stored up in memory." The Doctor made his own choice of terms: customary Reality, sensational Reality. He is welcome to them. But what is the epistemological import of "things dreamed of not being caused by things of the objective world but by their impressions"? Is a series of percepts ever caused by another series? If produced only by impressions, why does he call things in a dreamy sleep *sensational*? Are the senses functioning in a dream? Can we be aware of their functioning without an active mind? If the mind and the senses are active, how does the state differ from waking? And why are the dream things only notional?

It is, however, when we reach deep sleep, that we find the Doctor at the height of confusion and inaccuracy. "In deep sleep, however, neither the world of the waking state, nor the world dreamt of in dream is seen; the self in deep sleep is, as it were, in utter darkness. After waking from deep sleep it is usual for one to say 'I slept happily. I knew nothing' From this it follows that in deep sleep there is the experience of only two things, sensation of happiness and of ignorance.....As he recalls after waking all past experience, the Atma or Self in man must necessarily be in continuous existence in and through all the states, waking, dreamy, and dreamless. In short all that is inherited from Atma's experience in the three states is that

the world is merely sensational and unreal and that in deep sleep the Knower in man is haunted by Avidya or primordial ignorance in its potential form.....But for this Avidya haunting him throughout his life, the Atma or self in man would have been in his real form." I do not apologise to the readers for the length of this quotation as it contains the pith of the Doctor's argument and fairly illustrates his style of reasoning. The world is only sensational, and is not seen in deep sleep. It is therefore unreal. Avidya is a sensation haunting the Self throughout life. The Atma or Self is in continuous existence through all the states. Now if Avidya also in its potential or kinetic form haunts a man through all his life, and all the states, how is it less real than the Self? Both are co-existing entities and must be equally real or unreal, unless it can be shown that in some condition one of them is sublated by the other. But of this there is no hope, for as long as one lives, Avidya never ceases 'to haunt' him. So the Vedantic doctrine that Avidya is Ignorance removable by knowledge is a pious fiction, a learned dream without a chance of being realized in life. The crude notion that the world is unreal because it is only sensational, side by side with the averment that Avidya is a sensation haunting the Soul ever in deep sleep requires little comment. Are sensations possible in dream or deep sleep? Otherwise how does Avidya, a sensation, persist then? Or, can a sensation occur when the senses and the mind are inactive as in deep sleep? If they are active how does the state differ from waking? If the Doctor's exposition is accepted, Vedanta must shut up shop. It has nothing to urge, nothing to prove. The Self and Avidya are two co-ordinating rival

powers of which the former can claim but a moribund persistence, while the real affairs of the state, all the concerns of life are despotically managed by Avidya throughout life's term. The Self is eternally possessed and tormented by a demon without a moment's respite!

Then is trotted out "the principle regulating negative sensations". "For perceiving the non-existence or negation of a thing, knowledge of the thing which is negative as well as the place where its non-existence is to be perceived ought to be known." What in the name of all logic and psychology, is a negative thing? Who can perceive it or where? But let us see how he applies the principle to the experience of Ignorance in deep sleep, in the form "I knew nothing". From this feeling with which a man awakes, the Doctor infers, "Ignorance here does not mean absence of knowledge in its entirety..... but a positive form of wrong sensation. Hence Avidya means some positive form of wrong knowledge." In the first place "I knew nothing" refers to a past experience and is not memory in the ordinary sense. For when we remember a past event, we refer to a past *conscious* experience, but surely no one will assert that deep sleep was such, as in that case, one should have had the feeling "I know nothing now", at the time of actual sleep, which would render it sleep no longer. In the next place, the Ignorance of sleep is an object of reflexion at this present moment of waking, and must necessarily be represented in the triadic mould of cognition: knower, known, and knowledge. But this cannot warrant the presumption that these elements of cognition were separable in deep sleep, as it is opposed to universal experience.

Here is the Doctor's strange nostrum for the cure of Avidya or Ignorance: "Man must renounce the world together with all kinds of secular and religious works and attend to the constant revision of the teaching of the Upanishads. This revision will enable him to attain Naishkarmya Siddhi, or the state of inaction par excellence and to annihilate all the Vasanas or impressions of false thoughts and notions stored up in his memory forming the seed of his Samsara or chain of births and deaths. He need not, rather should not, attempt to procure even the necessities of life. For nature takes care of herself.... Hence renouncing all activity, even that which is necessary for begging food for feeding the body, a true Advaitin should attend to the realisation of Brahma knowledge. There is no fear of untimely death, for death means the end of past Karma. Such is the ethical perfection for the attainment of which complete inaction is taught in the system of Advaita." Here we stop for breath. Give up all works. Be continually reading the Upanishads. This would lead to inaction par excellence and destroy all past impressions of the mind. Think not of procuring even the necessities of life. This is ethical perfection attainable by inaction. But who will be in a hurry to take the advice?

Is Ignorance removed or knowledge obtained by inaction and a mere recitation of verses? Again can the aspirant survive the dawn of knowledge? For does not Avidya haunt the man through all the states of sleeping, dream and waking, that is to say through all life? I question again, whether inaction can lead to ethical perfection? Ethics is usually understood to be the science of morals, of rules of conduct. What is ethics without action? Do not even beg for food! Nature will take care of herself! We doubt whether the Doctor is really in earnest, and not indulging in grim irony. But such ironies are out of place in serious discussions. Vedanta cannot be meant for learned trifling.

In the next paragraph, there is a caricature of my position, "the new gospel of Advaita" propounded by me. The reader to be fair to me, will prefer reading my book, and obtaining my views at first hand to getting them filtered through passion and prejudice.

Then follows a reference to miracles. What bearing this can have on Truth and Reasoning I leave the learned Doctor to explain.

The Doctor's next procedure is to interpret Vedic passages. I do not deny his right to do so nor will he, I believe, fail to admit mine.

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA*

By Rao Sahib C. Ramaswami Aiyangar

I

Referring to Swami Ramakrishnananda, it will be remembered that Swami Vivekananda had said to his admirers in Madras, "*I shall send you one who is more orthodox than the most orthodox men of the South and who is at the same time unique and unsurpassed in knowledge and devotion.*" I shall in what follows, try to exemplify the truth of this observation.

First of his regard for the *Gita* and the *Ganga*. "The *Gita* and the sacred waters of the Ganges constitute the Hinduism of the Hindus," declared Swami Vivekananda. "Is it merely patriotism or the impressions of childhood? Who knows? What wonderful relation is this between Mother Ganges and the Hindus? Is it merely superstition? May be. They spend their lives with the name of Ganga on their lips, they die immersed in the waters of the Ganges, men from far off places take away Ganges water with them, keep it carefully in copper vessels and sip drops of it on holy festive occasions." All this applies word for word to the faith that Swami Ramakrishnananda had in the purifying power of Ganga.

When he first came to Madras, he had not brought Ganges water with him for worship and he longed to have it at the earliest opportunity. In 1899 when Swami Vivekananda started on his second voyage to the West with Sister Nivedita and Swami Turiyananda he brought a fairly big earthen ware jar full of Ganges water for Swami Ramakrishnananda. When the steamer in

which he came reached the Madras harbour, quarantine regulations owing to plague in Calcutta at the time prevented the ingress or egress of visitors and passengers. The steamer anchored far from the wharf. Friends and devotees who had gathered in large numbers to meet the Swamiji, went in small boats to the sides of the vessel. The presents they carried were drawn up in baskets and the jar of Ganges water was got down the same way. I was in the boat in which was Swami Ramakrishnananda along with a few others. He had prepared and taken with him several sweets and nice dishes, which he knew were to the liking of Swami Vivekananda and Swami Turiyananda. These were also sent up. We saw over us leaning on the parapet of the deck the two Swamis in uniform and Sister Nivedita, full of joy and gladness. Swami Turiyananda expressed himself inclined to land in Madras and stay there. He said to Swami Ramakrishnananda, "I am not much enamoured of America and am going on compulsion. If you can go there, in my stead, I would prefer to be here." When it was time for us to return to the shore, Swami Ramakrishnananda said to me, "Please ask the boatman to take us right round the steamer. Let us at least make a *pradakshinam* of the two great souls whose feet we have not been able to touch to-day." The boatman grumbled, but Swamiji insisted on our going round saying, "Let us pay the man a few annas more if necessary."

As for the *Gita*, the Swamiji made a point of reading it first regularly every morning; he would never miss it. In his "Life of Ramanuja", what he records as Alavandar's attitude to the *Gita* is his own too. "Let urgent business remain or not, I have learned that the reading of the *Gita* is the most meritorious and glorious of all actions. Recitation of the *Gita* should be attended to first." And again he adds, "How can he who has enjoyed and understood for a time at least the cardinal truths of the *Gita*, be attracted by the paltry things of the world? Really to enjoy the sweetness of the *Gita*, one should possess the force of Bhakti and the untainted wisdom of a pure heart. Nevertheless, even the mere repetition of the holy words that fell from the lips of the Lord cannot be without efficacy; it will surely arouse in the reader an unflinching sense of purity and devotion."

The couplet: "भगवद्गीता किञ्चिदधीता गङ्गाजलमपि कणिका पीता" was oft quoted by the Swamiji.

Not only in these but in all matters of traditional religious observances and beliefs, Swamiji was very scrupulous. For example, he would never begin a piece of important work without consulting the almanac; he would never undertake a journey on certain days or *thithis* and he attached great importance seemingly to omens and signs and premonitions.

When engaged in writing the life of Ramanuja he visited Conjeevaram and Sriperumbudhur and collected from several sources interesting stories and incidents relating to the lives of the Vaishnavite saints. When he learnt of the importance attached to Thoothu-Valai, a medicinal herb, as a Satvic food and what part it played in leading to the renunciation of Yamunacharya,

he took a great liking to it. He planted it in the Mutt, tended it with care and made it an article of his diet. A Swami who was in the Mutt as his assistant removed it one day, mistaking it for some ordinary weed, and this made Swami Ramakrishnananda very sorry.

His early training had been of the most orthodox type and when later on as a Sannyasin, he was free from all social obligations, he still continued in his orthodox habits. Like Sri Ramakrishna, he held that these little things though in themselves not of much intrinsic value, were like the chaff over the grain, which if removed, would take away from the grain its power of sprouting. So these things were necessary to keep the vitality of religion.

II

Next of the esteem in which he held his Gurubhais, which almost bordered on worship. He used to consider himself like a true Vaishnavite, "the servant of the servant of His servants". Once he was in Ernakulam and there he was accommodated in the house of a prominent lawyer by name Mr. Duraiswami Aiyar. As soon as Swami Ramakrishnananda went into his house, he said, "I have heard that Swami Vivekananda stayed in your house in his *parivrajaka* days. This is a *thirtham*, a holy place. I wish to see first the exact place or room where he stayed." Mr. Duraiswami Aiyar replied, "He was seated, when he came in, even where we stand now." At once Swami Ramakrishnananda rolled on the floor and kissed the ground, for to him the very dust of the place whereon his leader had trodden was sacred. In Madras and in other places too wherever he heard that Swami Vivekananda had halted, he used to bow down at the sight of those places as at a shrine.

*At the request of the Editor of the Vedanta Kesari, I wrote for publication in July 1922 and August 1923, some of my reminiscences of Swami Ramakrishnananda. Here are a few more stray thoughts.

Of his regard for Swami Brahmananda, late President of the Mission, I have given several instances elsewhere. Here is another which might be of interest. One day in 1908 when he was in Madras he asked me to procure the photograph of a South Indian dancing girl. I wondered what he could want it for and when I came to the Mutt the next evening with the photo, I asked Swami Ramakrishnananda if he knew anything about it. He was equally in the dark as to the need for this curious requisition and felt that whatever might be his object, if the visitors to the Mutt should see it or hear of it, they might misunderstand him. So Swami Ramakrishnananda took the photograph from me asking me not to mention anything about it to Swami Brahmananda unless he enquired about it again. Soon after he did ask me, and I had to tell him that the photo had been handed over to Swami Ramakrishnananda. It became evident that he did not approve of my act or the interference of Swami Ramakrishnananda in the matter. Whenever the latter came before him afterwards, Swami Brahmananda would turn away his face and would not talk to him. After a few days, he called for the almanac to choose a day for leaving Madras. Swami Ramakrishnananda could bear this no longer. He rushed into Swami Brahmananda's room and lay prostrate before him, saying, "Pray, be not angry with me, I am an unworthy and insignificant servant; at a mere nod of your head, a hundred Sasis will come forth." (Sasi was the name by which Swami Ramakrishnananda was known to his intimate friends.) Immediately the countenance of Swami Brahmananda was lit up with a smile and the cloud passed away. One cannot help admiring the simplicity and candour of both.

Swami Brahmananda was as magnanimous and ready to forgive as Swami Ramakrishnananda was humble and childlike.

What Swami Brahmananda's intention in asking for this photograph was, I understood later on. He had desired to send it to a devotee in Bengal who had been somewhat loose in morals. What effect would the receipt of such a picture from his Guru have on him? Every time he looked lustfully afterwards on a woman, the all-renouncing Sannyasin would appear in his mind's eye and melt away the lust. We can remember similar situations in the life of Sri Ramakrishna and how he used to tell some of his householder disciples in the lower rungs of the ladder of spiritual life, "One may go to the most objectionable place but only let him take the Divine Mother also with him. One may drink wine, only let him offer it to the Divine Mother and take it and so on." Not of course that Sri Ramakrishna permitted these things but this was a stage in the process of weaning out weak-minded followers. And Swami Brahmananda like his Great Master, led his disciples in the upward path in new and original ways and even those who moved closely with him could not fully understand at the outset the meaning of many of his actions.

III

Thirdly, of Swami Ramakrishnananda's devotion to Sri Ramakrishna: The Swamiji's life was one of continued austerity and privations. He never spoke to any one of his difficulties. At times he would only speak out his mind standing before the picture of Sri Ramakrishna which he worshipped.

One evening a few devotees came to the Mutt to meet the Swamiji and

they understood that he was in the shrine. Presently they heard him calling out in loud and angry tones, "You have brought me here, old man, and left me helpless. Are you testing my powers of patience and endurance? I will not go and beg hereafter for my sake or even for yours. If anything comes unasked, I will offer to you and share the Prasadam. Or, I will bring sea sand for offering to you and I shall live upon that." The devotees who were waiting outside did not quite follow his words and they guessed he was quarrelling with some one. With whom was it? It was with his Master. Such was the intensity with which he felt the abiding presence of his Guru and God.

Another incident comes to my mind. The first building of the Mutt had cracked in several places soon after its construction, and during the rains water would come down through the fissures in the ceiling. At such time, he would go into the shrine to make sure that no water entered there. One night it began to drip inside the shrine too, and right on Sri Ramakrishna's picture. Swamiji stood there holding an umbrella till the night wore out and the rains stopped. Any one else would have removed the picture to a safer

place and gone to sleep but to Swami Ramakrishnananda it appeared that if he did so, he would be awakening his Master from his rest at an untimely hour and that would be wrong.

His spirit of devotion was contagious and several men who saw him even for a short while caught it though he accepted none as his disciples. I heard recently from a friend that the present Mridangam expert in the Mysore palace is a great devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. He happened to play on the day Swami Ramakrishnananda opened the National Girls' School in Madras and the meeting with the Swamiji on that occasion brought about a change in his life. He remembers that as a blessed day in his life.

Another friend, who is an orthodox Vaishnavite told me that after his meeting with the Swamiji, whenever he opened the *Tiruvaimozhi* for his daily reading and thought of Nam-malwar and other saints, there stood before him the figure of Swami Ramakrishnananda. The greatness of the teacher whom he had seen, helped him to realise the greatness of the saints whom he had not seen.

So is he with us all to day who had the good fortune of meeting him.

A TALK TO TEACHERS OF RELIGION

By Prof. D. S. Sarma, M.A.

What is the religion that our 'educated classes' need at present? We are not now concerned with the religion of our masses nor with the religion of our Pandits, nor with the religion of the thousands of men and women who are educated indeed but who have not come under the influence of Western education. For the present let us confine ourselves to the religion of the class which has come into contact with European civilisation and culture and lives by the ideas derived from that culture. What is the type of religion that will satisfy this class? In other words, *what is the type of religion that will satisfy the needs of the graduates and undergraduates of our Universities and the pupils in our High Schools?* Many of us are imparting religious instructions in our schools and colleges, and we doubt not our ideas will be clarified considerably if we first answer the question with which we started.

At the outset, it may be asked, why we do raise this question about the type of religion that our educated classes need. Does religion change from age to age? Is it not something changeless? Is not Hinduism a Sanatana Dharma, something which is true for all time? Yes, the spirit of religion is eternal and changeless. But it embodies itself in different forms in different ages. It is like the soul of man. We all believe in the doctrine of Karma. We know that the soul is immortal. But it takes on different bodies in the time-process. When it outgrows a body it discards it and chooses another. Similarly, though the spirit of religion is changeless, the forms it assumes in different ages are subject to birth,

growth and decay. Our ancients had a very clear conception of this distinction. For, while they spoke of Sanatana Dharma on the one hand, they spoke of Yuga Dharma on the other. Every age according to them had its own form of Dharma. If Manu was an authority for one age, Parasara was an authority for another. This distinction becomes clearer to us when we take a historical survey of Hindu scriptures.

Our scriptures are divided into Sruti and Smriti. It is the principles and teachings of the Sruti that are authoritative for all time whereas the Smritis change from age to age. These are avowedly human compositions which derive what authority they have from the Sruti. They consist, as all of you know, of the codes of law, the two great epics, the Puranas, the Agamas and the Darśanas. The aim of all these secondary scriptures is only to expand, illustrate and exemplify according to the circumstances of the time the eternal principles of the Sruti. Some of them appeal to our imagination and sense of wonder; some to our logical understanding and some to our hearts, while the codes of law try to organise the Hindu society according to the needs of the time. Even the so-called three Prasthanas, when analysed reduce themselves to one. The primary authority is the Upanishads. The Brahma-sutras only string together the flowers of Upanishadic passages and extract out of them a body of consistent doctrine. And the Bhagavad Gita is, as every one knows, only the essence of the Upanishads. I need not remind you of the well-known verse which compares the Upanishads to cows, and the Gita to milk. Thus it is obvious

that the supreme authority for Hinduism rests in the Veda or more strictly in the Upanishads, and that all other scriptures represent the attempts of the various ages to realise the teachings of the Sruti. In the course of our history we know that many a secondary scripture has been superseded—many a code of law, many a school of philosophy and many a system of discipline. For instance whoever lives now by the code of Manu or the Sankhya system of philosophy? These have only historical interest now. If our race has any vitality left in it, it should march on and produce new systems of thought, new methods of discipline, new works of art and new codes of law—all under the seal and sanction of the spirit of the Veda. It is only thus that we can have a progressive Revelation. It is only thus that we can show that our religion is still a living tree and not mere dead wood.

Accordingly we may suggest here a few points which all of us who are attempting to teach Hinduism as a living religion in our schools and colleges should bear in mind.

Firstly, we should make it clear to our pupils that the supreme authority for Hinduism resides in the Upanishads and that it is not an arbitrary authority. Hinduism has no human founder like the other credal religions of the world. It did not originate in the utterances of a single personality. It is the accumulated and verified experience of a large number of seers and prophets. We accept their statements regarding the spiritual world as authority in the same way as we accept the formulas in the text books of science regarding the physical world. Just as every scientific statement can be verified by means of experiments in our

laboratories so could every religious truth taught by the Sruti be verified by experiments in our hearts. The joy of righteousness, the power that results from renunciation, the effects of Upasana, the expansive nature of the soul in prayer, the perception of the presence of God and the bliss of Divine Grace are all as much open to experiment and verification as the truths of any natural science. We take them on trust for the time being, because we believe in the testimony of experts in spiritual science as much as we believe in the testimony of experts in natural science. A mystic or a saint has as much right to speak of his experiments and conclusions as a scientist to speak of his. The Upanishads therefore form an authoritative statement of the various facts of the spiritual world. And in the course of our history many a saint, many a mystic, many an Avatara has borne testimony to the eternal truth of the Sruti. What is Bhagavad Gita but a long and convincing statement of an eye-witness regarding the facts of the spiritual world first revealed to us in this country by the ancient mystics of the Vedic age? What are Narada-sutras, what are the songs of the Southern saints, what is the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna but testimonies in different ages to the truth of the Veda? Let us therefore make it clear to all that the ultimate ground of belief in Hinduism is spiritual experience and not an arbitrary authority.

Secondly, we should boldly say that true religion has nothing to do with any particular social order or any particular social custom and usage or any particular type of political institution. Every one knows that great harm has resulted in the past by identifying Hinduism with caste system and with numerous customs connected with

marriage. We as teachers of religion are not concerned with the justice or the injustice of caste-system. We are not concerned with the desirability or the undesirability of certain marriage customs. As patriots and social workers we may have our opinions regarding these. But as teachers of religion let us first make it clear that religion has nothing to do with these, except in an indirect manner, for religious spirit cannot brook cruelty or injustice anywhere. If you think that early marriages are good, encourage them. If you think they are bad, discourage them. But do not identify religion with them. Similarly, if you think caste system still serves a useful purpose, cherish it as a social arrangement. If you think that it has outlived its purpose, allow it to die a natural death. But do not identify it with religion. That it has been so identified in the past is no excuse for identifying it now. I know that the formula of *Varnasrama* is an ancient one. But as practical men living in an age when there are no clearly-marked Varnas nor Asramas but only social and religious chaos, we have only to take the spirit of that formula. Let us face realities and have done with abstractions and ghosts. By propitiating a ghost we do good neither to ourselves nor to the ghost. The true way of exorcising the ghost is to give its soul the chance of a new embodiment. The soul of Varna is simply one's station in life from which accrue various Dharmas or duties. We are all teachers. We know them as our station in life. We know the functions we have to perform in the body politic. Whatever may be our parentage our Dharma is the same. As long as we discharge our duties as teachers, citizens and householders efficiently and ungrudgingly we may be said to obser-

ve our Varna-dharma. If every man's station in life is his Varna, his mental and moral development is his true Asrama. Our Dharma partly depends upon our profession and partly upon the state of our inner development. If a call comes to us in the depths of our souls as it came to Buddha to leave all and seek the truth, what was Dharma before becomes Adharma now. To cling on to our daily routine when there is a clear call ringing in our ears asking us to dare and forsake, is a sin against the holy spirit. The Asramas therefore are really the lights that we have. Thus interpreted in terms of modern life the formula *varnasramadharma* comes to mean the duties that accrue to us from our station in life and from the state of our spiritual development. Interpret the Hindu Dharma in this way to your pupils and you will see what an effect it produces in their minds. But mumble the old formula with its divisions and sub-divisions, or begin to talk of the permanent four classes of men in a society and you will make your boys yawn! We teachers should know that the catchwords and formulas that served a useful purpose thousands of years ago when learning was confined to a small class are worse than useless now when the gates of Saraswati's temple are thrown open to all. It is the blindness of some of our men to this elementary truth that is responsible for not a little of the social discord and bitterness of the present day.

Thirdly, every one of you will admit that it is our duty to teach a type of religion that is free from mythical geography, legendary history and primitive morality. In utilising Puranic stories and legends of saints for religious instruction we should be careful to separate the husk from the kernel. We should take care to point out that the

stories are not historical narratives but parables. The teacher of Hinduism has no great difficulty in the matter. For Hinduism cares only for ideal truth and not for historical fact. You may doubt the historical character of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata and yet be a good Hindu. To appreciate the ideal of devotion and service implied in Hanumat it is not necessary to believe him to be a historical character. In fact he must be a bold man who is prepared to say that the incidents and characters in our epics and Puranas are all historical. But we hope his boldness would be the surest disqualification for a place in a High School or College.

The same kind of discrimination has to be employed in separating spiritual truths from mediaeval scientific conceptions. In the great commentaries of our scholastic period we find theories of psychology, biology and cosmology that have been superseded by modern sciences. Our loyalty to Sankara and Ramanuja does not require that we should hold the scientific beliefs that they held. Modern science has made immense progress in the West and we teach it in our Schools and Colleges. Does not consistency apart from truth require that all antiquated scientific notions regarding creation, evolution and mechanism of knowledge that we find in our mediaeval commentaries should be abandoned? Sankara knew better than this. For while taking care to explain the apparent inconsistencies in the cosmology of the Upanishads he remarks that the function of the Sruti is only to teach us the facts of the unseen world and not of the seen. The Veda teaches us the nature of God and not the nature of the world. And yet we are unwilling to separate ancient and mediaeval scientific notions from our religious teaching. It is the result

of our refusing to look upon religion as a living tradition.

Fourthly, teachers of religion in this country should take particular care to emphasise its ethical basis. For unfortunately with most of our people religion stops short of mere ritualism. Rituals are intended to lead to morals. And a religion that elaborates rituals without emphasising the importance of character stands self-condemned. The duty of a teacher is clear on this point. He need not concern himself with rituals. He might safely leave them to the parent. The question of rites and ceremonies is a very tangled one. It is, of course, impossible to dispense with all rites and ceremonies. No religion can do without a certain amount of ritual. All wisely directed and significant ceremonies afford excellent discipline. But a mass of meaningless ritual chokes the religious spirit. A great reform is needed here. The question is made more complex by differences of caste, sect and local custom. And we cannot tolerate sectarianism of any kind in our schools and colleges. Our aim is to arrive at a homogeneous and living religion which will be acceptable to all our pupils without any distinction whatsoever and which will make them feel as brothers belonging to one spiritual family. A ritual in which only some of your pupils can take part and not others should have no place at all in your school. Therefore the wisest course for you is to concentrate your attention on the higher Karma or ethics and Bhakti and Gnana. For there are no caste-distinctions here. It is only in the region of lower Karma or ritualism that we have differences of class and creed. And it is the sacred duty of every Hindu teacher to ignore these differences and make all educated Hindus profess one type of religion.

Needless to point out that in this task more is done by example than by precept. It is said that true religion is not taught but caught. If the teacher is not himself a man of high character above all communal passions and hatreds, he cannot exercise any salutary influence on the minds of his pupils.

Fifthly, in our attempt to release the religious spirit from the forms in which it embodied itself in the past we should not go to the other extreme and make our religion a bloodless cosmopolitanism or vague humanitarianism. There are some teachers who, following the excellent principle that all religions are true, give their pupils moral lessons from all the great scriptures of the world. It is like plucking flowers from various trees to make a bouquet. The bouquet may serve its purpose for a day. But it will fade in a short time. The flowers will fall and die. No, we have to cultivate the living tree which will produce flowers of its own day after day in its natural course. Religion is the living tree and noble characters are its fragrant flowers. So to attempt moral instruction without a religious tradition is to attempt to produce flowers without a plant. You may succeed in producing some paper flowers. But they will have neither the sap nor the fragrance of natural flowers. Therefore religious tradition is all-important. It should be our guide in our progress. But it should not fetter our hands and feet.

In our attempts to take a step forward we should not unnecessarily antagonise those who represent that tradition. Most of our Pandits are after all not so conservative as we imagine. They are much less conservative in their actions than in their words. It is too much talk without corresponding action that spoils the cause of progress. But silent action coupled with sweet

reasonableness will carry forward even the most determined of conservatives. After all a tree is judged by its fruit. If the new type of religion we have in view does not result in a higher type of character than the old, if it does not conserve the traditional virtues of our race it is not in the true line of progress.

We say that the old orthodox Pandit is not of much help to us in the matter of religious instruction in our schools and colleges. That is true. A man who is not acquainted with modern science and who has not cultivated the modern critical spirit is not fit to teach religion in our schools. It is only graduates who have devoted some attention to religion and who have equipped themselves well that can successfully undertake religious instruction. But has the average graduate of all Universities the fine virtues of the average Pandit? The orthodox Pandit is generally characterised by thoroughness, loyalty to his ideals, sweetness, dignity, restraint, contentment and a host of kindred virtues which are conspicuously absent from the modern educated class. This class is characterised rather by its worldliness, its noise, its false smartness, its vulgarity, its superficiality and a host of kindred vices. A Pandit may implicitly believe in all the dead things of the past—mythical geography, legendary history, unscientific biology and primitive codes of law—and yet he may have a stronger and sweeter character than an average graduate. Therefore we say let us not antagonise the Pandit class but try to excel them in character as well as learning. Let us be as loyal to our ideals as they are, as thorough in our methods as they are and as calm and dignified in bearing as they are. And above all let us not accentuate and magnify the differences between them and ourselves. For they

are not so obscurantist as their words would make us believe. It is our duty to carry them along with us.

Lastly, it would not be out of place to point out in this connection the necessity of an enlightened and well-paid priesthood. Most of our difficulties are due to the absence of this class. Our religious organisations have crumbled down. Our ancient Mutts exercise little or no authority. At any rate they have no influence on the religion of the educated class with which we are at present concerned. In England, the church is manned by the best products of the Universities. The bishops and the archbishops of the church are as great in secular learning as religious learning. The Dean of St. Paul's for instance is a great classical scholar. Hence the dignitaries of the church are universally respected and they lead the religious thought of the country. They make the necessary adjustments between religious dogma and secular knowledge from time to time as need arises. The whole country is covered with a network of religious organisation. Every parish has its priest who ministers to its spiritual needs. But what have we in this country? In place of an enlightened and respected priesthood we have a class of chaplains who are universally treated with contempt for their ignorance and avarice. It is absurd to blame them. We have made them what they are. They are not properly trained for their work. They belong to no religious organisation. They have no

fixed salaries. Their emoluments depend on the whim of the householder. And in places where their numbers are scarce their demands are extravagant. The relation between this class and the public is one of sordid commercialism. It is really disgraceful that the educated classes have as their officiating priests men for whose mental and moral qualities they have nothing but contempt. We do not see why we should not pool our resources, raise a common fund and have a respectable class of priests with fixed salaries. But this is rather a complicated question of religious organisation which bristles with difficulties of various kinds. All that we can say now is that till an enlightened priesthood which is better educated than the educated class comes into existence and takes charge of religious instruction, those who are giving secular instruction should feel it their duty to equip themselves voluntarily for teaching religion on the right lines. Every Hindu teacher in a Hindu institution should qualify himself for the work. He should not think that it is the business of the Pandit. The Pandit cannot do it. The type of religion he is qualified to teach will not appeal to our boys and it will produce no effect on their life and character. It is the graduate teachers in our schools that should be in charge of religious instruction. They should regard it as a great national service. Theirs is the task of shaping the religion that the educated classes need at present.

THE GURU—PAST AND PRESENT

By Prof. K. S. Srikantan, M. A., F. R. E. S. (London)

"THE spiritual preceptor is the first form. The pupil is the last form. Knowledge is the link." So says the Sruti—

"आचार्यः पूर्वरूपं । अन्तेवास्तुत्तररूपं । विद्या संधिः" —(Taittiriya Upanishad). Magnetic and gracious was the personality of the Guru in Ancient India. He was quite a different man from the modern teacher whom we meet with in the secondary and the high schools. The Guru of the Ancient Indian type has practically disappeared and it is hard to find a single cultural copy of him to-day.

The Guru was a teacher; but that was only one of his multifarious relations to the students placed under him. In fact the Guru meant everything to the student. The Scripture says:—

त्वमेव माता च पिता त्वमेव । त्वमेव बन्धुश्च सखा त्वमेव । त्वमेव विद्या द्रविणं त्वमेव । त्वमेव सर्वं मम देवदेव ॥ "Thou art verily my mother, Thou art the father, indeed my friend also art Thou and companion as well. Thou indeed art my learning, and possessions too art Thou. Thou art my all in all. O Lord, Thou art the God of gods." Such was the magnificent position of the Guru in Ancient India.

Every Student of Indian culture is familiar with the word Guru. But the authors of the Dharma Sastras and Srutis are not agreed in respect of the exact meaning of the term. According to Manu and Vishnu, 'Guru' was not a term used for a teacher in general, but

only to a teacher of a particular learning:

उपनीय तु यः शिष्यं वेदमध्यापयेद्विजः ।
सकल्पं सरहस्यं च तमाचार्यं प्रचक्षते ॥
एकदेशं तु वेदस्य वेदाङ्गान्यपि वा पुनः ।
योऽध्यापयति वृत्त्यर्थमुपाध्यायः स उच्यते ॥
निषेकादीनि कर्माणि यः करोति यथाविधि ।
संभावयति चाग्नेन स विप्रो गुरुच्यते ॥

—(MANU)

"They call that Brahmin who initiates a pupil and teaches him the Veda together with the Kalpa and Rahasya, **Acharya**. But he who for his livelihood teaches a portion only of the Veda or also the Angas of the Veda is called the **Upadhyaya**. But that Brahmana who performs in accordance with the rules of the Veda the rites, the Garbhadhana and gives food to the child is called the **Guru**." Thus according to Manu, the Guru was nothing more than a priest. Technically a Guru is one who performs the purificatory ceremonies over a boy and instructs him in the Vedas: स गुरुर्यः त्रियाः कृत्वा वेदमस्मै प्रयच्छति ॥

Many other writers mean by the term 'Guru' the teacher of the 'Highest Knowledge' which was Vedanta:—

वेदान्ताम्बुजसूर्यो यो तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः
"Salutation unto the Guru who is the sun that makes the bud of Vedanta blossom." They were different from the other types of teachers as the Upadhyaya and Acharya in that they took to teaching as a 'Labour of Love' and not for any remuneration. The Guru was looked upon as one, who by

giving a knowledge of the self burns up the bonds of accumulated Karma of many a birth.

But here we have not used the term '**Guru**' in any of these technical senses. Here '**Guru**' is taken to be a teacher in general. These Gurus occupied the first rank in society and they were the guides and guardians of mankind. Even a cursory glance of the sacred texts of the Hindus would bring home to our minds the extraordinarily high regard given to the '**Guru**' in society. The Guru was considered to be the very God—the Creator, by the students:—

"गुरु ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णु गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।

गुरुरेव परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः" ॥

"Salutations to the glorious Guru; Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu and even the Lord Mahadeva. Nay, the Guru is even the Supreme Brahman Itself".

A student of culture to-day is not interested so much in the high position of the Guru in 'Ancient India' as in the fall in society of his modern representative. The teachers to-day occupy only the lower rungs of the ladder in society. As a consequence it is only second-rate men that enter this profession. These teachers are not respected even by their own students and much less by their parents. Ill-paid and little respected, the poor teacher spends a long life in utter discontent and misery.

Terrible indeed is the contrast! Pitiable is the transition from a time when men said, 'There is no object of veneration higher than the Guru Deva or Man God' to a time when men say, 'After all a teacher.'

The question that naturally arises in this connexion is:—How was it possible for the Gurus of Ancient India to

occupy such a magnificent position? Arising from it, but not the same is the question why it has not been possible for the modern teacher to hold such a position in society. This question has suggested itself to many scholars. But many of them, instead of finding out the causes, have only taken advantage of it to ridicule the modern teachers by placing them side by side with the ancient Gurus. They point out that, if to-day the teachers do not occupy a high position in society, it is due entirely to their own fault. Ignorance, indifference, pride, want of sincerity are often said to be the features of a modern teacher. But few try to understand that to-day the teacher is fettered by so many circulars that he has little or no scope to use his discretionary powers. The pity is the Headmaster and the Educational officers have more control over the teachers than the teachers over the students. The students are quite aware of this powerlessness of the teachers. Teachers who want to maintain discipline are the very men who are sooner or later placed in troubled waters.

It is true the Gurus of Ancient India were men of far nobler stuff. To be near them was in itself an education. Living far away from the cities, wanting nothing and expecting nothing, always studying and therefore always adding to the store of knowledge, the Gurus were the very cream of society. But they owed their lofty position in society not so much to their merit, but to their profession. To be a *Guru*, was given only to the best of men and it was enough if he was a Guru, all respect was his.

In recent years, both in the press and in the platform there has been much criticism against the teachers regarding their attitude towards their students.

It is, however, wonderful to find that very few have looked at the problem from the opposite angle. The problem of reforming the students by advice and discipline and making them consider that "teachers are teachers" is certainly a more urgent problem than the former. The Gurus occupied a respectable position in society—because the students were compelled to respect them by the sacred laws, by the society and by their parents.

The student, soon after getting up from the bed had to salute the teacher, reciting:—

“ओं नमोऽस्तु गुरवे तस्मै इष्टदेवस्वरूपिणे ।

यस्य वाक्यामृतं हन्ति विषं संसारसंज्ञकम् ॥

The Guru is here called Ista Deva incarnate. The nectar of his speech would destroy the poison called Samsara. The student had to spend every minute of the day in absolute obedience to the teacher. An indifferent and disobedient student was an impossibility in Ancient India. Society would shun him; parents would drive him out and the Dharma Sastras would throw him into the hell. The one characteristic feature of the modern student is indifference—(indifferent in dress, indifferent in manners and indifferent towards his studies). All law-givers of Ancient India lay down that the student should appear before the Guru with a clean dress and a clean mind.

The teacher to-day is compelled to teach all kinds of students, so long as they pay their fees. The teacher has no business to refuse teaching to a student who, he thinks, is negligent or impertinent. If the teacher is to be popular among the students and wants to be in the good books of his officers, he must wink over these. This has gone to such an extravagant extent

that to-day students, attending to the lecture very closely and taking down what the teacher says are looked down upon by the other students who call themselves intelligent and can pass without the help of the teacher.

With surprise and relief we turn to the student in Ancient India. The Guru was not bound to teach every Tom, Dick or Harry :

नापृष्टः कस्यचिद्ब्रूयात् चान्यायेन पृच्छतः ।

जानन्नपि हि मेधावी जडवल्लोक आचरेत् ॥

विद्ययैव समं कामं मर्त्यं ब्रह्मवादिना ।

आपद्यपि हि घोरायां न त्वेनामिरिणोवपेत् ॥

(MANU II)

“One must not teach unless asked for. He should not teach without discrimination. He should not teach to one who asks improperly. Let a wise man behave like an idiot in the company of such men. Even in times of extreme difficulty a Guru should rather die with his knowledge than sow it in an barren soil.”

One of the main reasons for the fall of the modern teacher from this high position is found in the fact that the relationship between the teacher and the student has become contractual. The student is led to think that the teacher is bound to teach him so long as he pays his fees and the teacher has no business to question him so long as he pays his fees. And teachers are more often than not made the target of criticism and ridicule in season and out of season even when any disciplinary measure is taken in the interest of the students themselves. In contrast we have:—

गुरोर्न परीवादो निन्दावापि प्रवर्तते ।

कर्णो तत्र पिधातव्यो गन्तव्यं वा ततोऽन्यतः ॥

नोदाहरेदस्य नाम परोक्षमपि केवलम् ।

न च वास्यानुकुर्वीत गतिभाषितचेष्टितम् ॥

परिवादोऽत्रो भवति श्वा वै भवति निन्दकः ।
परिमोक्ता कृमिर्भवति कीटो भवति मत्सरी ॥

(MANU II).

—The student is advised not to step in those places where the teacher is censured. Either he must cover his ears or depart thence to another place. The student ought not to mimic the gait and speech of the teacher. By censuring his teacher, though justly, he will become in his next birth an ass by falsely defaming him, a dog and so on. The above Slokas make the contrast terribly clear.

We may however point out that to-day the best men by passing the competitive examinations enter the administrative line. In the teachers' profession, we find the operation of 'Gresham's Law'. If the Guru was regarded highly, he also deserved it amply. The glorious Vyasa, it is said in the Bhagavatam, was even compassionate to men of poor abilities. He

so arranged his teaching that men of poor understanding could easily learn and retain what they had learnt.

अहिंसयैव भूतानां कार्यं श्रेयोऽनुशासनम् ।

वाक्यैव मधुरा श्लक्ष्णा प्रयोज्या धर्ममिच्छता ॥

नारुतुदः स्यादार्तोऽपि न परद्रोहकर्मधीः ।

यथास्योद्विजते वाचानालोक्यां तामुदीरयेत् ॥

In the above Slokas, Manu points out that a teacher should never use harsh words while teaching or at any other time. He must always use sweet and gentle words.

The king also held the Guru in a very high position :

ब्राह्मणान् पर्युपासीत प्रातरुत्थाय पार्थिवः ।

वैविद्यबृहान्विदुषस्तिष्ठेत्तेषां च शासने ॥

The king was asked to worship those well-versed in the Veda early in the morning.

Respected by the students, honoured by the king and loved by the society, enviable indeed was the teacher's profession, in Ancient India.

SRI ANANTHALWAR : THE TYPICAL SRI VAISHNAVAITE

By A. Srinivasachariar, B.A., L.T.

(Continued from the last issue)

SRI Ramanuja, after founding the empire of Visishtadwaita, with a view to perpetuate the sway of his religion over men's minds, established seventyfour hereditary seats of spiritual authority and tradition, and installed on them his duly qualified direct disciples, to whom the lay public offered their homage by virtue of their superior spiritual attainments. They were further empowered by the founder to propagate the philosophy of Visishtadwaita (qualified non-dualism) as

presented in the Upanishads and the divine hymns of the Alwars, to initiate disciples, and to continue the apostolic line for the redemption of humanity. These seventy four priests constituted the great body of Sri Vaishnavism, of which the living spirit was Sri Ramanuja. Of the various members of this missionary organisation, one was acclaimed and honoured as the hand of Sri Ramanuja, another (Embar) as the shadow of his feet, and a third as his sandals, and so on, but

Sri Ananthalar was looked upon as the very lotus feet of the great teacher. Sri Vaishnavites believe on good grounds that Ramanuja was the incarnation of Sesha, the divine thousand-headed snake, who is, as it were, an inseparable adjunct of the Lord—His eternal servant at all times, in all places and under all conditions. The unswerving devotion and service that characterised Sri Ananthalar and the complete absorption of his mind in it as also the exalted heights to which it rose during the time of service, earned for him not only the addition of the title 'Alwar' to his name, but also the glorious surname of 'Ananthanpillai'—'Anantha, the man,' in recognition of the extraordinary manhood and mighty heroism that he displayed in the fulfilment of the commission of service in the sacred hill of Thirupathi. Pious Vaishnavite Acharyas used to observe with great veneration, that when Sri Vishnu came down from the Nitya (eternal) world of paradise to the Leela world and chose the hill of Thirupathi as His abode with a view to deliver mortals from sin and sorrow, His eternal servant Anantha (or Sesha) appeared on earth with the name of Anantha and dedicated himself to a life of service on earth also, with a view to hold up the ideal of service before mankind as a sure means of salvation. Again, since in his one-pointed devotion to the service that was enjoined by his teacher Ananthalar did not mind even God, since the ideal of devotion to God was only subservient to the ideal of devotion to his teacher (Guru Nishta), Ananthalar was to Ramanuja, what Mathurakavi Alwar was to Nammalar and so Mathurakavi Alwar and Ananthalar are to this day regarded as the lotus feet respectively of Nammalar and Ramanuja.

Contemporaneously with Sri Ananthalar, there lived a Vaishnavite,—a disciple of Sri Bhatta, the renowned Acharya—famous for his devotion to Guru and God. One day, overpowered by the desire to hear from the lips of his erudite preceptor about the characteristics of an ideal Vaishnavite, he approached his teacher in all humility and reverence, and expressed his wish to be enlightened upon the point. But Bhattar, instead of directly answering the question himself, suggested that he should go to Sri Ananthalar and stay with him and learn of him the answer. The disciple in implicit obedience to his orders went on a pilgrimage to the hill of Thirupathi, and explained the purpose for which he was sent hither by his teacher. Sri Ananthalar promised to answer the question referred to him, and yet full six months passed away without any reference to it; and the disciple had in the meanwhile reconciled himself to the new environment and was spending his time in Seva or service wholly. Later, one day, there was a grand feast in the house of Ananthalar and the devotees were sitting ready for dinner in the respective seats according to the ranks assigned to them. Suddenly the idea dawned in his mind, the idea of testing the disciple waiting in his house for a long period and of teaching him at the same time the secret implications of the twin ideals of servitude (Seshathwa) and of absolute dependence (Parathantharya) in relation to God or His devotees—the cardinal doctrines of Vaishnavites. The disciple was seated in the front rank as usual on that day, but Ananthalar asked him to vacate the seat and occupy a seat in the next lower rank, since more guests arrived; and soon he was again shifted to still lower ranks, and

so on like that till the lowest rank available was assigned to him. The disciple obeyed the commands of Ananthalar with alacrity and composure and without the least perturbation. Ananthalar, delighted beyond measure at the excellence of behaviour of the disciple, went up to him and seated him by his side in the front rank, and together ate the holy food offered to the Lord. Some time after, Ananthalar said to the disciple, "It is long since you came here. You may return to the home of your Guru. Here is my answer to the question regarding the characteristics of an ideal Sri Vaishnavite:—'Like the crane, like the cock, like the salt, like thy own self.' Kindly inform your preceptor that I gave this answer. May the blessing of the Lord be on you! Farewell!" The disciple hastened to the presence of Sri Bhattar and delivered the laconic precious answer, to which the erudite scholar, Bhattar, furnished the following elaborate commentary, in the presence of his disciples and followers:—

'Like the crane': (1) A Sri Vaishnavite like the crane, chooses as his abode a place surrounded by tanks, lakes, rivers or other sources of water supply. (2) His snow-white purity, inner and outer, is comparable to the spotless white colour of the crane. (3) The crane perching upon the bank of a stream or on a lotus leaf and looking with an eye of unconcern on the hundreds of tiny fish that may come within its reach, lies in wait really, for the arrival of a big fish and then darts at it to make it its prey. Likewise the pious Vaishnavite looks with an indifferent eye on all those who are related to him physically or in a worldly sense, and waits for the arrival of the proper Guru who could liberate him from the trammels of ignorance; and on finding him,

seeks refuge in him instantly and spends his time everafter with him listening to his soul-stirring divine utterances. (4) The crane living by the seaside flies away, during the rainy weather, to the neighbourhood of a mountain lake to escape its destruction by thunder and lightning. So does a Sri Vaishnavite, whenever his spiritual welfare is endangered by some worldly relationship, flee from his abode to sacred places of importance surcharged with spiritual force, like Srirangam, Thirupathi, Conjeevaram and Thirunarayanapuram.

'Like the cock': The cock busies itself in stirring and rummaging heaps of rubbish with the object of picking up any stray grains in it, and finding them feeds itself and its young ones with them. Similarly the Saint Nammalar, the cock divine, ransacks the heaps of Vedas with their numerous divisions and sub-divisions in all thoroughness; and discriminating between the essentials and the non-essentials, he gathers all the precious elements in them and presents the quintessence of the four Vedas in four grand lyrics, simple yet deep, that are within the comprehension of the unlettered and the ignorant and yet provide ample food for reflection to the cultured and the wise. Those poems form a celestial ambrosia for all devotees hungering for God, and while himself partaking of the divine emotions that are enshrined within, the Alwar laid the whole of humanity under a deep debt by making the concretised forms of his superb emotions available to succeeding generations also. The blessed Sri Vaishnavite too in his turn like the cock, searches thoroughly and repeatedly every nook and corner of the divine lyrics of Nammalar, and finds almost everywhere an entrance leading to the depths of devotion concealed

underneath, and rushing through the door, he dives deep, sheds tears of ecstasy, and freely indulges in horripilation and other external manifestations of divine love. [The study of such works leading to the meditation on the attributes of God, His glories and His deeds of grace forms an essential part of the Sadhana or the means employed by Vaishnavaites for getting true devotion to God.] Of course, the mention of the lyrics of Nammalwar is only by way of illustration and hence is suggestive and inclusive of the works of other Alwars and Acharyas and the Bhashyas (commentaries on Vedanta Sutras and the poems sung by the Alwars). But in this connection the pertinent question may arise, "Are the Vedas a mass of rubbish?" The comparison is certainly not meant to be an out and out condemnation of the sacredness associated with the eternal and beginningless scriptures of divine origin; it only refers to the multitudinous nature of those scriptures, which are labyrinthine, voluminous, bewildering and terrifying to the average young intellect. The Vedas which are 'infinite in number', are a rich storehouse of varying human experiences at different stages of development, and possess a series of vistas obtained through different avenues of thought and endeavour. They teach not only the highest transcendental truths but also the lower and the lowest truths and thus serve as the universal guide and help for all souls standing in the various rungs of the ladder of evolution from the lowest to the highest. Since they contain prescriptions and directions for all temperaments and characters, for the inert (Tamasic), the active (Rajasic) and the calm (Satwic) types of people, each reader has to select the portions that suit his own purpose. The motherly

Veda, a thousand times fonder and more indulgent than the pettest human mother, rarely suppresses or restrains the blind impulses of the ordinary man at first but gives them their natural scope, leads him on and follows him patiently to the end of his erratic course; and when finally he turns away with distressing feelings of disappointment and regret from the dire consequences of his actions, the Veda encourages him with consoling advice and cheerfully points out the remedy and the right track. The Veda, with a view to instil confidence in itself into the minds of its followers, deals at first with the rules and ceremonies relating to black magic, which are productive of tangible results in this world, then goes on describing the ways and means of enjoying the pleasures of the subtle invisible heavenly worlds such as the worship of the deities presiding over the forces of nature, then leads him further to the worship of Brahma, the Creator of the universe and the attainment of his exalted position of rulership of the universe, and after thus training and purifying the mind of the aspirant, finally teaches the truth that all worlds made up of matter, however subtle and refined, are impermanent, that the Supreme Being alone is the eternal truth, and reaching Him alone we attain emancipation and annihilation of all sorrows. The author of the Bhagavad Gita, Sree Krishna, says to Arjuna, "No set determination is formed in the minds of those that are full of desires and look upon heaven as their highest goal, and who, taking pleasure in the panegyric words of the Vedas, declare that there is nothing else. Their flowery words...are the causes of births as the result of their works. The Vedas deal with the three Gunas." This

warning of the Gita has to be heeded, and discrimination exercised in accordance with the light shed by our Alwars and Acharyas shall be our weapon while threading the intricate mazes of the Vedas.

'Like the salt': (1) The Sri Vaishnavaites are the salt of the earth, and if the salt hath lost its savour where-with shall it be salted? (2) Salt both by its predominance in food and by its insufficiency renders it distasteful, yet by its presence in due proportion seasons it, and conduces to its relish. Similarly the Sri Vaishnavaites are silent, unobtrusive and modest, and yet radiates by his presence a sweet perfume in the atmosphere he happens to move in; he rarely makes his presence felt by even the slightest tinge of egoistic assertiveness in his behaviour towards God, His devotees and his Acharyas on account of his constant awareness of the inherent evil in him. (3) Just as the salt never replies to the critics that condemn its evil nature so a Sri Vaishnavaites, when blamed by a brother Vaishnavaites (apparently for some slight pretext but really out of the latter's inability to overcome the effects of evil impressions lurking in the mind), shall, not only refrain from retorting but shall be grateful also to the offender for reminding him of the dangers arising from the lack of self-restraint. (4) The salt dissolves itself

and loses its name and form in lending its savour to food; and so does the Sri Vaishnavaites readily efface himself in the service of God and man.

'Like the own self': Here is an allusion evidently to some specific behaviour of the disciple in the house of Sri Ananthalthwar that might be illustrative of a characteristic of the typical Vaishnavaites, and the disciple alone can now enlighten us on the point. [So saying, he asked the disciple to narrate anything special that took place during his stay there, and the disciple mentioned the incident of his being shifted at the dinner time to lower and lower ranks. Hearing of it with great delight, Bhattar continued thus:—] When a Sri Vaishnavaites is invited to a feast in the house of a devotee, it is his duty to comply cheerfully and willingly with the wishes of the host and accept any seat that the host may be pleased to assign to him without the least mortification. Herein lies the test of a true Vaishnavaites—namely, his voluntary submission to the will of a devotee of God and reliance on Him,—the fruit of his cherished attitude of self-surrender to God and entire dependence on Him.

To sum up: the ideal Sri Vaishnavaites is an embodiment of purity, devotion, selfless service and devout meekness.

(Concluded)

SELECTIONS FROM THE ADHYATMA RAMAYANA

AYODHYA KANDA: CHAPTER IV

RAMA'S INSTRUCTION TO LAKSHMANA

On being informed that King Dasaratha bound by a previous boon given to queen Kaikeyi, has ordered his (Rama's) exile into the forest for a period of twelve years, and the installation of Bharata as the ruler, Rama goes to his mother Queen Kausalya to take leave of her before his departure. A touching scene follows in which Kausalya bewails her lot, and tries to persuade Rama not to go to the forest by threatening that she would commit suicide if he departs in obedience to his father's command in spite of her wish to the contrary. Lakshmana, the loving half-brother of Rama, hearing this pathetic conversation between the mother and her son, becomes highly enraged at his father for what he considers to be his unjust and cruel sentence on Rama. Burning with indignation he says to Rama: "I shall enchain this insane and tyrannical king who is wholly under the influence of Kaikeyi. I shall kill Bharata with his uncle and all his relatives. O Rama, witness my prowess to-day; with bow in hand I shall destroy all who stand in the way of your coronation, and shall see that you are installed on the throne of your ancestors." To pacify him Rama speaks the following words of wisdom:

शूरोऽसि रघुगार्दूल ममात्यंतहिते रतः ॥

जानामि सर्वं ते सत्यं किंतु तत्समयो नहि

॥ १८ ॥

हे O रघुगार्दूल tiger among Raghu's clan त्वं you शूरः brave असि are (त्वं you) मम my अत्यंतहिते to in-

finite well-being रतः devoted असि are सत्यं truly ते your सर्वं all (valour) (अहं I) जानामि know किंतु but तत्समयः the time for that (अधुना now) नहि not (युक्तः proper स्यात् is).

18. You are indeed brave and greatly devoted to my welfare, O tiger among Raghu's clan. Truly, I know all about your valour, but this is not the proper time for it (i. e., the display of your prowess)

यदिदं दृश्यते सर्वं राज्यं देहादिकं च यत् ।

यदि सत्यं भवेत्तत्त आयासः सफलश्च ते ॥ १९ ॥

यदिदं this राज्यं kingdom देहादिकं beginning with the body च and यत् whatever दृश्यते is seen यदि if सर्वं all सत्यं true भवेत् be तत् then, i. e., in that case ते your आयासः effort सफलः fruitful (भवेत् would be).

19. If all that we see, this kingdom and everything beginning with our body be true, then indeed would thy (proposed) effort be fruitful!

[1. It implies that the phenomenal world is not true and that one should not exert oneself to fight with the shadow.]

भोगा मेघवितानस्यविद्युद्वेगवन्तः ।

आयुरप्यग्निसंतप्त-लोहस्यजलविंदुवत् ॥ २० ॥

भोगाः enjoyments मेघवितानस्यविद्युद्वेगाः flashes of lightning in the masses of clouds इव like चंचलाः unsteady (भवन्ति are) आयुः the duration of man's life अपि also अग्निसंतप्तलोहस्य-जलविंदुवत् like a drop of water on a red-hot piece of iron (भवति is).

20. Enjoyments are as unsteady as flashes of lightning in the masses of clouds, and the duration of man's life also is (momentary) like a drop of water on a piece of red-hot iron.

यथा व्यालगलस्थोऽपि भेकोदंशानपेक्षते ।

तथा कालाहिना ग्रस्तो लोको भोगानशाश्वतान्

॥ २१ ॥

यथा even as भेक frog व्यालगलस्थः caught in the throat of a serpent अपि although दंशान् gnats (food) अपेक्षते seeks for तथा similarly कालाहिनाग्रस्तः caught by the serpent of time लोकः (man) of the world अशाश्वतान् impermanent भोगान् enjoyments (अपेक्षते thirsts for).

21. Men of the world who are under the grip of the serpent of time seek after the impermanent enjoyments of life even as a frog cries for food although it is caught in the throat of a serpent.

करोति दुःखेन हि कर्मतंत्रं

शरीरभोगार्थमहर्निशं नरः ।

देहस्तु भिन्नः पुरुषात्समीक्ष्यते

को वात्र भोगः पुरुषेण भुज्यते ॥ २२ ॥

नरः man शरीरभोगार्थं for bodily enjoyments दुःखेन with great difficulty हि even अहर्निशं night and day कर्मतंत्रं all sorts of work करोति performs (यदा when) तु on the other hand देहः the body पुरुषात् from Purusha (Atman) भिन्नः separate समीक्ष्यते is seen (तदा then) अत्र here

i. e., in this body पुरुषेण by the Purusha कः what भोगः object of pleasure भुज्यते is enjoyed.

22. Even with great difficulty man performs various works night and day for (securing) objects of bodily enjoyment. But when the Purusha ¹ i. e., the Atman) is realised as separate from the body what pleasures then are enjoyed by the Purusha, ¹ i. e., nothing is enjoyed by Him.

[1. i. e., men seek for physical enjoyments because of the misconception that the body is the real self. But when the Atman, the real Self, is seen as separate from the body, the physical contacts are of no more consequence to the enlightened man. He being established in the consciousness of his real Self, the body is to him nothing better than an inert substance, and the so-called enjoyments of the body have therefore no attraction for him.]

पितृमातृसुतभ्रातृदारवंश्वादि संगमः ।

प्रपायामिव जंतूनां नद्यां काष्ठौघवच्चलः ॥ २३ ॥

पितृमातृसुतभ्रातृदारवंश्वादि संगमः The relation with father, mother, son, brother, wife, friends and others प्रपायां in a caravansary जंतूनां of men संगमः association इव like (तथा as well as) नद्यां in the river काष्ठौघवत् as a collection of pieces of wood चलः short-lived (स्यात् is).

23. Man's relation with father, mother, son, brother, wife, friends and others is as unstable as the association of people in a caravansary or as a collection of pieces of wood in a river.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

AFGHANISTAN ON THE TRACK OF PROGRESS

For the past three years the attention of the world has been to an unusual degree drawn towards the fortunes of Afghanistan, the small hilly tract of land that lies beyond the north-west frontier of India. The historic world-tour of the ex-Amir and the revolutionary reforms that followed his return seemed to indicate that in Afghanistan the old order was for ever going to change giving place to new. The subsequent out-break of rebellion, disorder and lawlessness however threw the country back into the path of retrogression for a time, and the outside world thought that Afghanistan was against any change in her traditional mode of life. But under the rule of Nadir Shah, the present Amir, Afghanistan has given the lie to this mistaken notion about her. She is again on the track of progress as will be seen from the following quotation from a contribution of the Afghan minister in London to "The Referee": "We want to remain at peace with our neighbours and develop internally. King Nadir Shah is extremely popular with all classes and tribes of Afghans. He is carrying on the work of modernisation which Amanullah Khan began. It is a mistake to think that Afghans are against reforms. They welcome them. People rose against Amanullah Khan because they misunderstood some of his reforms. That is all.

"We are doing a great deal to spread education. Schools and Colleges are being established all over the country. The girls who had been sent out to foreign countries for education two years ago have now returned. They will do a great deal to help the cause of female education in Afghanistan.

"We are tolerant. We treat Hindus and Mohammedans alike. There are plenty of Hindus employed in our Finance and other departments. Last year there were four Hindu students

out of the thirty we sent out abroad for education.

"We have no prejudice against painting, photography, and sculpture as many Europeans imagine all Mohammedans have. We have sent one student to Germany to learn sculpture and art.....

".....We are anxious to build railways. Sooner or later we shall build them.....At present we are using motor-cars and lorries for transportation.

"We regard Japan as our model. The Land of the Rising Sun can teach all Oriental nations how to modernise themselves and take an active part in the life of the world to-day. It is suicidal to remain too much attached to the past. What was good for yesterday is not good for to-day, much less for to-morrow. Life means continuous change; and those nations that cannot change according to the spirit of the times will die out. It is the law of nature."

The path that Afghanistan is now treading is the path for all countries of the East that want to survive the keen struggle for life that obtains at the present day among the nations of the world. The instances of Japan and lately of Turkey, China and other countries have disproved the cherished notion of some Western imperialists of the last century that the European possesses certain special racial characteristics by virtue of which he has come to occupy his present position of pre-eminence in the world and which would always enable him to dominate over the Asiatic and the Negro. The notion is a most mistaken one. In fact till the 16th century the Asiatics were the most forward people in the world, both in the field of thought as well as in political and commercial matters. But since then the liberalising influence

of Greek culture produced a mighty thought wave in Europe, and the intellectual ferment and adventurous voyages that followed in its wake gave a vigorous impetus to the national life of Europe which has carried her to the forefront in world-politics and still maintains her in that position. During the centuries that followed, the national life of Asia was in a state of decadence. Encumbered by traditions and religious conventions that were developed in the course of ages, the East refused to move from the old rut, and the re-

sult was that she became a prey to the imperialism of the youthful and exultant Europe. But bitter experience taught the East her mistake and from about the middle of the 19th century she began her belated march along the path of progress. The rise of Japan marks its first stage, the modernisation of Turkey its second, and the ferment in China, Afghanistan and India its third stage. Before the close of the first half of this century Asia seems likely to regain what she has lost by her negligence in the past few centuries.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras

FOUNDER'S DAY CELEBRATION

The birthday of Swami Ramakrishnananda fell on the 24th July this year and was observed with due solemnity by the members of the Mylapore Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home. As was appropriate for such an occasion the morning hours were devoted to the recital of Slokas from the Bhagavad Gita, the Upanishads and the Vishnu Sahasranamam and Puja. During the day rice was distributed to the poor numbering nearly a thousand. The members of the Home held a meeting in the evening, Swami Yatiswarananda presiding when speeches on "The life and teachings of Swami Ramakrishnananda" were made by some of the disciples of the Swamiji.

Swami Yatiswarananda said that it was an occasion for them to remind themselves of the great ideas and ideals for which Swami Ramakrishnananda stood in his life-time. The best way to offer their heart's adoration to the Swamiji would be certainly to follow in his footsteps.

Mr. Raghavachariar, Mr. V. C. Rangaswami and Mr. P. Manickaswami Mudaliar who had the privilege of sitting at the feet of Swami Ramakrishnananda dwelt at length on the life and teachings of the Swami. The proceedings

of the day were brought to a close by the Ramanamam Bhajana late in the evening.

R. K. Mission Relief Work at Kishoreganj

Before we had time to finish our relief work at Rohitpur, in Dacca, the cries of distress from the Kishoreganj subdivision in the District of Mymensing have demanded immediate attention. Readers of newspapers are already aware of the nature of the atrocities committed in this part. The picture of desolation here is the same as at Rohitpur, only on a magnified scale, covering fifty villages. So far as our workers could gather, only Hindu homes were looted, Mahomedan homes being scrupulously spared. The misery entailed by this ruthless plunder—and in some cases slaughter—can be better imagined than described. Only bare houses were standing, with not a vestige of their contents left. The once flourishing bazars tell the same sad tale. Everywhere poor and rich Hindus were rendered equally penniless. They were absolutely without the means of procuring their food or of cooking it and had just one piece of cloth. Seeing this desperate condition we have started a relief centre at Mirzapur, in the Kishoreganj sub-division, from which since the 1st of August, 149 mds. and 18 srs. of rice, 501 pieces of cloth and some

utensils have been distributed to the extremely needy families of ten villages. It is the want of adequate funds that has prevented our taking more villages. The help must be continued for at least some weeks more, for the condition as yet is most unstable. Our work at Rohitpur has been closed. We distributed in the last three weeks 96 mds. and 28 srs. of rice, besides some quantity of cloth, utensils, tools and certain other accessories of getting a living. We gratefully acknowledge receipt of the following amounts among others:—A friend Rs. 1,000, Messrs. Mooljee Sicks & Co., Calcutta, Rs. 1,000, A sympathiser Rs. 450, Dacca Relief Committee Rs. 200. We need substantial contributions yet to carry on the relief work in this area. We appeal with all earnestness to the generous public to help us with funds in aid of the sufferers.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses:—

(1) The President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O., Dt. Howrah.

(2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182 A, Muktagam Batu Street, Calcutta.

(Sd.) VIRAJANANDA,

Offg. Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission.
19—8—30.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

IN THE SERVICE OF MY LORD: By Y. Jagannadham, B. A.; Satsang Office; Masulipatam; pages 64; price annas 8.

In this booklet the author has tried to give a brief exposition of the triple knowledge that a spiritual aspirant should have, namely, knowledge of God, world and man. Of the four chapters in the book, he deals in the first with the various aspects of God—transcendental, immanent, personal and

Archa;—in the second with the worlds—their origin, maintenance and dissolution;—in the third with mankind, and in the fourth with hints from Gita regarding practical spiritual life. The book contains many noble thoughts and much useful information regarding Hindu religious conceptions. The subject is dealt with in a clear and simple manner and expressed in lucid language. Sincerity and a feeling of devotion pervade every page of this book.

R. K. Mission Sevasamity, Karimganj, Sylhet

The Report on the working of the Sevasamity for the years 1334, 1335 and 1335 B. S. shows its growing usefulness as a philanthropic institution. The Samity conducted a library consisting of 568 books and a number of Dailies and Monthlies both English and Bengali for the benefit of the reading public. It held religious classes, celebrated the birthday anniversaries of various prophets including those of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, expended Rs. 210—8—0 for the education of those helpless boys who were kept in the Ashrama during the period under review and ran one lower primary school at Lanta for the last seven months of the year 1336 B. S., and spent a sum of Rs. 36.14.0 on it. The Homeopathic Charitable Dispensary of the Samity treated 1375, 1030, 1091 patients including the repeated cases in 1334, 1335 and 1336 B. S. respectively. The further activities of the Sevasamity included house to house relief work in the locality, cremating the dead, contributing Rs. 40 to the Bankura Famine Relief Fund and Rs. 146 3.0 in connection with the Sylhet and Kacchar flood relief work of the R. K. Mission. The Samity thanks the subscribers, donors and friends for their substantial help and co-operation in all its activities and hopes to receive the same in future

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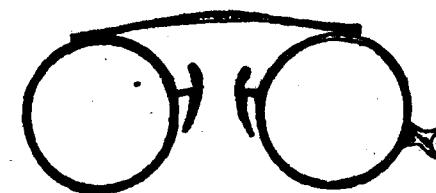
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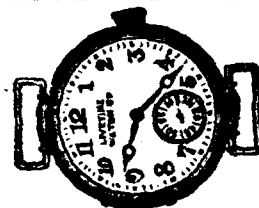
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