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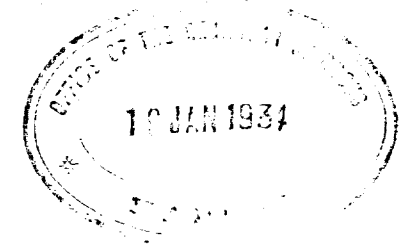
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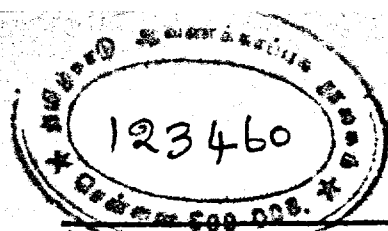
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Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

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JANUARY, 1934

[No. 9

HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

सत्यमार्जवमक्रोधमनसूयां दमं तपः ।

अहिंसाश्चानृशंस्यश्च विधिवत् परिपालय ॥

धर्माय येऽभ्यसूयन्ति बुद्धिमोहान्विता नराः ।

अपथा गच्छन्तान्तेषामनुयातापि पीड्यते ॥

ये तु तुष्टाः श्रुतिपरा महात्मानो महाबलाः ।

धर्म्यं पन्यान्महारूढास्तानुपास्व च पृच्छ च ॥

Do thou duly observe truth and sincerity, freedom from wrath and malice, self-restraint and penances, the duties of benevolence and compassion.

Those men who are stupefied by erroneous ideas display a hatred for righteousness. The man who walks after those misguided persons that have betaken themselves to devious and wrong paths, is afflicted equally with them.

They, however, who are contented, devoted to the scriptures, endued with high souls, and possessed of great merit, betake themselves to the path of righteousness. Do thou wait upon them with reverence and seek instruction from them.

SHANTI PARVA (CH. CCCXXII, 5, 11 and 12)

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

Q:—What again is this Bhavamukha?

The Non-dual Principle comprises within itself Two Aspects or Modes, namely, those with attributes and those without them. It is the Basis of the Cosmic Self too. This Cosmic Self is the Self of God or the Divine Mother, the Power that creates the World Phenomena

R:—I shall come to that immediately. But in order to understand it, it is necessary to conceive through imagination, as far as practicable, the condition of the Master in those days. We have mentioned above that the Master's ego consciousness was then slightly appearing at times and again disappearing altogether. But even when it was slightly manifested, the world did not appear to the Master in the same way as it now appears to us. To him the world phenomena seemed as various waves of thoughts rising in the Cosmic Mind, having their play for a while and again merging in their very source. What to speak of other things, even the Master's own body and mind were perceived by him as a mere wave in the Cosmic Mind. This Cosmic Consciousness and Energy which the so-called scholars, with their minds clouded with western materialism, declared to be inert though unitary,—while trying to gauge it

with their puny intellect or the various instruments improvised by them—was experienced by the Master from this plane as the Living Conscious Non-dual Principle, the one source of all desires and activities, the Divine Mother of the Universe with Her Boundless Love and Grace. He saw further that this Non-dual Principle comprises within itself the two modes or aspects, namely, those with form and those without it,—which fact is referred to in the scriptures as the internal differentiation in the Ultimate Principle;—and that a Cosmic Ego is manifested in it, an ego which pervades the whole world from the lowest to the highest form of creation. Not only that. It is due to this Cosmic Ego that an infinite number of waves of thought are surging in the Cosmic Mind, a small fraction of which is perceived by limited individual egos as the external world with its various objects and is dealt with accordingly. The Master found that the existence and the activities of the limited egos depend entirely on this Cosmic Self. But yet, as they fail to perceive this Cosmic Ego, they fall into the erroneous notion that they themselves possess free will and power of action. This narrowness of vision is known in the scriptures as Nescience.

This Cosmic Ego itself is called Bhavamukha as all Bhavas or Thoughts arise from This One Source

This Cosmic Ego which resides midway between the two modes, namely, the attributeless and that with attributes, is itself called the *Bhavamukha*. For, it is on account of this Cosmic Ego that infinite thoughts appear in the Cosmic Mind. This is the Self of God or the Divine Mother. In order to describe this Ego, the saints of the Vaishnava cult of Bengal have styled it as the pure luminous form of Lord Krishna, whose relation with the world is beyond the ken of human understanding, that is, it is impossible for any being to comprehend whether the Lord is identical with the creation or different from it.

The Master's Realisation in the Perfectly Non-dual State or in the Plane where the Duality is Dimly Perceived

When the Master's ego-consciousness was being wiped out completely he was remaining unified with the attributeless aspect of the Divine Mother—in a state beyond the province of the Cosmic Ego. In that plane the existence of the Cosmic Ego or its infinite waves of thoughts, which we call the world, were not at all perceived. And again, while the Master's ego was being reawakened to some extent, he was experiencing the Cosmic Ego with its attributes and the waves of thought residing in it, and at the same time associated with the attributeless as-

pect of the Divine Mother. Or in other words, the moment the Master was rising to the plane where all attributes cease to exist, the internal differentiation in the Non-dual Principle too was disappearing simultaneously. And whenever he was perceiving the Cosmic Ego with its attributes, he was realising that "Brahman is the same as Its Shakti (Power or Primal Energy), the same Principle being both attributeless and with attributes. Purusha (Intelligence) is identical with Prakriti (Matter). The same snake that was motionless is now in motion; or the same Diety who is attributeless by nature, appears with attributes in a playful mood, as it were." After the full vision of the Divine Mother with Her endless attributes harmonised with the attributeless aspect, the Master received the Divine Command,—"Remain in Bhavamukha."

"Remain in Bhavamukha"—What does it mean?

The meaning is: "Do not live in the plane beyond all attributes by discarding the ego altogether. But live always with this truth in view that the Cosmic Ego alone, the only source of all thoughts, is thy ego, that His will is thy will, that His action is thy action; and thus go on doing good to the world." To remain in Bhavamukha then means to realise at all times and in all circumstances that the individual ego is in reality the Cosmic Ego itself. When one attains the Bhavamukha state all ideas of

limitation such as, "I am the son of so and so; or the father of so and so; a Brahmin or a Sudra", etc., become completely obliterated from the mind, and instead one remains forever identified with the Cosmic Self. Hence it is that the Master would reiterate before us, "I am the son of so and so; or the father of so and so; a Brahmin or a Sudra; a great scholar or a rich man,"—all such

ideas belong to the impure limited unreal self and bring about bondage. Discard them altogether from the mind, and think on the other hand, 'I am the Lord's servant, His devotee, His child or His part and parcel.' Stick firmly to this attitude." Or again, he would say, "Whatever you like after having secured the knowledge of non-duality in your pocket."

VIVEKANANDA THE INNER MAN

Monk First and Then a Patriot

THIS is the month in which the birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda falls. It is appropriate for us on this occasion to turn our thoughts to the life and personality of the great Swami, especially to an aspect of his character which ought to be stressed more than it is usually done. 'Vivekananda the Monk' is often overlooked by a casual student of his life owing to the brilliance of his achievements as a patriot. But to those who study him carefully, it is the monk in him that is at the root of all his achievements as an orator, as a preacher, as a patriot, as a nation-builder and as a humanitarian. Even his patriotism was the offspring of his spiritual fervour; for unlike patriots of the ordinary type, he loved India because to him India was the spiritual teacher of the world, and her rehabilitation was therefore necessary to secure the spiritual good of mankind.

The Call of the Spirit in Early Life

From his very childhood the call of the spirit was audible to him. Meditation was his childhood's play, and the vision of a great brilliance, the Brahma Jyoti, was a daily occurrence with him before he fell asleep. Often before falling asleep he used to get a twofold vision of great significance—of a life of great opulence, comfort and fame on the one hand, and of the austere and self-denying life of the Sannyasin on the other. The power to gain either, he used to feel, was in him. But his choice always fell on the latter. With the dawn of youth he was swept away by a great hankering for Truth which made him go from teacher to teacher and from church to church in quest of God. He went about questioning the important religious leaders of the day, "Have you seen God?" and could get no satisfactory answer from any one until he came to Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna answered the

question in the affirmative and promised to lead him too to that state of God-consciousness which he himself was experiencing. From that day the trend of the Swami's life was settled once for all.

Though born and brought up in a wealthy home, the sudden death of his father left him and his family indigent, almost on the verge of starvation. In spite of this pinch of poverty, neither his yearning for God nor his effort for realising Him slackened. His discipleship under Sri Ramakrishna was beginning to bear fruit in the form of an extreme spirit of renunciation, a striking example of which we cite below. Reduced to the utmost straits of poverty, he once approached his great Master and asked him to pray to the Mother that his family might have enough to subsist upon. Sri Ramakrishna sent him to the shrine of the Mother to pray for this himself, but as soon as he entered the shrine he forgot everything about his material needs and prayed only that he might have discrimination and renunciation. Thrice he was sent to pray and thrice he failed in this way until a great shame came over him for having stooped down to such a mean thing as approach God for the sake of the fleeting things of the world.

The same austere monastic spirit permeated his whole life, both as a spiritual aspirant and as a public man. During his Master's lifetime and after his demise, the Swami lived a life of intense Tapasya, practising the highest form of concen-

tration and subjecting his body and mind to the most rigorous discipline. According to the time-honoured tradition of monastic life, he spent his time till he left for the West, in study, meditation and lonely wanderings from one place of pilgrimage to another over the length and breadth of India. After he emerged into public limelight, the holy obscurity and hard Tapasya of the wandering monk was denied to him, but he continued to keep up its spirit in his mind at least, if it could not be manifested externally as in his earlier days. In the words of Sister Nivedita, "He never appeared to be practising austerity, but his whole life was a concentration so profound that to any one else it would have been the most terrible asceticism."

A Powerful Spiritual Personality

As a fruit of his striving he was blest with the highest form of spiritual realisation. He was one who had known God intimately both in his Personal and Impersonal aspects. Even in his Master's lifetime, he had reached Nirvikalpa Samadhi, the highwatermark of transcendental experience. As a result God-consciousness became the natural state of his mind, and the slightest effort or suggestion used to make his mind wholly ingathered and absorbed in the depths of meditation. Within a few minutes he would get so absorbed in meditation, without any consciousness of the body or things external, that he could not be disturbed even when

mosquitoes covered his whole body as with a blanket. In his early life in America he found himself frequently carried away by his habit of constant meditateness and was on this account put to much difficulty in that land of railroads and tramways. Often it happened that absorbed in his thought he forgot to get down from the tram car and remained unconscious of it until he was carried to the terminus and the conductor disturbed him again for his ticket. In the same way, in his classes, when he demonstrated meditation to his students, he used to get absorbed in it so much that hours passed before he became conscious of anything outside, and the students had to leave the place one after another in the meantime.

The man of realisation that he was, he was endowed with a spiritual fervour of an extremely contagious kind. Sri Ramakrishna had predicted of him that in time his spiritual energy would be so great that he would be able to impart spirituality to others by a mere touch or wish. And this became literally true as many persons who came into intimate contact with him testify. Sister Nivedita says from actual experience with reference to this power of the Swami: "One's whole attitude towards things was reversed; one took fire, as it were, with a given idea; or one suddenly found that a whole habit of thought had left one and a new outlook grown up in its place without the interchange of a single word on the subject. It seemed as if a thing

had passed beyond the realm of discussion, and knowledge had grown by the mere fact of nearness to him. It was in this way that questions of taste and value became different. It was in this way that the longing for renunciation was lighted, like a devouring flame in the hearts of those about him." Any one who was caught within the field of his thought used to be carried away irresistibly by its currents. One of his brother disciples remarked, "Ah! One at once becomes absorbed if one sits for meditation in company with Naren! I do not feel this when I sit alone." And in his lectures what used to hold his audience spell-bound was not so much the beauty of his words, the subtlety of his arguments or even his eloquence, as the great spiritual fervour that emanated from his personality. Literally, the whole audience was raised to the level of his sublime thought.

His power of concentration and spiritual fervour manifested in a remarkable way once when in the courtyard of the Belur Math he exclaimed, addressing the assembled Sannyasins: "Here is the unveiled presence of Brahman. Eie upon those who, disregarding It, set their minds on other things! Ah! Here is Brahman as palpable as a fruit in one's palm! Don't you see? Here!" These words were spoken in such an appealing way that every one stood motionless for some time like figures painted on canvas and felt as suddenly drawn into the depths of meditation. He was, as his Master

described him, ever like a drawn sword; so keen was his discriminative faculty that no trace of materiality was left unsevered from his consciousness. What made him the prophet of strength and fearlessness was this fact of his being grounded in the consciousness of Atman, which knows neither death nor decay, which is pure Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. It made him rise above every form of weakness, fear or narrowness of thought, and imparted to his personality a grandeur and majesty, before which every one who came into contact with it was forced to bow down.

The Purity of His Character

Not in austerity, power of concentration and spiritual strength alone, but in point of purity of character too he was a paragon of monasticism. Renunciation of lust and gold was the watchword of his great Master; the same was the case with Vivekananda too. Unlike his Master, the Swami was a great social figure in the East as well as the West, and he had to deal with money, and men and women of all types of character and every station of life. But in all these contacts he never deviated from the great principles of his Master, which form the very essence of monastic life. The money that came into his hands also freely passed out of it to relieve the needs of others. He gave all his teachings in the West free of charges. When he had constructed his central Math from the gifts of his western friends, he gave away all that he had acquired

to his brother disciples and the organisation, thus fulfilling literally the monastic vow of non-possession. So also in his relation to the opposite sex, he kept himself above all weaknesses of the flesh. The celibate life, the most precious possession of the monk, was for him an end in itself, and to rise above the very impulse that stood in its way an integral part of his ideal of perfection. But this did not however engender in him any hatred of woman. In fact he was closely associated with several women all over the world as disciples, co-workers and friends, but in all such contacts he followed the familiar Indian habit of establishing a kind of family relationship, and thus formed, wherever he went, groups of 'mothers,' 'sisters,' and 'daughters.' He was always firmly established in the Vedantic idea that the soul is above sex, and was capable of viewing all who came to him for the benefit of his company and instruction, as so many souls and not bodies. Even any form of politeness that emphasised the distinction of sex appeared so horrible to him. In fact purity had become so automatic with him that whenever any impure thought or image appeared before him, he was immediately conscious of what he called 'a blow'—a shattering, paralysing blow,—struck from within upon the mind itself, as to say 'No, not this way.'

His Universal Love

But the picture of Swami Vivekananda the great monk will not be

complete unless we add to these strong and austere traits of his character that wonderful quality of his heart which distinguished him from the common run of Indian monks and makes him a veritable Bodhisatwa of the modern age. It is his unlimited love and sympathy for all life. In the Bhagavata we read of the great sage Suka who, having reached the state of oneness with all life, answers the anxious call of his father through the trees of the hermitage. But in this Suka of Sri Ramakrishna the feeling of at-one-ment with all life manifested itself in a more significant manner through a participation in the suffering of mankind and a burning desire to alleviate the same. He threw away the peace and bliss of a life of contemplation, and courted the struggle, restlessness and disappointment of an intensely active life for the welfare of all beings, which ultimately brought about his own untimely death. The ideal of merging himself in unbroken Samadhi came to him in his early spiritual life, but his great Master sharply reprimanded him for this and said: "You are a fool. There is a higher stage than that even. Don't yousing, whatever is is Thyself? Come here after making some provision for your family, and you shall get a higher stage than even Samadhi." It was the realisation of this higher stage, namely, the recognition of the One in the many or the immanence of the Divine in all beings, that fired the heart of Swami Vivekananda

with a pity of adoration that recalls the glorious days when the Bodhisatwa ideal, which spurns one's own salvation for the well-being of others, used to move the heart of religious India. It was the growing realisation of this which made him confide to a brother disciple of his, after all his wanderings over India, just before his starting for the West: "Haribhai, I cannot understand your so-called religion!" "But," he added, pressing his trembling hand on the heart, "but my heart has grown much, much larger, and I have learnt to feel (the sufferings of others). Believe me, I feel it very badly." It was this very same consciousness of Divine immanence which made him utter such words of terrible earnestness as the following: "Him I call a Mahatma whose heart beats for the poor. Otherwise he is a Duratman." "May I be born again and again," he declared in an inspired moment, "and suffer thousand miseries so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls, and above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races and species. May these be the special objects of my worship." At a more mature period of his life he gave expression to this same realisation of his in less, fiery but more profound words: "After so much Tapasya I have understood this as the highest truth: God is present in every being. There is no other God besides that. He who serves all beings serves God indeed."

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The suffering of the world was so poignantly felt by him that he was sometimes disposed to disbelieve the doctrine of individual salvation and preferred the idea of Sarvamukti or Universal Salvation, according to which no individual can reach the state of ultimate peace until the whole universe attains to that state. Though conscious of its metaphysical difficulties, he declared, "But just consider the greatness of the heart which thinks that he will take the whole universe with him to liberation." It was this tendency of his thought that made him discourage his monks from exclusively following the path of contemplation and austerity and exhort them always to look upon the alleviation of the sufferings of mankind as a duty no less important for a monk than the so-called striving for salvation. The Swami once addressed a group of Brahmacharins whom he had just initiated into Sannyas in the following fiery words: "Remember, for the salvation of one's own soul and for the good and happiness of the many, the Sannyasin is born in the world. To sacrifice his own life for others, to alleviate the misery of millions rending the air with their cries, to wipe away the tears from the eyes of the widow, to console the heart of the bereaved mother, to provide the ignorant and the depressed masses with the ways and means for the struggle for existence and make them stand on their own feet, to preach the teachings of the Shastras to one and all without dis-

tingtion for their material and spiritual welfare, to rouse the sleeping lion of Brahman in the hearts of all beings by diffusion of the light of knowledge,—the Sannyasin is born in the world!" It was not unoften that he took to task those of his disciples who showed an extreme leaning towards the ideal of individual perfection. To some of those who, on being asked to go as preachers, pleaded with him that they may be allowed to practise more Sadhana and attain to realisation, he thundered forth: "You will go to hell if you seek your own salvation! Seek the salvation of others if you want to reach the Highest. Kill out the desire for personal Mukti. That is the greatest of all Sadhanas. Work my children, work with your whole heart and soul! That is the way. Mind not the fruits of work. What if you go to hell working for others? That is better than winning heaven through self-sought salvation."

It is, however, important that the spirit of service that the Swami praises here is distinguished from the egoistic type of philanthropy that we come across so often nowadays. In works of the latter kind it is not so much the feeling of the world's misery as ideas of self-importance or the desire to be lionised by society that drives people to activities of apparent unselfishness. The Swami criticised such motives as vehemently as he did morbid salvation-seeking. What he wanted was that men should begin to feel for others as intensely as they

did for themselves and serve them in a spirit of worship.

The Swami's overflowing sympathy for the sufferings of life was once revealed in a dramatic fashion when Girish Chunder Ghosh, the great Bengali dramatist, touched him on this sore point in his heart. The Swami was on that occasion discoursing learnedly to his disciples on the several abstruse points in the Vedanta philosophy. In the middle he taunted Girish for his neglect of scriptural study, whereupon the latter, in order to draw out the true mettle of the Swami, addressed him in these powerful words: "Well, Naren, let me ask you one thing. Of Vedas and Vedanta you have read enough. But are there remedies prescribed in them for these wailings, these cries of hungry mouths, these abominable sins and the many other evils and miseries that one meets every day? The mother of the house there, who at one time fed daily fifty mouths, has not the wherewithal to cook even for herself and her children for the last three days! The lady of such and such a family has been violated by ruffians and tortured to death. The young widow of so and so has succumbed from causing abortion to hide her shame!.....I ask you Naren, have you found in the Vedas any preventive for these evils?....." When Girish continued in this strain, a striking transformation came over the Swami. Vivekananda the scholar and metaphysician, disappeared for the time

being, and Vivekananda the inner man came out in the shape of a flood of bitter tears for the sufferings of fellow beings which he found incompetent to remedy in spite of his great learning and spiritual realisations. In a fit of uncontrollable emotion he stopped the discourse and left the hall for his own private apartment.

It is in this aspect of Vivekananda's character that we find the true element of his greatness which made him the irresistible force that he was wherever he went, and which has rendered his life and teachings so potent an influence on the minds of countless sincere men and women in all parts of the world. It is sometimes believed that the Advaitic realisation culminates in a state called Samadhi, in which a man becomes merged in a kind of contemplative bliss and becomes impervious to the joys and sorrows of his fellow beings. But the Samadhi of this kind is not, in Sri Ramakrishna's opinion, the highest state of Advaita. He spoke to the Swami, as we have already mentioned, of a state higher than that, and this state the Swami realised when he declared that there is no God besides Him who is immanent in all beings, or when he spoke of the position of the Vedantin as consisting in seeing the Real in the illusion. It is a state that comes to one who, after realising the Absolute in transcendental Samadhi, recognises with his higher personality that the Jagat and the Ego are of the same stuff as the Supreme

Being, that God, man, and nature are mere identities. It is a state of realising the One in the many, the Permanent as residing in the impermanent, the One Self as the self of all beings. It is what is spoken of as Sarvatma Bhava or the consciousness of being the Self of all beings.

It was the realisation of this highest stage which his great Master had promised him when he expressed his desire for perpetual Samadhi, that made the Swami Vivekananda see the joys and sorrows of mankind so intensely as his own and say, "The thought comes to me that even if I have to undergo thousand births to relieve the misery of the world, aye, even to remove the least pain from anyone, I shall cheerfully do it!" The Swami's consciousness of oneness with all life is what Nivedita describes when she says, "One had the impression as if no blow to any in the world could pass and leave our Master's heart untouched, as if no

pain, even to that of death, could elicit anything but love and blessing." This poignant feeling of sympathy for all life dragged him from the holy egoism of the ordinary ascetic and the placid calm of a life absorbed in Samadhi, and threw him into the vortex of work which allowed no moment of rest or peace. His simultaneous consciousness of the calm of the Absolute and the call of suffering humanity has often been described as the conflict in Vivekananda's personality and the tragedy of his career. But it is neither a conflict nor a tragedy but the supreme glory of his life—a glory to which only the most exalted type of Brahmajnanis has access, as his great Master pointed out to him in his early days. What appears to the ordinary mind as misery and suffering in the struggle and restlessness involved in the service of others is to the knower of Brahman all joy and bliss; for in the words of the Swami, "There is bliss in torture too."

VEDANTISM ON HORSEBACK: THE MESSAGE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA *

By S. K. Maitra, M.A., Ph. D.

THERE are two distinct lines of approach to religion. In the first place, religion may be approached from the subjective side, from the standpoint of the pious devotee. Viewed in this light, religion becomes a matter of *सत्यता*, of inner realisation, which is incommunicable

to those who have not had it. The essence of religion in this view is something inexpressible, something which can be felt but cannot be communicated by means of any rational symbols. Religion, consequently, becomes unteachable except by way of inspiration

* The title of this paper has been borrowed from that of a lecture delivered by Mr. V. N. Mehta, I.C.S., some years ago on the occasion of the anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

through personal contact with a *guru*.

There is certainly a good deal to be said in favour of this view. Religion undoubtedly rests upon a unique experience. This unique experience constitutes its main value for the individual. The individual seeks this experience, he obtains a satisfaction of his self from it, which he does not obtain in any other way. It gives the peculiarly religious value which he sets over against other values. This experience being unique, it is incommunicable and untranslatable in terms of any symbols.

That religion rests upon this kind of unique experience is a truth which we fully realise when we compare any religion in its most living form, in the form in which it reveals itself to a great seer or prophet, with that same religion when it has become stereotyped and crystallised into dogmas. Christianity in the life of Jesus Christ or his immediate disciples, is a way of life, a path to a new realisation. In the hands of the Church Fathers of the Middle Ages, all its vitality is gone, all its contact with life is lost. It becomes a political creed and loses all its religious character. It becomes the policy of an ecclesiastical State. Just as a political State does not tolerate anarchists, so the huge ecclesiastical States of Mediaeval Europe did not tolerate heretics. They were burnt at the stake or disposed of in other summary ways, as a political State disposes of people whom it considers dangerous.

It is of the essence of religion, therefore, that it should rest upon a unique experience. This inwardness is the test of the vitality of a religion. But though inwardness is vital to religion, yet it seeks also expression, that is, it wants to have an external outlet. Religion is organically united with the whole of

our soul-life and cannot live in isolation. It is in fact the consummation of our spiritual life. This takes us to the second way of approaching religion, which consists in viewing it as the crowning phase of our spiritual life.

The mistake of asceticism lies in ignoring this second way of approaching religion. It views religion in its isolation. It forgets that the spiritual life is an organic whole. This is the reason why it could never make any lasting impression upon mankind and had always to yield to more virile forms of life-synthesis. The greatest ascetic order of the world was perhaps Buddhism, and its decline and final disappearance from the land of its origin is the most vivid example that exists of the fundamental weakness and instability of all ascetic schemes of life.

In the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda we find a full recognition of this truth. He did not yield to anybody in the strength of his religious emotions or the fervour of his religious soul, but he felt very clearly that any attempt to separate the religious from the moral or the intellectual life would be disastrous. In his lecture on *Practical Vedanta** the great Swami declared, "The fictitious differentiation between religion and the life of the world must vanish... ..The ideals of religion must cover the whole field of life, they must enter into all our thoughts, and more and more into practice."

In fact, his chief mission seems to have been to show the interconnection between religion and the other phases of human life. What he wanted was to save religion from its isolation and to place it in the midst of the vital currents of

* Works (Mayavati Memorial Edition, Part II, Page 395.)

life. If India could do this, she would be in a position, he thought, to conquer the world by her spirituality. "Up, India," he said, "and conquer the world with your spirituality.....Spirituality must conquer the West.....we must go out, we must conquer the world through our spirituality and philosophy. There is no other alternative, we must do it or die. The only condition of national life, of awakened and vigorous national life, is the conquest of the world by Indian thought."*

At the same time he never forgot that the essence of religion lies not in any dogma or creed but in personal realisation. In his attempt, so to say, to broadcast religion, he was never oblivious of the fundamental characteristic of religion, its inwardness, its intimate contact with the innermost feelings. While lecturing on "The Common Bases of Hinduism," he declared most emphatically:** "Mere believing in certain theories and doctrines will not help you much. The mighty word that came out from the sky of spirituality in India was *anubhuti*, realisation, and ours are the only books which declare again and again, 'The Lord is to be seen'..... Religion is to be realised and not only heard; it is not only that some doctrine should be learnt like a parrot. Not only is there intellectual assent; that is nothing; but it must come to us." In the same strain also he spoke in one of his addresses on Bhakti Yoga: "You must bear in mind that religion does not consist in talk, or doctrines or books, but in realisation; it is not learning, but being.....Religion is realising, and I will count you a worshipper of God when you have become able to realise the idea. Before that it is the spelling of the

word, and no more. It is the power of realisation that makes religion; no amount of doctrines, or philosophies, or ethical books that you may have stuffed into your brain will matter much, only what you are and what you have realised."*

Having thus obtained the truths of religion by personal realisation, the Swami went out to proclaim them to the world. His was a practical Vedanta, what a distinguished countryman of ours has characterised as 'Vedantism on Horseback.' He believed in missionary work. He felt that he had a message to deliver, a mission to fulfil. He felt that he would not be true to himself, he would not be true to his Master, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, if he kept the truth which he had realised to himself. It was for this reason that he went to the Congress of Religions at Chicago to deliver his message to the West. He felt an irresistible urge within him to go and proclaim his message to the world. "He was seized with such a paroxysm of intense *rajas*," as his biographer happily puts it,** "with such a tremendous force surging within him and struggling for an outlet that he felt as if he would burst, as he said to one of his Gurubhais. It was this mighty force that fell upon the world in its flood-tide of spirituality, destined to sweep away all that was weak and debasing, and bear in its contents all that was ennobling and life-giving."

And it was a very good thing for India that he felt this urge and went out to proclaim his message to the West. Not to speak of the great service he rendered by dispel-

* Ibid, Part III, p. 761.

** *Life of the Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. IV, p. 170.

* Ibid, Part III, p. 642.

** Do. p. 701.

ling the stupendous ignorance of the West regarding the religious ideals of the East, his message came at a very opportune moment. The 'eighties' and the 'nineties' of the last century marked perhaps the most glorious epoch for science. The whole world lay at the feet of the all-conquering science. The claims of philosophy and religion received but scant recognition from people who were intoxicated with the wine of the positive sciences. At that time, therefore, the western world had very great need of the wisdom of the East. The need was perhaps then as great as it was after the Great War, when the whole of the West turned with a longing, lingering look towards the great prophet of the East, Rabindranath, for light. The West welcomed the message of Swami Vivekananda. It was glad of the opportunity which he gave it of coming into contact with new truths and new ways of life. It was glad to be able to breathe a new atmosphere untainted by scientific formulae.

I often wonder whether it would not have been better for India if, instead of political messengers, she had sent religious missionaries to the West. There can be no doubt that this would have led to a rapid conquest of the West by the spirituality of the East. India in that case could at least have the satisfaction which Greece had, which, although made a dependency of Rome, could claim to have conquered Rome by her thought.

Swami Vivekananda believed that the chief cause of India's present degenerate condition was her neglect of the masses. In the course of an interview which he granted to a representative of the "Madras Times" on his return from his European and American tour, he

said,* "I consider that the great national sin is the neglect of the masses, and that is one of the causes of our downfall. No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed and well cared for. They pay for our education, they build our temples, but in return they get kicks. If we want to regenerate India, we must work for them." He continued in the same strain throughout the interview. "The one problem you have is to give to the masses their rights. You have the greatest religion that the world ever saw and you feed the masses with stuff and nonsense. You have the perennial fountain flowing and you give them ditch-water."

Equally emphatic was he in asserting that India's regeneration could only take place by re-asserting her own ideals and not by slavish imitation of the West. Let India, he said, cling once more to her ancient ideal of renunciation and service, and the world will be hers again. "Our method," said the Swami, "is very easily described. It simply consists in re-asserting the national life. Buddha preached renunciation. India heard, and yet in six centuries she reached the greatest height. The secret lies there. The national ideals of India are renunciation and service. Intensify her in these channels, and the rest will take care of itself."

If this is called orthodoxy, well the Swami was orthodox. He believed in India maintaining her own peculiar culture which made her once supreme. He did not think that it would be right for her to give up her national ideals for the sake of others borrowed from the West. This kind of orthodoxy he

* Works, Part V (Memorial Edition, p. 1089.)

had and he was proud of it. But he had nothing but contempt for the false orthodoxy which is only another name for 'don't touchism'. Thus, speaking of himself and his band of workers to a representative of the "Prabuddha Bharata," he said, * "We are orthodox Hindus." "But" he added, with great earnestness and emphasis, "we refuse entirely to identify ourselves with 'don't-touchism.' That is not Hinduism; it is in none of our books; it is an unorthodox superstition which has interfered with national efficiency all along the line."

Swami Vivekananda resembled Raja Rammohan Roy in the range of his vision, in the breadth of his point of view. Like Rammohan he bestowed equal attention upon all regions of national life, the religious, the moral, the social and the political. Only in one respect did he differ from the father of modern India, and that was in his zeal for missionary work.

This was an altogether new line which had not been attempted for centuries in India. The Swami, therefore, was justly proud of this. "Other sects and parties," he said, "have carried spirituality all over India, but since the days of Buddha we have been the first to break bounds and try to flood the world with missionary zeal."

The catholicity of the Swami's mind is reflected in his extremely liberal views regarding the position of women. The Swami held that the truly Hindu conception of the position of women was one of equality with men. The inequality of women, such as we find in modern Hinduism, took place, in his opinion, in the Pouranic age, mainly as the

result of Buddhistic influence. He wanted to restore to the women of India the position which they held in the Vedic age. But he wanted to do this not by means of any violent social change but simply by spreading education among women. "Women," he said, "must be put in a position to solve their own problems in their own way. No one can or ought to do this for them. And our Indian women are as capable of doing it as any in the world."

Finally, the message of Swami Vivekananda for his countrymen was a wonderful message of strength and of hope. "I am firmly convinced," he said in a memorable speech*, "that no good comes out of the man who day and night thinks he is nobody. If a man day and night thinks he is miserable, low and nothing, nothing he becomes. If you say, 'yea, yea, I am, I am,' so shall you be; and if you say 'I am not,' think that you are not, and day and night meditate upon the fact that you are nothing, aye, nothing shall you be. That is the great fact that you ought to remember. We are the children of the Almighty, we are sparks of the infinite, divine fire. How can we be nothings? We are everything, ready to do anything; we can do everything and must do everything.....Losing faith in one's self means losing faith in God. Do you believe in that Infinite, good Providence working in and through you? If you believe that this Omnipresent One, the Antaryamin, is present in every atom, is through and through, अतोमन, as the Sanskrit word goes, penetrating your body, mind and soul, how can you lose heart?"

* Ibid, Part V, p. 1091.

* "The common Bases of Hinduism" (Works Mayavati Memorial Edition, Part III, p. 700)

BUDDHISM IN JAVA AND SUMATRA

By R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph. D.

BUDDHISM was introduced in Java at a comparatively late period. At the time when Fa Hien visited the island (C. 415 A. D.) there was but little trace of it. But the story of Gunavarman shows that it was not long before Buddhism was introduced and then gradually took deep root in the island. According to Seng Tchouan or "Biography of Famous Monks" compiled in A. D. 519, Gunavarman belonged to the royal family of Kipin (either Kashmir or Kapisa, *i.e.*, northern Afghanistan). He rejected the offer of succession to the throne and took to the life of a Buddhist monk. He first went to Ceylon and then proceeded to Java. First the queen mother and then the king himself adopted the new faith, and then it was gradually spread over the whole island.

The accounts left by I-tsing leave no doubt that towards the close of the seventh century A. D. Buddhism had spread over other regions. The following two paragraphs from his "Record of Buddhist Practices" convey a fair idea of the state of things.

"In the islands of the Southern Sea—consisting of more than ten countries—the Mūlasarvāstivādanikāya has been almost universally adopted (lit. 'there is almost only one'), though occasionally some have devoted themselves to the Sammitinikāya; and recently a few followers of the other two schools have also been found. Counting from the West there is first of all Po-lu-shi (Pulushih) islands, and then the Mo-lo-yu (Malayu) coun-

try which is noted as the country of Che-li-fo-che (Sribhoja) [*i.e.* Sri Vijaya] (in Sumatra), Mo-ho-sin (Mahasin) island, Ho-ling (Kalinga) island (in Java), Tan-tan island (Natuna island), Pem-pen island, Po-li (Bali) island, Ju-lun island (Pulo Condore), Fo-shih-pu-lo (Bhojapura) island, O-shan island, and Mochia-man island.

"There are some more small islands which cannot be all mentioned here. Buddhism is embraced in all these countries, and mostly the system of the Hinayana (the Smaller Vehicle) is adopted except in Malayu (Sri Vijaya), where there are a few who belong to the Mahayana (the Larger Vehicle)."

The identification of Che-li-fo-che with Sri Vijaya, in Sumatra may now be regarded as certain and we may refer to Takakusu's learned discussion for the location of the rest. But whatever we may think of these identifications, there is absolutely no doubt whatsoever that these islands are all to be located in Malayasia and the statement of I-tsing may be taken as generally true for this region. It may thus be regarded as certain that the Hinayana form of Buddhism was fairly prevalent all over Malayasia though Mahayanism was not altogether unknown.

In addition to the general statement quoted above, I-tsing has left some details of his own journey which throw interesting light on the culture and civilisation in Malayasia. On his way to India the pilgrim halted in Sri Vijaya for six months and learnt the Sabdavidya

(or Sanskrit Grammar). During his return journey also he stopped at Sri Vijaya, and after a short stay in China he again returned to the same place. Here he was engaged in copying and translating the voluminous Buddhist texts which he had brought with him from India. Why he chose this place for his work is best explained in his own words:

"Many kings and chieftains in the islands of the Southern Ocean admire and believe (Buddhism), and their hearts are set on accumulating good actions. In the fortified city of Bhoja [*i.e.*, Sri Vijaya] Buddhist priests number more than 1,000, whose minds are bent on learning and good practices. They investigate and study all the subjects that exist just as in the Middle Kingdom (Madhyadesa, India); the rules and ceremonies are not at all different. If a Chinese priest wishes to go to the west in order to hear (lectures) and read (the original), he had better stay here one or two years and practise the proper rules and then proceed to Central India."

The position of Sri Vijaya as an important centre of Buddhism is also indicated by the biographies of the Chinese pilgrims to India which I-tsing has recorded. We are told that the Chinese pilgrim Hsuei-ning on his way to India stopped for three years in Java (Ho-ling) and there in collaboration with a local monk called Jñānabhadra he translated several scriptural texts. Similarly we hear of quite a large number of Chinese pilgrims such as Uun-ki, Ta-tsin Tcheng-kou, Tao-hong, Fa-lan, and others who made a prolonged stay in Sri Vijaya, learned the local dialect (Kouen-lien, probably a form of Malay) as well as Sanskrit and engaged themselves in collecting, studying and translating Buddhist texts.

It is thus evident that in the seventh century Buddhism and Buddhist literature had their votaries in Malayasia and there were important centres of Indian learning and culture which attracted foreigners.

The importance of Sri Vijaya in this respect deserves, however, more than a passing notice. Apart from its position as a great centre of Buddhism, it merits distinction as the earliest seat of that Mahayana sect which was destined ultimately to play such a leading part in the whole of Malayasia. According to the express statement of I-tsing, quoted above, Hinayanism was the dominant religion in Malayasia in his time, except in Sri Vijaya which contained a few votaries of Mahayana. The same writer also refers to the existence of Yoga Shāstra (of Asanga) in Sri Vijaya. All this is fully corroborated by the inscriptions of the Kings of Sri Vijaya referred to above. The inscription of Jayanāśa, dated 684 A. D., contains definite references to Mahayanist doctrine. It mentions *pranidhana*, and describes the successive stages of development such as (1) the awakening of the thought of Bodhi; (2) the practice of six Pāramitās; (3) the acquisition of supernatural power, and (4) mastery over birth, action (कर्म) and sorrows, leading to the final knowledge (*anuttarabhisamyak-sambodhi*). The inscription of Jayanāśa is the earliest record in Malayasia referring to the Mahayana sect. Taking it along with the evidence of I-tsing we may presume that Mahayanism was a recent importation into Sri Vijaya and had not spread much beyond this centre.

The occurrence of the word 'Vajrasāra' in the inscription of Jayanāśa leaves no doubt that the Mahayana in Sri Vijaya was of the

Tantrik form known as Vajrayāna, Mantrayāna, or Tantrayāna. According to the general view of scholars, this cult was developed, mainly in Bengal, towards the middle of the seventh century A. D. It is therefore interesting to observe first, the rapidity with which new ideas travelled from India to the Far East, and secondly the influence exerted by Bengal over the development of Buddhism in Sumatra, an influence of which more definite and concrete evidence is available for the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. Even for the seventh century A.D. we have a distinguished example in Dharmapāla, an inhabitant of Kāñcī, and a Professor at Nālandā, who visited Suvarṇadvīpa.

The supremacy of the Sailendras in Java and Sumatra gave a great impetus to the Mahayana form of Buddhism. In Java it led to the erection of the world-famous Borobudur and several other magnificent temples like Chandi Kalasan. The Sailendra inscriptions distinctly refer to the influence which Bengal exerted on the growth of Mahayana in Java. The kings were in close touch with the Pāla kings and the celebrated monastery of Nālandā while Buddhist teachers from Bengal occupied the high position of royal preceptors. Mahayana texts were introduced into Java and we find a complete hold of Mahayanism in both Java and Sumatra.

This is best illustrated by a study of the Buddhist iconography in Java. Here the entire hierarchy of the Mahayanist gods makes its appearance. The Adi-Buddha and Prajñā-Pāramitā, the Dhyāni Buddhas, the Mānusi Buddhas, the Bodhisattvas and the Tārās, all make their appearance almost in identical forms and names, and we also meet with the familiar postures

called *Mudra* in the delineation of these images. A detailed reference to these cannot be attempted here. It will suffice to state that, in addition to the images of Gautama Buddha, those of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara were most popular in Java and Sumatra, though Maitreya and Mañjuśrī were also great favourites. The images of Tārā were also very familiar. Slight discrepancies are sometimes noticeable in the Javanese representation of these divinities. Thus, in India, Syāma-Tārā is represented with the right hand in Varā-Mudrā and a lotus (उत्पल) in the left, while the Javanese image with these attributes is expressly named as Māmā-k(h)ī, Syāma-Tara is on the other hand represented in Java in the Dharma-Cakra Mudrā, holding a lotus without stem. Again, Locanā, the Shakti of Akshobhya, is in Java represented as the Shakti of Vairocana. But with these minor modifications the entire Mahayanist Pantheon seems to be well represented in Java.

The later phases of Mahayana Buddhism in India are also met with in Java. We may note in particular four of them viz: (1) The adoption of Hindu gods in the Buddhist Pantheon (2) introduction of minor and miscellaneous divinities, sometimes of terrible appearance, (3) the development of Tantrik mode of worship and (4) the gradual rapprochement between Mahayana and Brahmanical religion.

As in India, Hindu gods like Brahma, Siva, Ganesa, and Indra were adopted in the Buddhist Pantheon, but relegated to an inferior and sometimes even to a degraded position. In earlier period they were represented as attendants of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas but in later times their images, even those of Siva and Parvati, are represented

as being trodden under foot by the Buddhist gods. This change seems to be due to the introduction of a class of minor gods in Mahayanism. These are regarded as protectors of the devotees or defenders of the faith, though they occupied a rank distinctly inferior to the aristocratic family of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Tārās referred to above. As prominent examples of these may be mentioned Trailokya-vijaya, Hevajra, Heruka, Mañichī, Hayagrīva and Kubera. The last mentioned one, although originally a Hindu god, was taken over into the minor Buddhist Pantheon and thus escaped the fate which overtook his superior gods. Some of these minor gods are of either monstrous or terrible appearance, like their Indian prototype, but in one case at least, that of Mañichī, the Javanese form presents a benign human figure in Varā-Mudrā attitude, in striking contrast to her Indian prototype, with a hideous pig-face, standing in a menacing attitude on a chariot drawn by seven pigs.

The image of Trailokya-vijaya found in Java aptly illustrates the point noted above. It stands on the prostrate bodies of Siva and Gaurī and has four (or five) heads, eight hands and a necklace composed of the image of Amitābha. It is represented in Vajra-Hunkāra Mudra, and holds in his hands a variety of attributes such as sword, thunderbolt (vajra) discus, elephant-goad, noose, bow and arrow.

Among the minor gods of monstrous and terrible appearance mention may be made of Hayagrīva and Heruka. Hayagrīva, as the name indicates, has the head of a horse, (sometimes placed above three ordinary human heads), wild hair adorned with human skulls and *uparita* made of double line of snakes. He holds in his hands various attributes

such as mace, sword, bow and arrow.

The image of Heruka is very rare even in India, only three being known upto date. As such it is interesting to note a recent discovery of this image in the Bairo Bahal Temple (No. 11) in Sumatra. The image corresponds to the Sādhana and to its Indian prototype. The god is represented in a dancing attitude with a devilish smile (or grin) in his face. His hairs rise up like flames and he wears a garland made of human skulls (and probably joined together by entrails, as the Sādhana says). He holds the thunderbolt in his right hand and a human skull serving as a wine-bowl in his left. On his left shoulder lies a Khatvanga (a club or mace) and to its upper end is fastened a flapping banner with small bells.

The evolution of these monstrous and terrible gods in the Buddhist Pantheon unerringly indicates its later degraded form known generally as Tantrism, which appears almost simultaneously both in Hinduism and Buddhism. The object of Tantrism, to take the most favourable view, was to obtain, by supernatural or magical practices, the highest spiritual power or bliss even in this life without having to undergo a series of births as original Buddhism contemplated. But both the objects and the means were not unoften extremely degraded. Instead of the attainment of spiritual power, not a few strove only for the acquisition of material advantages. As to the depraved and revolting nature of the means, we may mention the Pancatattva or Pancamakāra which enjoins upon the devotees the free enjoyment of Madya (wine) Māmsa (meat), Matsya (fish), Mudra (various postures) and Maithuna, and also of the Cakra, i. e., secret sitting in a

circle of men and women practising mysterious and obscene rites. It is unnecessary to go into details about the development of this aspect of Tantrayana or Tantra-cult for which adequate information is available in many standard treatises.

The following passage from Kern's Manual of Buddhism admirably sums up the general view of the subject:

"The development of Tantrism is a feature that Buddhism and Hinduism in their later phases have in common. The object of Hindu Tantrism is the acquisition of wealth, mundane enjoyments, rewards for moral actions, deliverance, by worshipping Durga, the Shakti of Siva-Prajñā in the terminology of the Mahayana, through means of spells, muttered prayers, Samādhi, offerings, etc. Similarly the Buddhist Tantras purpose to teach the adepts how by a supernatural way to acquire desired objects, either of a material nature, as the elixir of longevity, invulnerability, invisibility, alchemy; or of a more spiritual character, as the power of evoking a Buddha or a Bodhisattva to solve a doubt, or the power of achieving in this life the union with some divinity."

The Tantrayāna, even in its most debased form, Kālacakra-tantra, prevailed in Java and Sumatra. About a certain text of this sect the late Dr. R. L. Mitra observed as follows:

"The professed object is devotion of the highest kind, but in working it out, theories are indulged in and practices enjoined which are at once the most revolting and horrible that human depravity could think of. The work is reckoned to be the sacred scripture of millions of intelligent beings."

It is not perhaps difficult to explain the rise of Tantrism in Java. The Tibetan historian Taranatha informs us that the Pāla period witnessed a great development of the cult. As we have seen above, the Sailendra kings were in close touch with the Pāla kings of Bengal and learned Buddhist priests from Bengal exerted great influence over the religion of Sumatra and Java. It is, therefore, perhaps not unreasonable to assume that Tantrism, like Mahayanism, flowed from Bengal to Malayasia. This view is further strengthened by the date of the Buddhist Tantrik text Sanghyang Kamahāyanikan. This work which deals with the theory and practice of Tantra, and to which a more detailed reference will be made later on, was probably composed in the Sailendra period and revised in the reign of Sindok by Sambhara Suryavarana. To the same author is also ascribed the Javanese Subhūtitantra which formed the most favourite subject of study of King Kṛtanagara. Thus Tantrism, which flourished later in eastern Java, had already struck deep root in Java in the tenth century A. D. while the Pālas were yet ruling in Bengal.

Recently the Dutch scholar Moens has dealt in great detail with this last and decadent phase of Buddhism in Sumatra and Java, and we refer the inquisitive readers to his learned article. For the theological and philosophical aspects of the question it will suffice here to state that we can trace the influence of Tantrism in the eleventh and twelfth century A.D. by the prominent parts played by Tantrik teachers during the reign of Airlangga and Jayabhaya. During the thirteenth century it had two great devotees in kings Kṛtanagara of Java and Adityavarman of Sumatra.

The accounts of these two kings, the images of Bhairava, Heruka and other Tantrik gods and goddesses as well as the Tantrik texts, give us unmistakable proof of the nature and extent of this degraded form of Buddhism which ultimately proved its ruin.

Reference may specially be made to the religious activities of Kṛtanagara. It is a sad comment on the religious condition of the time that this great king, believed to be an incarnation of Jina and undoubtedly endowed with power and talents of a high order, could indulge, perhaps in sincere faith, even in such obnoxious practices as Pancamakāra and Sādhana Cakra. According to Moens, the king was represented after his death by a Bhairava image which is now at Leyden. The image is a terrible and repulsive one, a naked corpulent figure decorated with human skulls all over his body, dancing on a seat made up of or supported by human skulls. It has protruding teeth and bulging eyes, and holds in his four hands a trident, dagger, Damaru and an inverted human skull forming a bowl of wine. Whether this Bhairava image really represented the deified form of the king may be doubted, but it seems almost certain that the image personifies the crude and obnoxious religious faith of the time.

Moens has also proved that King Adityavarman was a great follower of the Bhairava cult. According to his interpretation, the Surawaso inscription of 1297 Saka seems to refer to *Kapalika* practices indulged in by king Adityavarman.

The king assumed the title Viseshadharanī, after performing, according to the Bhairava cult, the highest consecration ceremony which included a human sacrifice in the cremation ground. Seated on a

corpse he was drinking the blood of the victim who was being consumed in a blazing fire. Here, again, although this interpretation is not absolutely free from doubt, the inscriptions of Adityavarman leave no doubt that the king was a follower of Tantrayāna, and indulged in its obnoxious practices. He looked upon himself as an incarnation of Bhairava and his queen as that of Mātanginī, one of the ten Mahāvidyās.

From a study of Tantrayāna we may now pass on to the last phase of Mahayana, viz., a syncretism of the different Hindu and Buddhist gods. It is a well-known fact that in its very origin Mahayanism shows clear influence of both Vaishnavism and Saivism. That there was a growing tendency of rapprochement between the last two sects is indicated by the image of Harihara, i. e., the joint representation of Siva and Vishnu, and a clear expression of the identity of the two gods in religious texts. Now in a similar way there was an attempt towards a synthesis between Vaishnavism and Buddhism by regarding Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu. With the development of Tantrayāna these identities assumed a more definite form.

Siva, Vishnu and Buddha were all regarded as identical and so were their Shaktis. Here again the point is well illustrated by the case of king Kṛtanagara. He called himself *Narasimha-Murti*, i. e., an image of Vishnu in the incarnation of Narasimha (Man-lion). But he was also known as Siva-Buddha, and was represented after his death by an image of Siva-Buddha. His father, king Vishnuvardhana, was represented after his death both by the images of Siva and Buddha, while the cousin of the latter, who shared the royal honours with him, was called Narasimha-Murti, but was represented by an image of

Siva. These are not instances of faith in different gods, but rather of a belief that these different gods are identical. The evidence thereof is furnished by the growing popularity of the image of Harihara at this period. It may be remembered that Kṛtarājasa, the son-in-law and successor of Kṛtanagara, is represented by a fine image of the god Harihara.

The Tantrik texts definitely identify the three gods in the form of Bhairava. Thus Tārātantra says,

"He, Janārdana, is the excellent Deva in the form of Buddha, the Kulabhairava". The images of Bhairava which we meet with in Java and Sumatra may, therefore, be regarded as the visible symbol of the Tantrik syncretism of the gods of different sects. This gradual obliteration of sharp differences between the different sects and a growing conviction of their essential unity, inspite of outward observances, is also very clearly reflected in Javanese religious literature.

(to be continued)

ETHICS OF THE GITA

By P. Nagaraja Rao

IN this short article I wish to bring to the learned readers' notice the possibilities of working out a systematic and scientific ethic from the Gita. It has almost become a favourite theme with the western critic to say that ethical life has not received its proper treatment at the hands of the Indian metaphysicians. Prof. Otto and several others have told us that Indian philosophers have laid undue stress on intellectual or the contemplative aspect of life sometimes to the detriment of an active ethical life. The great German Prof. Hegel spoke in very contemptible terms about Indian morality and its illusory nature. I shall quote his remark, for it typically represents one prominent hostile point of view. "Freedom of will is the fundamental postulate of morality, without which moral life loses its integrity.so that the people of India are sunk in complete immorality."

The ethics of the Gita is cosmopolitan in its outlook. It recognises

human responsibility and is founded on the inseparable and intimate trinitarian concept of morality, metaphysics and mysticism. In any scientific ethical enquiry we ought to take into account the *Form* of morality and the *Content* of morality. The form of the moral good is God himself. Good life finds its consummation in godly life. Godly life is impossible without good life. In this sense the norm of good is absolute and not relative. The theistic outlook of the Gita protests against pious Naturalism which abounds in good deeds and the harmless Humanism which talks of a life of rational, amoral, hedonistic self-indulgence. The teacher of the Gita has very little sympathy for the advocates of the alluring doctrine of despair. Liberal Christian theists of the type of Miss Evelyn Underhill and Prof. L. P. Jacks have protested against the interpretations of Christianity in terms of Humanism. Jacks in his

beautiful review of Christianity in *Crisis* tells us that the kernel of the Gospel of Christ is not the removal of the light afflictions that mark the temporal lot of mankind but the eternal glories of godly life. Christian theists have begun to protest against the chariot of Humanitarian progress being yoked to the Gospel of Christ. What holds good with liberal Christian theism partly holds good with the theism of the Gita also. In addition to this the Gita ideal reconciles the concept of social service with that of love of God. "Christ-seeking and self-seeking cannot go together." The gospel of the Gita has two complementary aspects. So the unity of the teaching of the Gita has to be studied from two points of view. On the one hand the doctrine of detachment is advocated and on the other hand the complementary doctrine of attachment to God is insisted upon. The Gita ideal of Duty is not the bloodless categorical imperative of Kant or the Stoic's Law of Nature but it is the realisation of the True and the Real Self about which Green, Bradley and a host of English Hegelians talked. The Duty of the Gita replaces the egocentric point of view by bringing about the cosmocentric point of view.

The author of the Gita is not an advocate of customary morality or conventional propriety. The content of morality does not so much determine the moral worth of the action as that of the attitude of the moral agent. The Gita doctrine lays great stress on the ethical how of an action. It is not the number of acts that determine the moral worth of the agent but the state of his mind. "Whosoever devoutly offers to Me a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, I accept the pious offering." Not only is the ethical how insisted upon but the criterion insisted upon is

Jnana. The ultimate moral Good has to be achieved by Jnana only. This knowledge, which is not merely intellectual, is spoken of as the raft with which we cross all transgressions of life. The moral ideal of the Gita is the composite life of Sankhya and Yoga. The author of the Gita tells us that "it is only the simple and unwise that speak of renunciation and work as diverse ways. He who is firmly set on the one reaches the end of both." The Gita ideal lays great stress on the concept of natural development. Aristotle defines nature as the perfect development of a being. One of the distinguished figures in new Hindu renaissance in India, Prof. D. S. Sarma, in his students' edition of Gita interprets the concept of Swadharma as Swabhava in expansion of a suggestion of Arambindo Ghose. The Gita ideal is to encourage the development of an individual in accordance with his natural propensities, i. e., Swabhava. The concept of social service (the concept of Kainkarya) is advocated in the Gita. Social service is only a stepping stone and not a stopping place on the onward spiritual journey of man.

The Gita presents the judicious solution to the fundamental problem of morality (namely the free will problem). The problem of free will has been the postulate of all sound scientific ethics. To take an analogy: There is a farmer with a piece of land. The fertility of the soil, the weather, the expected rains and such other natural factors are not within the control of the farmer. These factors are the determined conditions. The farmer willy-nilly has to accept them. The conditioning agent is the farmer. He is free to till the soil or to lay it fallow. So the conditions are determined but not the conditioning agent. This simple solution of the Gita is scien-

tific and plausible. Our sciences have taught us to fly in the air and to swim in the seas, but have failed to teach us how to live on earth in amity. The Gita ideal of wisdom and action is of great pragmatic

value to men who want to live a godly and good life. Gita has vindicated the ethical glory of man in contrast to his cosmic littleness. The ethics of the Gita is a religion lived in society.

B. G. TILAK ON VIVEKANANDA

IN answer to questions Mr. Bala Gangadhara Tilak said:—

About the year 1892, *i.e.*, before the famous Parliament of Religions in the World's Fair at Chicago, I was once returning from Bombay to Poona. At the Victoria Terminus a Sannyasin entered the carriage I was in. A few Gujrathi gentlemen were there to see him off. They made the formal introduction and asked the Sannyasin to reside at my rehouse during his stay at Poona. We reached Poona and the Sannyasin remained with me for eight or ten days. When asked about his name he only said he was a Sannyasin. He made no public speeches here. At home we would often talk about Advaita philosophy and Vedanta. The Swami avoided mixing with society. There was absolutely no money with him. A deerskin, one or two clothes and a Kamandalu were his only possessions. In his travels some one would provide a railway ticket for the desired station.

The Swami happened to express a strong hope that as the women in the Maharashtra were not handicapped by the *Purdah* system, it was probable that some of the widows in the higher classes would devote their lives to the spread of spirituality and religion alone like the old *yogins* of the Buddhist period. The Swami also believed like me that

the Shrimath Bhagavad Gita did not preach renunciation but urged every one to work unattached and without the desire for fruits of the work.

I was at that time a member of the Deccan Club in the Hirabag which used to hold weekly meetings. At one of these meetings the Swami accompanied me. That evening the late Kasinath Govind Nath made a fine speech on a philosophical subject. No one had to say anything. But the Swami rose and spoke in fluent English presenting the other aspect of the subject very lucidly. Every one there was thus convinced of his high abilities. The Swami left Poona very soon after this.

Two or three years thereafter Swami Vivekananda returned to India with world-wide fame owing to his grand success at the Parliament of Religions and also after that both in England and America. He received an address wherever he went and on everyone of such occasions he made a thrilling reply. I happened to see his likeness in some of the newspapers and from the similarity of features I thought that the Swami who had resided at my house must have been the same. I wrote to him accordingly inquiring if my inference was correct and requesting him to kindly pay a visit to Poona on his way to Calcutta. I received

a fervent reply in which the Swami frankly admitted that he was the same Sannyasin and expressed his regret at not being able then to visit Poona. This letter is not available. It must have been destroyed along with many others, public and private, after the close of the Kesari Prosecution of 1897.

Once after this, during one of the Congress sessions at Calcutta, I had gone with some friends to see the

Belur Math of the R. K. Mission. There Swami Vivekananda received us very cordially. We took tea. In the course of the conversation Swamiji happened to remark somewhat in a jocular spirit that it would be better if I renounced the world and took up his work in Bengal while he would go and continue the same in Maharashtra. "One does not carry," he said, "the same influence in one's own province as in a distant one."

KARMA SANNYASA

By M. A. Venkata Rao, M. A.

THINKERS of our generation are trying to recover a speculative basis for morals, if possible, in terms of the spiritual fundamentals of the past. No wonder that controversy centres round the pronouncements of the Gita—the most comprehensive and trenchant of our texts on ethical problems. I propose briefly to suggest a point of view from which the vexed question of Karma Sannyasa may be seen in a more convincing light.

The end of life is Moksha or liberation from the bonds of Sam-sara. It is taken literally as redemption from the world, and to consist in a state of absorption in the Ultimate or eternal fellowship with God, transcending utterly all contact with matter and the life that we know here on earth. However mysterious it may be, this is the ideal portrayed in our religious philosophy, absolutistic or personalistic. Further, such Moksha is regarded as brought about by reason and intuition, Manana and Nidhidhyasana and to consist of an intuitive state itself—of Jnana, so that the act of self-recognition constitutes *ipso facto* entry into the blessed state of Moksha. So much

is common ground. The question arises regarding the place of activity and social participation in this scheme. The Indian tradition sums up the attitude to them in the ideas of Dharma and Karma. Dharma is both moral and religious, synthesising the here and the hereafter. Karma is activity realising in our personal lives the values inherent in Dharma or the spiritual order of things. The detail of conduct is the articulation of Dharma in terms of daily life and is embodied in the table of Nitya karmas or obligatory duties. These Nitya karmas are categorical imperatives and allow of no exception or evasion. Further, the substance of life is taken up in duties flowing from the state of individual development and from one's station in life. These are called Varnāshrama dharmas. Fulfilment of duty in absolute disinterestedness is Dharma. For the benefit of weak human nature, a further preparatory stage is recognised in the Kamya karmas. Man wants happiness. Let him have it through divine favour and social righteousness. A stage will arrive when he will become aware of a deeper longing, when he will

feel discontented even with Svarga (heaven). Then Jnana marga will appeal to him. The simultaneous fulfilment of Nitya karmas will have kept alive the consciousness of the eternal even in his search for happiness. Varnāshrama duties will have 'purified' him, in the traditional phrase. Such *chitta suddhi* will have prepared him for the higher road to Mukti—Jnana marga.

The question arises whether Karma by itself is not capable of leading us to Moksha. The answer can only be negative, for Moksha is a state of knowing, of vision, and therefore must necessarily be brought about by an effort of *thought*. When it is declared that Karma or devotion to duty leads to Moksha, it is meant that it puts us in the way of attaining it. Disinterested activity lifts us to a universal attitude in every fibre of our being; it tames desire and will, and attunes them to the rhythm of world-harmony; it brings about a balance in action. This is what is meant by 'purification.' This state of mind requires to be followed up and consolidated by a conscious intuition into the heart of reality. Then the ideal of conscience will be seen to rest on the solid foundations of fact. The idea will acquire flesh and blood. "Then will the unheard become the heard, the unknown become the known, the unrealised become the realised" (Chandogya 6-1). The glory of the treasure laid up in *faith* will be revealed to the *sight* and its value confirmed. To claim therefore that humble discharge of duty, utter surrender of the will, (prapatti), total consecration of the affections (bhakti) can of themselves bring about Moksha is an exaggeration, though an intelligible one. If Moksha were a dissolution or absorption alone, if it is a continuation of perfect obedience, in a

word, if it is a state in which the dualism between us and the Supreme Self continued, Karma and Bhakti by themselves may be enough. Even the leaders of Vaishnavism, Ramanuja and Madhva are emphatic that Moksha is not a "linear" culmination of Karma and Bhakti but requires the additional *dimension of Jnana* to supplement and consolidate the riches achieved by them. Hence *at some point or other* Jnana marga must supervene upon the earlier ways and carry them into self-illumination. Those whose lives are cut off earlier by accident or death must be supposed to continue where they left off in a future embodiment. These accidents do not affect the fact of spiritual development. Heroes of the battlefield as well as persons in the most humble position in life have their careers continued. Their effort and sacrifice will shorten the probation but all must take up the labour of thought when the time is ripe. To hope for salvation by means of Karma or Bhakti is like hoping for the genius of Einstein without the trouble of thinking. And a life of thought has its own obligations and requires the giving up of earlier forms of duties, Kamya karmas, Naimittika karmas and Varna dharmas. This is not to suggest that the work of life in the various stations of life does not require thought. In fact the Brahmanas have study and teaching as part of their duties, and the Kshatriya duties of administration and defence do need a vast amount of thought. But their knowledge is primarily *applied knowledge* in *special fields* and presupposes the "Brahma vidya" of the "whole-time" thinker. This is the essence of the doctrine of Karma Sannyasa as I understand it. The position may be summed up thus: The process

of moralisation begins with the duties of Ashrama and Varna, optional and obligatory. Nishkama karma ripens the soul by "*inducting*" it as it were into the eternal order of things and habituates it by the pressure of life itself to the universal point of view. To feel and act for God is to be already *saved* without knowing it. The light of knowledge is necessary to render salvation assured and permanent. The second stage is Karma Sannyasa, a sloughing off, of the external rules of life, for the *bonds* have now been established *within*. Law has become spontaneous impulse. The Vaishnava schools insist upon the Nitya karmas even in this stage. In principle the insistence is justified, for Nitya means eternal; the soul must reveal itself in determinate forms of aspiration and Jnana which are inherent in its nature. The soul cannot transcend its inmost essence of derivative being. Self-will is given up but not the self itself. Anyway, Nitya karma at this stage has risen above the stage of external duty and has become inward adoration of the soul. Social obligation in the *narrow sense* is over. Sacrifices and Naimittika duties are left behind. This however is a minor difference. But even regarding the major point of the need of Jnana for Moksha, Advaitin and Dvaitin are at one. What then does the aspirant *do* after renunciation of "karma" and "bhakti"? He devotes himself body and soul to thought, to win a vision of life in which all the values of life may be seen in a perfect harmony. The process is summed up in the words, Sravana, Manana and Nidhidhyasana, acquisition of the cultural heritage of the race, independent reflection upon it and rapt contemplation. Of course there are many blind alleys in which many have lost

themselves. There is the road of self-hypnosis miscalled Yoga; there is the road of self-torture, another variant thereof; and others have resorted to culture of ecstasy, a mental drug. But the Vedantic way represents the heightening and purification of man's mind and spirit. It does not ask us to *extinguish thought* but to *solve the problem of life* by honest and devoted thinking. Its intuition is the summed up result of thought integrally related to scientific discovery and artistic creation. Karma Sannyasa therefore is the negative aspect of Jnana marga. The powers of man are limited. We cannot do all things. To give up the preparatory formalities of life is not to give up life itself. It is to carry us to a deeper level where the values of the earlier stage are preserved. Such a life of active intellectual search will lead to the third and, in a way, the crowning stage of life—*sakshatkara*. *Sakshatkara* is the moment of vision, of full understanding. It is salvation. We have reached the centre of things from which the whole of experience is seen to radiate in a resplendent and infinite expanse. The aspirant has become *jivanmukta*; he has reached utter identity with Brahman or attunement with Him, whatever may be its ultimate character. It is a state of Ananda. It is life from the standpoint of eternity. Now the burning question arises—what does the *jivanmukta* do? The answer is substantially the same in all the three principal schools of Vedanta, but an answer that leaves room for dissatisfaction. Advaita holds that the *jivanmukta* is above the dualism of subject and object, of duty and conscience, faith and vision; that we do not know what he *may* do, but adds emphatically that he *need do nothing*. His condition is *not incompatible* with action,

for he lives and maintains himself; but there is *nothing* that he *ought* to do. In principle he has reached the end of life in both senses and is only waiting for Videhamukti. At death he will vanish from the earthly scene altogether and is folded in the One without a second. The Dvaita Vedānta only points out that the *jivanmukta* has not become Brahman, but has been intimately united with Him in fellowship, that Mukti is not *complete* though *assured*, but will certainly be consummated in several stages of journey. And the *jivanmukta* may continue to perform Karmas out of habit or for *lokasangraha*. In either case, the interval between *sakshatkara* and death may be filled up in two ways—in lonely contemplation or in *lokasangraha*. Both are regarded as of equal value in Indian tradition—if anything, the balance of favour falls upon the way of contemplation.

In this plan of life, moral and religious life in the usual sense forms the preparation, the life of thought par excellence the vestibule of heaven, the beatific vision is the critical or turning point, *jivanmukti* is the tableland of waiting immersed in bliss all but absolute, expressing itself in solitariness or *lokasangraha* and Moksha at death, which is life everlasting. Some of our contemporaries are dissatisfied with this scheme. They are not happy with the subordinate place given to action and social contribution. They want to see that the stream of action is uninterrupted by Karma Sannyasa. This spirit of our generation has expressed itself in the West in classic form in Dewey's Gifford Lectures, the Quest for Certainty, in which this leader of American activism protests against the whole classical tradition of Greek and Medieval exaltation of thought.

It is to be remembered that Karma Sannyasa is not ordained for everyone. The normal path is the path of duty, of action. Varnashrama dharma and Nitya and Naimittika observances enable the individual to enter deeply into the ethos *sittlichkeit* or cultural substance of his society. Obedience is the attitude of 'wise passiveness' indispensable for education. Social contribution *from* one's station in life, thinker or priest, administrator or businessman, will ripen one's power. Self-formation and social participation are two aspects of the same process. The critic has here an ample field for all his zeal for social service. *But reform requires fully thought out plans issuing from a life of realisation.* People absorbed in the stress and strain of the usual business of life cannot have the leisure or the equipment to pursue thought to the bitter end, unwarped by vested interests. The world is suffering from the results of such part-time legislation and leadership. Luckily we do find in every generation a set of men to whom the routine of life does not appeal, the stereotyped channels of contribution seem dead and wooden, to whom the usual pleasures of life have no charm. Indian thought would say that they had achieved *chitta suddhi* in previous lives. The theory of Karma Sannyasa "*exploits*" for social ends the existence of such a class of souls. We have therefore to distinguish the usual and the unusual types of temperament. Sannyasa is ordained for both. The first type assumes it after the Grihastha and Vanaprastha Ashramas, after social contribution in the shape of taxes, children, charities, etc. The normal citizen rounds out a life of 'extroversion' with a holiday of "introversion," a period of absorption in life with a 'sabbath'

of 'chewing the cud'. Nothing more is expected of him in this embodiment. He is free to meditate or even to vegetate with the obsolescence of mental powers. He may follow the ideal of Ajagara or the big snake which lives by the chance prey that enters its mouth. He has a right to such a quiet evening after the fitful storms of life. It is certainly better than a life of bitter regrets and envies, of an undignified fishing for crumbs from the powers that be. But those in whom *vairagya* arises earlier in life, in the full vigour of manhood, have a perfect right in the name of social welfare and of God, to give up the routine of Naimittika and Varna dharma, provided they devote themselves with undivided consecration to Sravana, Manana and Nidhidhyasana. The right is conferred by inner fitness and the need of such men for social welfare. Among such dedicated souls, three sub-classes may be distinguished: in one class are the pure thinkers who seek a co-ordinating philosophy or integral vision of things, the second will focus such vision on lines of evolution and reform and the third will devote themselves to putting the results of policy and programme into effect, by teaching, organisation and if necessary, by non-violent resistance to tyranny of all kinds. Now these groups of men will fall under the class of Karma Sannyasis in the traditional scheme. They have renounced the routine of Karma to be freer to contribute the gift of Jnana to society and incidentally to achieve salvation. The old Karma is given up because it is a "time-killer" and binds the soul to vested interests; the new Karma they take up is *lokasangraha*. *Lokasangraha* and Karma Sannyasa therefore may go together. Critics of

Sankara overlook this possibility, identify Sannyasa with the type that comes after Vanaprastha, having Ajagaravritti for its ideal, and see in his heroic life a dichotomy between theory and practice, the heart unsaying the head. In the case of Janaka and Arjuna, there was no need of Karma Sannyasa, for their station in life and their stage of development did not require a contribution through a channel other than that of action. Karmaphala Sannyasa was the stage they were passing through. In the case of a Brahmana or thinker like Sankara, Karma Sannyasa was necessary. We cannot have priest, householder and thinker in one. Human psychology is against it. Sankara's *lokasangraha* therefore had to take the form of Karma Sannyasa. The same thing may be said of Ramanuja and Madhva. Their career includes all the three types of Sannyasa we distinguished, so far as the spiritual inheritance of the country is concerned. The modern ideal would include *all knowledge* within the kingdom of the Sannyasi. It is wrong therefore to contrast Karma Sannyasa with *lokasangraha* as if they were mutually exclusive. If it is urged that Janaka and Arjuna attained Mukti and therefore must have found sufficient opportunities of thought without renouncing their usual duties, it is to be remembered that they had exceptional opportunities and that the great Jnanis of their age laid the results of their meditation at their disposal. It may be therefore that some persons in every generation are required to pursue the way of meditation pure and simple. It may even be said that the Jnana of Janaka and Arjuna must have been one of "imitative assimilation", presupposing discovery on the part of Yajnavalkya or Krishna, and re-

requiring completion in later stages of their growth. Further, even if Karma Sannyasis do not engage themselves in teaching and the spiritual direction of the country, it may be urged that the very existence of a class of "renouncers" has a healthy reflex effect on the country reminding us that man has a destiny beyond 'the bourne of time and place.'

Such, it seems to me, is the line of answer that can be made to the critics of Karma Sannyasa without bating a jot or tittle of theory—absolutistic or personalistic idealism. The relation between thought and the other aspects of life need not be envisaged in terms of the antithesis of end and means. The two are not exclusive of each other. In the earlier stages of development, feeling and action predominate, and the individual's own thought lies in accepting the results of thought embodied in the social system. Jnana is there in the householder (warrior or priest), but it is imitative and partial, obeying laws and ideals: he walks in faith, not seeing their source in ultimate truth. *Authority is not yet internalised.* From the moment of Karma Sannyasa, thought takes the upper hand but *feeling and action do not vanish.* The Gita pronouncement that one cannot live even a moment without action is a self-evident proposition which cannot abolish the possibility of renunciation in the sense we are urging. The Karma Sannyasi does not seek to abolish feeling and action altogether but diverts all their energy to sustain the course of thought in its natural rhythm seeking the ultimate. Such seeking may be prolonged indefinitely before the final vision occurs. We need not expect perfection therefore in a Sannyasi. It is enough if he is absolutely sincere in the quest and is

fully qualified. At the moment of *sakshatkara*, when it comes, all the aspects of personality are unified. The Supreme Self or Reality is seen to penetrate all things with its own ineffable splendour; the warmth of feeling and the urge of will are transfigured. What is the course of life *thereafter*? Here comes the *change in emphasis that is really required.* Instead of hesitatingly urging that the Jivanmukta condition and activity are not incompatible, it is necessary to push the logic of the theory to its culmination and to claim that *after sakshatkara the Jivanmukta will necessarily*, though he will not feel the necessity as an external compulsion, *express his jnana or beatific vision in a life of abounding joy and creativeness.* The idea of *lila* as applied to Brahman must mean something; some echo or analogue of it must appear in the Jivanmukta. In fact Madhva declares, that though Karma is not necessary to knowledge, it is helpful towards making the object or fruit *complete.* Further, he goes the length of declaring that failure to do the good will result in the *dwindling* of bliss and performance of good will enhance bliss (*vide* Bhashya on Vedanta Sutra 3-4-33). It is not easy to derive this conclusion from Advaitic premises, because of its traditional identification of Avidya and the world. On this basis Jnana destroys the world, dissolving it like the baseless fabric of a dream. Critics point out that there is no room for the Jivanmukta condition on this hypothesis. But I believe it is possible to reinterpret the basis of the system so as to eliminate this difficulty. If the Absolute is *satchidananda*, he who is one with it must necessarily overflow into joyous activity. Activity cannot be regarded as an ultimate factor only in the sense of being

goaded by emptiness and imperfection. But the activity of the Free Man will be different from the Karma preceding the act of renunciation. Preparatory Karma is one thing. Post-Sakshatkara "Karma" is quite another. It is an outflow of abundance, marking no imperfection whatsoever. It may express itself in poetic utterance like the hymns of the Rig Veda; it may issue in the joy of service or thought. A necessary distinction should here be made between mystic ecstasy and the steady *mystic state* illumined by a *fixed light*, showing all things in the light of eternity. Madhva points out that the Jnani is quiescent in Samadhi but is active during the rest of life. The spasm of emotion may be passing, even the vision may vanish, but the sense of direction and scale of values must be permanent possessions. Otherwise the *sakshatkara* has no value, rather it is *not sakshatkara*. Thus the permanent light installed in the soul of the Jivanmukta will spontaneously seek to pass into life, into acts of ever-widening ranges of influence. The man is perfect, but his perfection will issue into joyous activity to save the imperfect. If the Divine is Bhakta Parādhina, as it is so movingly described, it is no wonder if the joy of the Free Man is "three parts pain." To the dictum of Spinoza, that the intellectual love of God is the love wherewith God loves Himself, it is necessary to add that it is also, by the same token, the love wherewith He loves His children. In such a state of freedom, the partial categories of end and means are transcended in an undivided cycle of Jnana, Bhakti and Karma. These will be Viseshas mutually implying each other but inseparable. I believe the modern social conscience will be satisfied with this extension of emphasis

in the traditional account, and that far from being an illogical concession, it is the necessary culmination of Hindu Ethics. Hence we may conclude that *preliminary Karma Sannyasa is necessary; that lokasangraha may best be furthered by it, but that, after sakshatkara, the Jivanmukta's life will be a revelation of a new kind of Karma.* Adapting the words of Prof. Hariyanna*, we may say that the prior Karma helps the "realisation of Brahman," while post-sakshatkara "Karma" will constitute the "revelation of Brahman." There need be no fear that such activity will entangle the soul in the toils of Samsara, for ex-hypothesi, *sakshatkara* occurs only when there is *sufficient chitta suddhi*. It is not a mere fleeting glimpse, it connotes the "direct instalment of the self, soul, mind and body, in the very heart of reality." Prof. Radhakrishnan would go a step further and urge that the Jivanmukta is not utterly released at death, will not wish to be released but will come back to the scene of life again and again for service till all people are released. In the Upanishads there is an idea that the released will wait with Chaturmukha Brahma (Maheswara or Prajapathi) till the end of the Kalpa, when they will all go to the Supreme by the presiding deity of this epoch. It is far more important to develop this strand of thought than to tilt against Karma Sannyasa under the mistaken notion that it is against social service. It is far more important to urge that *after sakshatkara knowledge is achieved only in outline* (though an outline that is final and unchanging) and that a series of lives are necessary, not

* See Introduction to his edition of Vedanta Sara (Poona).

only for helping others as Radha-krishnan suggests, but also for achieving the uttermost *fullness of detail in knowledge* possible to human capacity. The glory of God is not fully known, even as much as is possible to our capacity, until He is seen indwelling and translucent

in the infinite web of life and matter. As Madhva insists, knowledge of difference is necessary to enhance the knowledge of identity (Tattva Sankhyāna). We must put the mind of Einstein in the Soul of Buddha to derive our ideal of Jñāna for the future.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

The Nature of the Soul

[We reproduce below an extract from the monthly Bulletin of the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, managed by Swami Ashokananda. The extract is interesting in as much as it has strung together some of the most important utterances of the Swami Vivekananda on "The Nature of the Soul"].

The Hindus say that the Soul is absolute and all-pervading, therefore infinite.

There is no change in the Soul whatsoever — Infinite, Absolute, Eternal, Knowledge, Bliss and Existence. Neither can there be birth nor death for the Soul. Dying and being born, reincarnation and going to heaven, cannot be for the Soul. These are different appearances, different mirages, different dreams.

It cannot be that the Soul knows, but it is knowledge. It cannot be that the Soul has existence, but it is existence. It cannot be that the Soul is happy, it is happiness. That which is happy, has borrowed its happiness; that which has knowledge, has received its knowledge; and that which has relative existence, has only a reflected existence. Wherever there are qualities, these qualities have been reflected upon the substance, but the Soul has not knowledge, existence and blessedness as its qualities, they are the essence of the Soul.

The Soul is not a force; neither is it thought. It is the manufacturer of thought, but not thought itself; it is the manufacturer of the body, but not the body.

The real Perceiver, the real Ruler, the Governor, the Creator, the Manipulator of all this, is the Self of man. The Self of man being beyond the law of causation, is not a compound. It is ever free and is the Ruler of everything that is within law. It will never die, because death means going back to the component parts, and that which was never a compound can never die.

You are only One; there is only one such Self, and that one Self is you, standing behind this little nature is what we call the Soul. There is only One Being, One Existence, the ever-blessed, the omnipresent, the omniscient, the birthless, the deathless. "Through His control the sky expands, through His control the air breathes, through His control the sun shines, and through His control all live. He is the reality in nature, He is the Soul of your soul, nay, more, you are He, you are one with Him."

The Soul is not composed of any materials. It is unity indivisible. Therefore it must be indestructible. For the same reasons it must also be without any beginning. So the Soul is without any beginning and end.

In every man and in every animal, however weak or wicked, great or small, resides the same omnipresent, omniscient Soul. The difference is not in the Soul, but in the manifestation.

The Soul is also sexless; we cannot say of the Atman that it is a man or a woman. Sex belongs to the body alone. So are the ideas of age. It never ages; the ancient One is always the same.

We all hold in India that the Soul is by its nature pure and perfect, infinite in power and blessed. Only, according to the Dualist, this natural blissfulness of the Soul has become contracted by past bad work, and, through the grace of God, it is again going to open out and show its perfection; while according to the Monist, even this idea of contraction is a partial mistake, it is the Veil of Maya that causes us to think the Soul has lost its powers, but the powers are there fully manifest.

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

The Background, the Reality of every one is that same Eternal, Ever Blessed, Ever Pure, and Ever Perfect One. It is the Atman, the Soul, in the saint and the sinner, in the happy and in the miserable, in the beautiful and the ugly, in men and in animals; it is the same throughout. It is the Shining One. The difference is caused by the power of expression.

You are everywhere. Then what is this coming and going? It is the hallucination produced by the change of this fine body, which you call the mind. That is going on. Just a little speck of cloud passing before the sky. As it moves on and on, it may create the delusion

that the sky moves. In reality you are neither going nor coming, you are not being born, nor going to be reborn; you are infinite, ever-present, beyond all causation, and ever-free.

Macnicol on Inter-religionism in India

Rev. Nicol Macnicol has made some interesting remarks on the Christian conception of harmony between religions in an article entitled 'Inter-religionism in India', originally published in the 'Congregational Quarterly' and re-printed in the National Christian Council Review for October. In the first place he points out and criticises what he calls the two prevailing ideals of inter-religionism in India. The first which he attributes to the Ramakrishna movement is that all religions are equally true, and the second for which he gives the credit to Mahatma Gandhi, is that there is so much mixture of error or uncertainty in them all that Hinduism is good enough for a Hindu, and even animism for the animist. To us who think of man as riding from truth to truth, from lower conceptions of it to higher conceptions, and not as Christians think, from error to truth, there is little difference between these two conceptions.

Macnicol criticises these as being the outcome of a pantheism that looks upon the world as an illusion, or as due to despair of attaining to religious truth. He remarks, "If there is such a thing as truth, then it must be a standard for the whole human race. If there is a road by which men have travelled to eternal reality, a road which has led them into fellowship with a God who is 'the eternal home of values, the Supreme worth,' then that road must be the road that every son of man should seek to travel." We

have no hesitation to accept this in a general sense, but beyond this, can the learned writer show any criterion, except his own dogmatic assertions, to which all religionists may be made to agree? Evidently every one of us has got some particular prejudices and a particular outlook due to our education and up-bringing which gives a colouring to all our thoughts and which thereby make it impossible for us all to view the same thing in the same way in all respects. Only in science there is not this difficulty, because science relates to quantitative measurements which will be registered in the same way for all by the instruments. But when qualitative measurement is our source of knowledge, as it is the case in our religious life, differences of conception in details cannot be avoided owing to the subjective character of the interpretation. When Hindus say that all religions are true or that absolute truth cannot be found in any religion, it is this unavoidable colouring of the instruments of knowledge that they have in mind, and not that they want to preach a gospel of despair or of moral sluggishness.

Macnicol remarks: "If we can believe that a truth exists which is not wholly unattainable, then we cannot be content that we should abandon the endeavour to attain it, nor can we be indifferent if others are not sharing with us the experience of it, so far as it has been attained....." If the Christian Missionary goes about with this egocentric notion of religion that what is good for one must always be good for others also, he can expect to become the fruitful source of hatred and fights wherever he goes with his religion of peace and love. While the solicitude for others is commendable in one sense, Chris-

tian Missionaries have to this extent abused it wherever they have gone.

Christian Conception of Inter-Religionism

As against the Hindu conception of religious universalism, Macnicol states the Christian conception of it as consisting in what he calls the sharing of religious experience. His explanation of this sharing process is rather ambiguous. He first seems to say that there is an element of devotion and prayer in non-Christian religions similar to that of Christianity and that by cultivating this in their followers they are preparing them for the final acceptance of Christianity. If this is the hope of the Christian Missionary, non-Christian religions can point out in their histories to cases of men who have attained the highest ideal of devotion without any Christian aid.

Immediately after, Macnicol states his view in a rather different way. "To try to come together with non-Christians so as to reach down to this common basis of dependent creatureliness in the hope that God may break forth upon us and we may together know Him—that is an 'inter-religionism' that some earnest spirits in India, Christian and non-Christian, are seeking to make use of." If the Christian is ready to admit, as is implied in this statement, that his religion is as imperfect as that of the non-Christian, and that they both alike have to wait for God to 'break upon' them, then we find very little difference between Macnicol's view and the Hindu view of universalism which he seems to reject scornfully. The chief difference that remains consists in that the Hindu likes to place his theory against a philosophic background, while Macnicol will have his supported by dogmatism or mysticism.

Japan and India

The *Advance* publishes the report of a conversation between the 'United Press' representatives and two Buddhist monks from Japan who are on a visit to Satyagraha Ashrama at Wardha. In reply to a question as to what the Japanese think about India, the monks are reported to have said:

"Buddhism spread to Japan some 1300 years ago and Japanese civilisation came from it. Therefore the Japanese think that India is the mother of the Japanese civilisation. At present all Japanese look upon India as a beautiful garden of God, and a place radiating spiritual peace to mankind. We feel for India because it is the birthplace of Buddhism, our sacred religion. We are praying for Buddha's blessing every morning and evening to see India attaining her national goal.

On further questioning the monks assured that this was not their personal opinion, but the general feel-

ing among the Japanese people. Japan had hitherto carried great prestige among Asiatic nations, but her recent high-handed policy in China has greatly undermined the faith of other Asiatic peoples in her. It is none the less gratifying to note that the Japanese people have not forgotten their cultural and spiritual contact with India in the past, and that they still love and revere India as the birth-place of Buddha. These cultural ties that India had contracted with the past with other Asiatic nations stand to this day as a reminder to us of our once vigorous cultural life which influenced other nations, not through fire and sword but through the love and blessings of India's great spiritual sons. In the turmoils of our modern political and economic life, the words of these Japanese monks ask us, as it were, to remember that the conquest of the spirit is far more enduring and beneficial than those of military and naval expeditions.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

PLOTINUS ON THE BEAUTIFUL AND ON INTELLIGIBLE BEAUTY: Published by the Shrine of Wisdom, Aahlu, 6, Hermon Hill, London. Price sh. 2-6 (Cloth)

The Editors of the Shrine of Wisdom Quarterly have published excellent translations of these two essays by Plotinus in a single volume which forms Manual No. 13 of the Shrine of Wisdom series.

The conception of beauty is both external and internal. Externally beauty appeals to the sight, to the hearing through compositions as in poetry and music. But beyond the external, that is, sense perception, there is the beauty of the virtues, for every virtue is a beauty of the Soul, as it partakes of the nature of the Soul. Such beauty the eye of sense cannot contemplate,

but the soul without need of sense organs beholds and pronounces beautiful. Thus we behold ourselves beautiful within, when the Soul gets purged, as it were, of dross and is beautified. Well has the author said that the beauty and good of the Soul consist in her assimilation to God, who is Beauty and goodness. And closely following the inimitable words of the author in another place, it may be postulated that in order that each one of us may be enabled to see beauty within ourselves, that is God, each one of us should become beautiful, God-like. The idea is elaborated in both the essays. The object of the second essay is particularly to point out the way of approach to the vision of the beauty of Divine Intellect and to the still more glorious realm of Intelli-

gible beauty to which it introduces the Soul.

THE SACRED KURAL: By H. A. Poppley, B. A. Published by the Association Press, Publication Department of the National Council of Y. M. C. A.'s of India, Burma and Ceylon, Calcutta. Price: Cloth Rs. 2. Paper Re. 1-4.

This small treatise is an introduction to the study of the famous Tirukural or the Tamil Veda, as it is sometimes called, and belongs to the 'Heritage of India Series.' It contains an English rendering in verse of a few choice Kural couplets and a fairly lengthy introduction dealing with the date of the Kural, its ideals and teachings, the character of the poet, and the South India of his times. The explanatory notes at the end and some illustrations including the traditional figure of the sage add to the value of the book.

About the interest the author has taken in mastering the original in Tamil he himself says in the Preface: "Ever since I began to study this little book twenty-eight years ago, it has been with the New Testament my daily companion in all my travels, and I have learnt to love it and to rejoice in its homely, high-minded teachings." "It is impossible," he continues, "in any translation to do justice to the beauty and force of the original.....I realise that I have failed miserably again and again and can only hope that those who read this translation may be able to gain at least a glimpse of the inimitable style of the Tamil Author."

Leaving aside this humble self-estimate of the translator, we find that the selection has been carefully made. The verses have been arranged neatly according to topics, as 'Domestic Virtue,' 'Ascetic Virtue,' 'Kingship' etc. The translations too are not without a ring and a music all their own. On 'Conduct of Affairs,' for example, we light on the verse:

"Sleep on those things that slowly may be done,

Sleep not on those that sleepless promptness need."

The editorial preface says that in every volume that is brought out "everything must be scholarly, and everything must be sympathetic. The purpose is to bring the best out of the

ancient treasures, so that it may be known, enjoyed and used." This treatise fulfils all these conditions.

SHIVAJI THE GREAT: By Balakrishna, M. A., Ph. D. Published by D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co., Kitab Mahal, Hornby Road, Bombay. Price complete set in 2 Volumes, Rs. 15

This book is issued in two volumes. Volume I contains two parts. The first part attempts to arrive at a correct genealogy of Shivaji and gives an account of the career of Shivaji. The second part follows the history of Shivaji up to his coronation and is entitled "Shivaji the Uncrowned King of Maharashtra." Volume II is entitled "The Crowned King" and does not appear to have been released from the press yet. The book is declared to have been in preparation for seven years. It contains an introduction explaining the nature of the records explained. It is a research volume and the specialist on the subject will find much valuable information in the book.

To the available sources of information on the Life of Shivaji in Maharashtra, Persian and English, the author has added the Dutch factory records preserved in Batavia and the Hague. While the Mahratta chronicles abound in fable and fiction, the European material available in the Despatches of the East India Company, and the Dutch, French and Portuguese records refer only to isolated events without giving exact dates. The author has found it necessary to supplement the indigenous with the foreign material.

A correct account of Shivaji's genealogy is still to be arrived at. When on the one side he is connected to the Rajput family of Chittore by some, he is referred to as belonging to a family of agriculturist Patels or village officers by others. A Rajput descent is certainly more appropriate to a warrior and a hero of such eminence as Shivaji. History however cannot have its judgment on a sense of appropriateness, but has to do it on documentary evidence. The author has worked at it with great assiduity and is of opinion that Shivaji's descent from the princely house of Chittore can now be considered as established. One of the Ranas of Chittore, Sajjan Sinha, who was disinherited by his father, went to

Deccan and entered into the service of Hasan Gangu, the founder of the Bahamani kingdom. His descendants thrived well in his court and in time became the Rajas of Mudhol. One Shubha Krishna, a younger son of this family separated himself from the ruling family and settled in Devagiri. Shivaji is connected to this younger line but the connections are not all distinct and beyond doubt. The author has collected a number of references to prove that the family to which Shivaji belonged are Rajputs and has added the list as an appendix to Part I of Volume I.

The career of Shahji has been described at length. What to him was a life-long dream was left to be accomplished by his gifted son. We read that Shahji paved the way and created a favourable atmosphere for the successful rebellion of his son against the foreign rule. That the father and son were not on friendly relations has been ably met by the author. We have it on the evidence of Chitnis that the father gloried so much in his son's successes that he vowed to donate a golden idol worth a lakh of rupees to the temple at Jejuri for the fulfilment of his son's mission in founding an independent kingdom.

Some of the other important features of the book are that the date of birth of Shivaji is proved to be 19-2-1630, as against the traditional date 6-4-1627 and that his illiteracy is repudiated. Several references such as the English instructing their envoys to deliver their letter into Shivaji's own hands "for we fear these Brahmins make letters speak what they please," have been collected from contemporary documents to support Shivaji's literacy.

The murder of Afzal Khan is one of the darkest points in Shivaji's career. Many accounts of the same are extant. The Dutch records have helped the author to relieve the treacherous act of a part of its cold bloodedness. Shivaji's action is justified as treachery playing against treachery. It appears to us that an admirer of Shivaji should be accustomed to look without honour on such acts of murders. When one is in sympathy with the mission for which he worked, namely, to root out the foreign rule as far as possible and protect Hinduism, the Brahmins and the sacred

kine, it is not difficult to understand that the times required strong and decisive action above all considerations of ethics, for any measure of success. While reading about this and the other seemingly dark points in his life, if we can remember that it was the same man 'who made it a rule that wherever his followers went plundering they should do no harm to Mosques, the book of God, or any one's woman, who was ready to renounce his kingdom and all in a trice, and that it was the same man, again, who rose so much above the temptations of the flesh that when the beautiful daughter-in-law of the Muslim Governor of Kalyan was presented to him as a captive maid, he only gently remarked that had his mother been half so beautiful, he himself would have been less ugly, and sent her back to her parents,—then we can have a far more balanced estimate of him.

The book has a good get up and we trust it will be studied with interest.

ACHYUT: Published by Sri Krishna Pant, Achyut Granthamala Karyalaya, Lalita Ghat, Benares City. Annual subscription (Inland) Rs. 6.

The 'Achyut' is a Hindi monthly unique of its kind. The subject it will mainly deal with is Hindu Philosophy with an elucidative explanation of Sankara's commentary. The style is simple but exhaustive, elegant and pure. It is hoped the contemporary will attain an eminent rank among journals devoted to philosophy and create an ever-increasing interest among the Hindi-knowing public.

J. M. SEN GUPTA: ANNIE BESANT & V. J. PATEL: By C. S. Venu. Published by R. K. Raja & Co., 2, Nammalvar Street, G. T., Madras. Price One Anna each.

In these pamphlets of the 'Mother India' Series, the lives of these three great fighters for India's freedom have been narrated. With an unprejudiced mind, the writer has touched on all the points of importance in their noble careers.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF H. P. BLAVATSKY: Edited by A. Trevor Barker, Vol. II. Published by Rider & Co., Paternoster House, London, E. C. Price 15/-Net.

The modern Theosophical movement was begun in New York in 1875 by Madame H. P. Blavatsky, a Russian, and Col. H. S. Olcott, an American, "under the inspiration and teaching" of certain "Oriental Spiritual Adepts". The method determined upon by the two founders was that of arresting the attention of the world by displaying laws denied equally by orthodox materialism and dogmatic religion. To those who have had no access to the two great works of this gifted and versatile Russian lady.—'The Secret Doctrine' and "Isis Unveiled"—the articles contributed by her to various newspapers and periodicals, English and foreign, and which are republished in the handsome and well got-up volumes before us should prove highly useful. The material has been arranged in chronological order according to the date of original publication from 1874 onward, thus adding greatly to the historical value by enabling students of Theosophy to trace the gradual unfolding of H. P. B.'s mission from her first contacts with the spiritualists in America to the day of her death in 1891.

The history of the Theosophical movement has, as may be expected, shown familiar human characteristics. Criticisms there have been to the doctrines propounded by H. P. B., and as we stated in noticing the first volume, several of the contributions are replies to critics who ranged themselves on the side of science in questioning the genuineness of spiritualistic phenomena. A number of the articles are by way of furnishing information on various aspects of the movement and clearing misunderstandings. As we have stated, students of Theosophy will find in these volumes material regarding the evolution of the life-work of Madame Blavatsky. The volumes contain also other articles which will be of great interest to non-Theosophists and general readers as well.

In an article on "The Arya Samaj" (1879), H. P. B. says that the Theosophical Society is in organised affiliation with the Arya Samaj of India, its eastern representative. A younger society

than Brahmo Samaj, it was instituted, "to save the Hindus from exoteric idolatries, Brahmanism, and Christian Missionaries." The author adds that the Theistic movement connected with the Brahmo Samaj had its origin in the same idea. Tributes of respect and admiration are paid to Swami Dayanand, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Babu Keshab Chunder Sen. Speaking of Swami Dayanand the author says, "Wherever Swami Dayanand goes, his splendid physique, his manly bearing, eloquence and incisive logic bear down all opposition. People rise up and say: 'We shall remain no longer in this state for ourselves, we have had enough of a crafty priesthood and a demoralising idolatry, and we shall tolerate them no longer. We shall wipe off the ugliness of ages and try to shine forth in the original radiance and effulgence of our Aryan ancestors.'" Not less hearty is the author's admiration for Ram Mohan Roy. Her eloquent praise of him is topical, the centenary of the Brahmo Samaj movement having been celebrated in this city and elsewhere a few days ago. "A Raree Brahmin," "and one of the purest, most philanthropic and enlightened men India has produced.....His intellectual power was confessedly very great while his manners were most refined and charming and his moral character without a stain. Add to this a dauntless moral courage, perfect modesty, warm humanitarian bias, patriotism, and a fervid religious feeling, and we have before us the picture of a man of the noblest type."

Among other noteworthy articles may be mentioned "The Popular Idea of Soul-Survival," "What is Theosophy?" "Antiquity of the Vedas," and "Indian Metaphysics" which show the deep scholarship and polemical skill of the author. We have perused with great interest the volumes covering the period 1874-1881 which throw considerable light on the activities of the founders and their co-workers in the early years when the movement was being consolidated in America, Australia and India.

A. S.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Ananda Ashrama, California

Swami Paramananda, returning from his visit to India, passed quickly through Europe and reached America in May. The first two months after his arrival he spent at his Centre in Boston, the establishment of which is almost coincident with his first landing in America twenty-seven years ago. He reached Ananda Ashrama, his California centre in July. In the many unusual meetings that followed, attendance throughout was large and many friends were gained for work.

The Swami conducted the two regular religious Services each Sunday and a Class for practical spiritual instruction every Thursday. On two successive Thursdays there were special moonlight Services in the court of the Temple. One evening was devoted to India, and the Swami told with deep feeling of the warm welcome he had received there, and of the ever-growing call of the Motherland which was sounding in his heart. After his address, there was a reception at which refreshments were served. Everyone present was also warmly interested in seeing the addresses of welcome and the gifts received by the Swami during his Indian visit. The demand was so insistent, it became necessary to arrange a second "India Night." This too began with a dinner given to a large number of people. The Swami himself prepared the dishes, and there was great appreciation both of his hospitality and of the dinner itself. At the close of it, all those present again gathered in the court of the Temple to hear the Swami tell once more of India, especially of the work done for women. He dwelt with special pleasure on the new Ashrama recently started at Dacca, East Bengal, by Srimati Charushila Devi, for giving a home and vocational training to over sixty women of all ages and castes. He also spoke of the day school of two hundred and seventy-five, which carries its pupils to University matriculation.

R. K. Vidyalaya, Podanur, (Coimbatore)

The management have issued the report of this institution from the day of its opening, 3rd February 1930, up to 30th September 1933. Starting as a mere boarding arrangement for 3 boys, it soon developed into a residential school, and has now on its rolls 42 boys and teaching facilities from the fifth class to the seventh. There are 4 teachers and a secretary who acts both as the warden and religious instructor. The work of the Vidyalaya is divided into several departments, each under a captain and a batch of boys. Even cooking is done by them. Caste prejudices are not at all respected, among the pupils being representatives of all the main castes including the Harijan. Neither is any differentiation made among the boys on grounds of wealth. Love of country and service are taught through national songs and a variety of other means such as cleaning of slums. Attempts are also made to develop the power of initiative in the boys through their own court where they settle their disputes with the aid of a panel of elected judges and through their monthly meetings where they represent their difficulties and suggest improvements. The management hope with the help of the public to raise the Vidyalaya into a residential High School with a well equipped industrial section which can train up a hundred boys.

Cheris' Address to Mahatmaji

During his short stay in Madras, Mahatma Gandhi responded to the call of the Harijan inhabitants of three Cheris in which the Thondar Sangam, organised by the R. K. Math, Madras, has been doing reconstruction work on the lines laid down by Swami Vivekananda. The Servants of Untouchables Society, Madras, has placed the Sangam as well as the Harijan residents under a deep debt of gratitude by their very generous gift of about two hundred sets of excellent Khaddar dress to the most deserving families of these Cheris. At

about 9 a. m., on the 21st of December 1933, Mahatmaji motored to the place and was received by the Swamis, the members of the Sangam and the Harijans. An address was presented and the Mahatma gave a fitting reply which will be enshrined in the hearts of all those present on the happy occasion. He congratulated the Mission on the good work it is doing throughout India, and stressed that the Ramakrishna Mission is a "movement for self-purification within Hinduism." In the end he exhorted young men to take part in larger numbers in this noble work of uplift.

Swami Vijnananandaji in Madras

Swami Vijnananandaji and party arrived in Madras from Calcutta on 24th December 1933. Two years ago, when this disciple of Sri Ramakrishna visited the South, numerous devotees flocked to him and got the rare privilege of hearing from him his personal reminiscences of the Master and of Swami Vivekananda. On that occasion he saw many of the important places of pilgrimage, like Conjeevaram, Rameswaram and Kanya Kumari, and gave the benefit of his holy company to the inmates and devotees of our Ashramas like Trivandrum, Ootacamund and Mysore. The Swami had a great desire to finish his South Indian tour by crossing over to Ceylon and seeing Colombo and other places of importance on the other side of Pamban. But on account of heavy rains the steamer service got suspended for a time, and the Swami had to postpone his trip. This time, therefore, he left Allahabad with the definite intention of visiting Colombo—the place which got the blessed opportunity, before all others, to welcome the Swami Vivekananda after his signal success in the West.

On the 21st and 22nd the devotees of Madras flocked to see Swami Vijnananandaji and sat round him by the hour listening to his witty, brilliant and inspiring discourse. Often when he

talked of his Master and of Swami Vivekananda the "reminiscences" that poured forth from him had a directness and vigour that could not but impress the minds of the listeners with the grandeur of the Self that is "beyond the passions," the Self that is "transcendent", and at the same time "immanent in the hearts of all."

As the invitation from Colombo was pressing, and as arrangements had already been made for the reception of the Swami there on the 27th the party left Madras on the 25th by the Indo-Ceylon Mail. They are expected back in Madras in the beginning of January 1934.

R. K. Mission Flood Relief in Orissa and Midnapur

Our relief work is going on from eleven centres in the Districts of Cuttack, Puri and Midnapur. Two weeks before we started a new centre at Chalisimultalia in the Sub-division of Tamluk in Midnapur. In two weeks ending 11th and 18th November we have distributed 957 mds. 6 srs. of rice among 6958 recipients belonging to 315 villages from Niali, Baliana, Balikuda, Kapi-leswar, Fatehpur and Chitreswari centres in Orissa. During the same period 248 mds. 24 srs. of rice and 161 pieces of new clothes were distributed among 2494 recipients of 96 villages from Balighai, Pratapdighi and Balyagovindapur in Contai Sub-division and 99 mds. 20 srs. among 995 recipients of 53 villages from Barabaichberia and Chalisimultalia of Tamluk Sub-Division in Midnapur District. Besides, 455 mds. of bran were supplied for cattle from the centres of Contai. Our work in Contai Sub-division will be closed shortly. But the work of other centres will be continued some time yet. So help in the shape of money or new clothes will be thankfully received and acknowledged.

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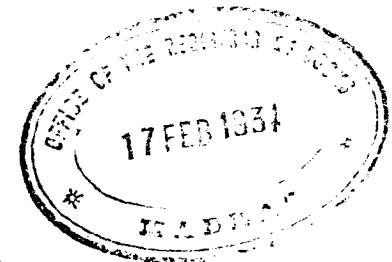
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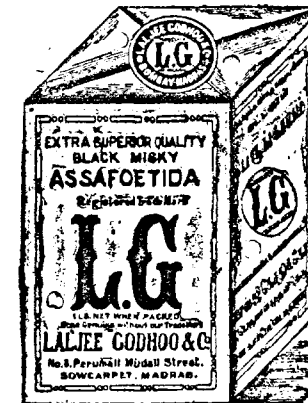
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Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

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HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

अहःसु गण्यमानेषु चीयमाणे तथायुषि ।
जीविते लिख्यमाने च किमुत्याय न धावसि ॥
पुरा कुसङ्गतानि ते सुहृन्मुखाश्च शत्रवः ।
विचालयन्ति दर्शनात् घटस्व पुत्र यत्परम् ॥
धनस्य यस्य राजतो भयं न चास्ति चौरतः ॥
मृतश्च यत्र मुञ्चति समर्जयस्व तद्धनम् ॥

As the days are going one after another, the period of thy life is being lessened. Indeed, when thy life is being incessantly shortened, why dost thou not run to preceptors for learning the means of rescue?

Very soon will those evil companions and foes of thine (*viz.*, the senses), dressed in the guise of friends, swerve thee from correct vision. Do thou, then, O son, strive to achieve that which is of the highest good.

Do thou earn that wealth which has no fear from either kings or thieves, and which one has not to abandon even at death.

SHANTI PARVA (CH. CCCXXII, 9, 45 and 46.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

With gradual progress in spirituality an aspirant arrives at the Stages of Dualism, Qualified Monism and Non-dualism one after another

OUR reader may remark: "Was not your Master then a true Advaitin? As he accepted the internal differentiation in the Divine Mother and realised Her as possessed of attributes as well as without them, it must be admitted that he did not believe in the absolute Non-dualism, as propounded by Sankara where the very existence of the world is denied altogether." But this was not the case. The Master admitted all systems—Dualism, Qualified Monism and Non-dualism. But, he would add, the aspirant passes through all these systems one after another in accordance with his mental development. At one stage he believes only in Dualism and the other two systems appear to him to be wholly erroneous. At a higher stage of spiritual development comes the belief in qualified monism when the aspirant realises that the same Ultimate Principle which is eternally free from attributes, is also possessed of infinite attributes.* Dualism at this stage

* This presentation of Visishtadvaita is, of course, not as the orthodox Visishtadvaitins would have it, but as viewed by an Advaitin. Orthodox Visishtadvaitins never believe in the attributeless aspect. Consequently they interpret the term 'Nirguna' with reference to Brahman as meaning 'free from evil attributes.' (Translator)

seems to him as positively false. Neither does the truth of the non-dual system occur to his mind. Lastly, when a soul rises to the highest culmination of spiritual unfoldment he realises the attributeless aspect alone of the Divine Mother and remains for ever identified with Her. All the distinctions between the subject and the object, the living and the non-living, devotion and liberation, virtue and vice, merit and demerit are then completely obliterated.

Hanuman the Great Sage on these Three Stages

The Master used to illustrate these three stages in spiritual life with the story of Hanuman who was a great Jnani and a devout servant of the Lord in one. The Master would say, "Once Sri Ramachandra asked His servant, Hanuman, how he worshipped or meditated upon Him. 'Oh Rama!' replied Hanuman, 'When I identify myself with the body, I think thou art my Master and I am thy servant, thou art the Object of worship and reverence and I am thy worshipper and devotee. Again, while I consider myself to be an individual being possessed of soul and mind, I realise that thou art the Whole and I am a part of thyself. Lastly when in Samadhi I know myself as Pure Atman trans-

cending all limitations, I find that I am the same as thyself; there is no distinction whatsoever.'"

The Non-dual State is beyond all words and thoughts. So long as one deals with others one is bound to accept both the Eternal as well as the Changing Aspects of God

The Master used to say: "A real Advaitin must remain speechless. Non-duality is not a thing to be described; so long as a person speaks or behaves he is involved in duality. So long as thinking and imagining continue the duality is there, the perfect knowledge of non-duality is not yet reached. Of all objects in this world, Brahman or the attributeless aspect of the Divine Mother alone has never been defiled by human tongue." Language has ever failed to express it. For how is it possible to communicate through words that which is beyond the pale of mind and intellect? So the Master used to say repeatedly with reference to the non-dual state, "It is the last stage in spiritual progress." Thus it is clear from his teachings that so long as the distinctions of the subject and the object and any form of behaviour persist, one has to admit in practice both the aspects namely, those with attributes and without them, permanence as well as change in the Ultimate Principle. At this stage non-duality may be professed in words but in behaviour one must follow qualified monism.

Some Illustrations cited by the Master to prove this Truth

How variously would the Master illustrate this truth! He used to say, "As in music the tone gradually rises from the lowest to the highest scale and again comes down in the reverse order, similarly after experiencing non-duality in Samadhi one descends to a lower plane and lives with the ego-consciousness."

Or: "While examining a *Bel* fruit one analyses it into its constituent parts, the shell, the seed and the pulp. Now, which of these is the *Bel*? First he rejects the shell as inessential, then the seeds, and lastly takes the pulp separately and considers that alone as the real fruit. But then the after-thought comes that the same fruit which has the pulp, has the shell and the seeds as well. All these together make the whole fruit. Similarly after having directly perceived God in His attributeless aspect one realises that the same Deity who is eternal by nature has assumed the world form in a playful mood.

"One reaches the stem of the banana plant after divesting it of all the sheaths one after another, and takes that alone to be the essential part. But later he considers that the sheaths are of the stem itself. Both of them are necessary to make the trunk a complete whole.

"If one goes on removing the scales from an onion one by one nothing remains ultimately. Similarly, if a person enquires into the

nature of the individual self and discriminates it from all the not-selves, as for instance, the body, the mind, etc., lastly he will find there is nothing called the individual self as distinguished from

God who is in reality everything.

"The idea of an individual ego is just like enclosing a portion of the waters of the Ganges and calling the enclosed portion one's own Ganges."

A REVERSAL OF THE SITUATION

Christianity and the Pre-Christian Religions of Europe

WE hear nowadays a good deal about the passing away of religion from the life of Europe. It is worth remembering that the people of the West are, as a rule, endowed with great religious fervour, as their history up to the nineteenth century will show. As long as their intellectual attainments had not outrun the rationality of their religious thought, they remained faithful to the teachings of the Christian Church. That the modern apathy of the West towards religion is not due to any irreligiousness ingrained in the people there, but because of this great disparity between their present intellectual and social attainments on the one hand, and the age-old traditional religious conceptions of the Christian Churches on the other, is the view held by many cultured and sincerely religious spirits of the West. Such is the thesis of a remarkable book entitled "The Faith of the Future" by J. H. Tuckwell, an Englishman of great piety, who himself began life as a devoted adherent of the Christian Church, but who, under the stress

of the intellectual life and cosmopolitan thought of modern times, has outgrown the Church mentality and risen to a level of thought strongly influenced by Platonism and Vedantism. His survey of the religious thought of the West in the past, of its trend at the present and of its possibilities in the future, is so profound and prophetic in itself, and above all so significant with regard to India's religious thought, that we wish to share its salient features with our readers.

Christianity, Tuckwell points out, was not born into a virgin soil but into one abounding in cults of various kinds, some intellectual, and others ritualistic and mystic. At the head of all these stood Platonism and Stoicism, the most refined products of the spiritual genius of the Greeks. In the thinkers of these schools human thought had, after passing through many intermediary stages of polytheism and anthropomorphism, reached that level of higher pantheism which looks upon God, not as a personality apart from the world but as the One in the many, as the all-embracing Self of the universe, wholly immanent in all its particu-

lars. God is here not simply an object of worship or a mere postulate of ethical life. He is an *experience* imbedded in the very structure of Reality, giving rise to the sense of order and harmony observed in Nature and revealed by the light of purified reason. The direct ethical consequence of this is the recognition of the divinity of man; for God being the immanent principle or Self, He is present in the human spirit. Man, as Plato said, is according to this view "a celestial, not a terrestrial plant," "a child of earth and starry heaven," and the purpose of life is merely the ex-foliation of the divinity already in him. Spiritual life, though progressive in character, ceases to be a vain attempt to gain infinite wealth by heaping up countless finite additions, and turns into an endeavour to appropriate an infinite inheritance of which we are already in possession.

It was only men of high mental development who could experience the immanence of God in nature and the divinity of their own selves. The masses, however, required some device by which God may be brought down to them, since they could not themselves reach out to Him. Hence arose the several Mystery Religions of the pre-Christian era, Mysteries like those of Osiris, Mitra, Attes, Adonis, etc., the favourite themes of which consisted in the story of a divine incarnation who, after being slain, had again risen from the dead. Their chief ritual consisted in the par-

taking of consecrated bread and wine which were mysteriously conceived to be the blood and flesh of the incarnate Deity, and thought to impart His divinity to those who partook of them. The thirst for union with God was in the heart of the wise as well as of the masses, but the former with their enlightened understanding could realise man's implicit divinity while the latter had to infuse the divine spirit into themselves *from outside*, through identification with an incarnate Deity and the mysterious ritual of bread and wine connected with Him.

It was in the Graeco-Roman world replete with these Mystery Cults and with an under-current of the high intellectualism of Platonism and Stoicism that Christianity was born. The original teachings of Christ, whatever they be, underwent great transformation in the hands of their great Apostle, St. Paul, who preached them to the Graeco-Roman world and whose professed motto was to be "all unto all men." Himself conversant with the Mystery cults and anxious to spread Christianity among their votaries, Paul preached a religion substituting Christ for Mitra or Isis, and incorporating their essential mythical beliefs and mystical rites. Thus Christianity as we know it today had very little to do with the human Jesus. It was a product of the Graeco-Roman religious mentality. The Greek converts, who swamped into the Christian fold, interpreted Christ

as the head of a cult superior to all others in as far as salvation could be had only by joining it—a belief which finds expression in the Acts, “there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.” The essential beliefs and rituals of the Mystery Cults also found ready entrance into it. Christ, its leader, was proclaimed as incarnate God, dying and rising for our salvation, into whose life, being and experiences, we enter by partaking of the consecrated bread and wine in the firm belief that they form His very flesh and blood.

Roman Catholicism

From these two fundamental beliefs, those of the incarnation and sacramental food, adapted from the Mystery Cults of the ancient world, was developed the Christian theology and rituals, which, when first formulated into a dogma in Europe by the Church, came to be known as Roman Catholicism. Immortality, that divine spark which Plato and the Stoics thought as inherent in man and realisable through the eye of reason, the new religion, following the mentality of the work-a-day masses of Corinth, Thessalanisia and Rome, undertook to impart to people through faith in its teachings and rituals. Immortality thus became something externally introduced, a supernatural gift bestowed through grace and not the inherent nature of man. “The gift of God is eternal life through (or in) Jesus Christ, our Lord,” says Paul. And St. John

puts in the mouth of Jesus: “Verily, verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves, he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Catholic Christianity has faithfully preserved the beliefs of these old Mystery cults in its ritual of the mass in which the Divinity enters into the consecrated bread and wine and imparts His being to all who open their hearts and partake of it, His very flesh and blood, irrespective of any attribute of culture or wisdom. The effect of this ceremony on the recipient is evident from the prayer after the communion: “I adore Thee, now reposing within my breast, O my God and my all; A thousand times welcome.....Thou hast vouchsafed to heap Thy favours on dust ashes; to come into this poor cottage, this house of clay, my earthly habitation; and to feed my soul with the heavenly banquet of Thy most precious body and blood. O teach me to entertain Thee as I ought.”

The power and efficacy of a ritual like this cannot be minimised. Faith strengthened by the hoary antiquity and great traditions of the Catholic Church, will act as a very powerful suggestive influence and produce the sense of holiness and piety in the sincere participant. But its weakest point is that it can work on men only as

long as they are at the suggestive level, that is, as long as they do not exercise the truly divine eye of reason. Reason, as Plato and the Stoics maintained, perceives divinity as the very nature of man, and can never reconcile itself to the idea of introducing into us, as Christianity supposes, a nature that is not essentially ours, of making us immortal through rites, beliefs and intermediaries. The common mind, however, incapable of rising to this level of enlightenment and of perceiving the divinity of man, but none the less desirous of at-onement with the Divine, needs this method of suggestion, so that the mind may feel that the divinity, which, it believes, is not its nature, is somehow infused into it from outside through the descent of God as an incarnation and the ceremonial participation of His flesh and blood. The thirst for union with the Divine is the same in both cases, but in one it takes an enlightened form while in the other it assumes an extremely crude shape. Christianity, by its very origin, as the successor of the mass religion of the Graeco-Roman religion, has formulated its teachings not to meet the needs of cultured intellects but the undeveloped minds that cannot feel their own inherent divinity. Hence Tuckwell calls it an Inter-rim Religion, highly efficacious as long as humanity is at its intellectual infancy, but bound to lose ground and eventually pass away as man becomes more and more of a thinking being.

The Protestant Movement and Scriptural Interpretation

Depending as it did on the historical fact of a divine incarnation and the mysterious ritual connected with him, Christianity relies ultimately on a revealed scripture for the justification of its dogmas. As against what is called natural religion, which looks upon Reality as a cosmos, or a unity without contradiction in it, understandable to reason in its real nature, a revealed religion like Christianity maintains that there is an ultra-rational region in the nature of God, from which the revelations come. If faith is to rely wholly on revelation, the scripture must be infallibly recorded and also infallibly interpreted. Multiplicity of interpretation and the questioning of its authenticity are bound to shake the foundations of faith. Hence Christianity had from very ancient times recognised the sole authority of the Catholic Church to interpret the scriptures and uphold their authenticity. But when the intellect of the West began to get gradually emancipated from the thralldom of credulity and acquire a spirit of enquiry, it found it no longer possible to allow itself to be blindfolded and led by Rome, or to believe that the body of the Saviour which was in heaven could at the same time be present in the consecrated bread and wine at the altar. In other words, reason began to assert itself, and as a result took place the great Protestant schism as a consequence of which a large body of men in Europe ceased to recog-

nise the right of Rome to be the sole interpreter of the scripture or to look upon the bread and wine as the flesh and blood of the Saviour. The Protestant movement was thus an assertion of the human intellect, but the assertion related only to the right of interpretation. While rejecting the authority of Rome to interpret the scriptures, the schismatics accepted the scriptures of Rome *in toto*, together with the doctrine of the natural depravity of man, from which he can be saved only by the incarnate Deity. Reason did not however receive full recognition in a compromise of this type. The only result of it was that innumerable interpretations happened to be given to the scriptures, and innumerable sects began to spring up, as it is inevitable when a revealed scripture is left without a central authority to interpret the same.

Unitarianism

A more radical attempt at intellectualising Christianity has been made by Unitarianism. Going further than the other Protestant sects, Unitarianism rejects the doctrine of Trinity and looks upon Jesus only as a human being, however perfect, and not an incarnation, unlike the other Christian sects. First the Mass, and then the incarnation and the Trinity are progressively rejected. Yet the Unitarian remains a Christian, since he calls himself so, and holds the Bible to be an inspired scripture, given by God to mankind through the perfect man, Jesus. The Unitarian must still

be looked upon as under the tutelage of the Church, because he still clings to the old Christian monotheism that views God as a personality external to man and the universe. With the rejection of the doctrine of incarnation and real presence, Christianity wholly loses the character of a Mystery Religion, but at the same time its pure ethical monotheism fails to be a vital religion in as far as it ceases to satisfy the inherent yearning in the human heart for union with God, to have His very presence in us, which Catholicism used to fulfil, however crudely, through those two rejected doctrines. True it is that Unitarianism insists less upon the corrupt nature of man, and preaches the dignity and glory of human nature, but this is with the Unitarian not so much a metaphysical doctrine implying the natural divinity of the very essence of man, as a belief in man's capacity to know and love the Highest, to live and die for a high ideal. The yearning for unity, the urge of divine reason in man, is unrealisable according to the Unitarian ideal.

New Thought and Spiritism

What the Protestant movements left half-done was accomplished in a greater measure as time went on, due to the influence of Emersonianism, Berkelian idealism and Vedantism. The movements that have risen under these influences, movements which, when carefully studied, are seen to re-unite the European religious consciousness with the old Platonic tradition of a

rational spiritual idealism, are Mind Cure and New Thought movements and the modern cult of Spirits. Both New Thought and Mind Cure are forms of higher monistic pantheism, which disclose the deep cravings of man's rational soul to have not only fellowship with God, but complete identity with Him. They have abandoned the traditional Christian conception of an extra-cosmic Personal God in favour of the Immanent Divine Principle—not one principle among many, but the Ultimate Reality, all-embracing, the Great Self of the cosmos and the deeper Self of every man. Reality is therefore not a dualism of mind and matter, of good and evil, of God and the devil, but One monistic Principle of Goodness, the apparently opposing dual principles being only a nightmare, something not positive, belonging to the dark times of man's ignorance, which true knowledge will disperse. There is no such entity as Sin, and no real enmity in the human heart towards God. Sin is only a missing of the mark, the cure for which is to aim better next time. Punishment should therefore be only corrective, not vindictive. Man is not a creature 'conceived and born in sin,' as the Christian priest has to declare regarding every child presented at the font at baptism, but a being whose deepest, most essential nature is already divine,—a fact of which he has only to be convinced in order to get rid of the appearance of sin and weakness. That Impersonal and Immanent God exists in every

being, more manifested in man, as the immaculate principle of reason and harmony which New Thought terms specifically as the Truth of Man. This Divine Principle is not, as Christianity conceived it to be, to be communicated or conveyed to our being from without. It is already within us, and the purpose of human life and evolution is to exfoliate it. Hence 'the Truth,' says New Thought, is for each man his own divinity, and that divinity is rational, a principle of harmony. We need not, it tells us, go outside to find this principle. It is within. In stillness and silence alone can its voice be heard. It is our Divine Self, ours and yet far more than ours, or it would not be Divine. Through my Divine Self, it says, I am one with all that lives, nay, with the universe itself. And the evolution of this Divine Self within us is the sole end and purpose of our being, in this and endless worlds to come. Then go, it bids us, into silence, be still, and hearken to the voice of Divinity within, 'I give Thee rest, I set Thee free, I make Thee whole.'

A doctrine like that of New Thought depends very little on the historic Christ, the mainstay of orthodox Christianity. Christ is not for it the externally revealed incarnate Deity, the vehicle of divine love to undivine humanity. He becomes an embodied ideal of men, an embodiment and revelation of what is already in man. As Edison is to a student of electricity, so is the historic Jesus a source of encour-

ragement and inspiration to every man who seeks to understand the soul and its possibilities.

The other movement referred to, *viz.*, Spiritism, is a necessary outcome of the findings of New Thought. If there is in man a divine principle conceived as an entelechy that uses the organism of the body and the mind for its purposes and can cure them of their diseases, then its survival after the dissolution of the body has to be taken for granted, and the spiritualistic phenomenon revealed by psychical research is only the demonstration of that fact through modern scientific methods. If mind-cure shows the supremacy of the entelechy over the body through its curative power, Spiritism shows the same through the demonstration of its survival. They both thus constitute an assertion of man's divinity as well as a refutation of materialism.

The Trend of Religious Thought in the West

Thus the history of religious thought in Europe shows that Christianity, as it was originally understood, was an Inter-rim religion meant for the edification of minds at a low intellectual level. An extra-cosmic God conceived as a Trinity essentially different in nature from man and the world, the doctrine of incarnation according to which God became human at a particular point of time so that man may become divine, the Mass at which He daily incarnates and changes the consecrated food into His very flesh and blood so that

His worshippers may take Him into themselves, a historically revealed scripture with a Church to interpret the same, the doctrine of the essential sinfulness of human nature, the conception of immortality as a special gift of God,—these are all features of a religion that arose for satisfying the thirst for union with God of an intellectually undeveloped humanity, who could not rise to the level of thought attained by Platonism, Stoicism or Vedantism and discover the essential divinity of man as revealed by his rational nature. With the dawn of intellectual maturity, reason gradually begins to assert itself in European religious consciousness and eliminate one after another those features of Christianity that find their fullest expression in Roman Catholicism, until we come at last to the modern New Thought Movement in which reason realises its consummation in a philosophy of higher pantheism—an essentially monistic philosophy that conceives Reality as the principle of rationality and coherence, and looks upon God as the One in the many or the immanent Essence of the universe, upon human nature at its basis as an essentially divine and immortal principle, upon scripture as the revelation of the divine principle of reason and upon religion as the manifestation of the divinity already in man. In this tendency of religious thought, Tuckwell finds the growth of the religion of the future which will be entirely free from all entanglements, from all irrelevant appeals to tradition and authority,

and will be grounded solely on man's ever-growing knowledge of himself and his place in the universe. With F. W. H. Myers, he says: "I would have science, first sublimated into philosophy, and then kindled into a burning flame by religion." This ideal means the reconciliation of religion with reason.

This considered opinion of a cultured mind of the West, trained in the best traditions of Christian theology, comes to us in India as a reassuring message. Christian missionaries in this country have often been preaching to us that Christianity is to be the crown of Hinduism, in other words, that the religious evolution of India in the past is only a preparation for the advent of Christian theology into this country. But the progress of religious thought, as Tuckwell has pointed out in his masterly book, indicates that quite the contrary is going to

take place in the long run. In Vedanta India has got a system of thought that is akin to the best principles of the Platonic and Stoic philosophers of old, to which Christian Europe has been slowly but surely moving after the Reformation in preference to the Inter-rim religion, Christianity. While Platonism and Stoicism are no longer live systems of thought, Vedanta has still the advantage of a living and vital spiritual philosophy in this country, and Europe can therefore draw inspiration from it to a greater extent in reconstructing a faith that is in harmony with reason, the underlying principle in the constitution of man and the universe. Why should we not then reverse the favourite expression of the Christian missionary "Christianity as the crown of Hinduism" into "Vedanta as the crown of Christianity"?

THE FUTURE OF HINDUISM

By S. K. Maitra, M. A., Ph. D.

WHAT is the future of Hinduism? At the outset, I must say that there are some men (happily, their number is daily diminishing) who think that Hinduism is only one-dimensional in time, that is to say, that it has a past but has neither a present nor a future. They are very good people, honest people, pious people, who sincerely regret the modern tendencies in Hinduism and want to keep it as ancient as possible. For them Hinduism has only a past and noth-

ing else. They seem to have a peculiar pleasure in living in the past. At a certain stage both in the life of the individual and in that of the race, the past monopolises the attention to the exclusion of the present and the future. Old men are proverbially fond of living in the past. So, too, are old races.

Do you wish that Hinduism should exhibit such signs of senility? I am sure I have only to put the question in this way to get an emphatic 'No' from you. You

certainly do not want that it should be a living specimen of decrepitude, dragging on a weary existence. But have you ever cared to investigate what can give it life and vigour?

The vegetable, as well as the animal kingdom, shows us as clearly as possible what conditions are essential to a vigorous growth and what conditions lead to decay and death. In a vigorous plant as well as in a vigorous animal we notice that there is the power to utilise the resources of nature for the building up of the body. The plant draws from the earth as the animal draws from its food the nourishment which it requires for the maintenance of its life. The characteristic of a vigorous life, therefore, is the capacity to mould nature according to the needs of life.

This condition of life is very wrongly stated as the capacity to adjust oneself to the environment. It is just the reverse. It is the capacity to adapt the environment to the self. The self must be triumphant. It is Nature that must be made the slave of ourselves and not ourselves the slaves of Nature. Life is not a passive adaptation of the organism to the environment but the conquest of the environment. As Fichte said, the world is not given but has to be conquered. It is conquest, not surrender, which is the principle of life. The evolution of life is not a passive but a creative process. This is the great truth which Swami Vivekananda preached.

Do not for a moment think that we have suffered on account of our spirituality. We have suffered just for the opposite reason. We have suffered because we have lost our spirituality, because Matter is subjugating us and we are becoming inert fossils. The first thing which

Lord Krishna said to Arjuna was "क्लृप्य मास्म गमः पाथे" "O Son of Pri-
tha, do not become inert." Spirituality is just the reverse of a tame submission to evil. It stands for the conquest of evil.

Rightly understood, this is the true form of अहिंसा. Ahimsa does not mean toleration of evil, it means just the reverse. It believes in removing evil, not by killing the evil-doer but by transforming him. Evil, it thinks, cannot be met by evil but only by good. It is not tolerant of evil, rather it employs the subtlest means for completely eradicating evil.

Moreover, it is only the strong that can practise अहिंसा. There can be no greater mistake than to suppose that *ahimsa* makes a virtue of weakness. On the contrary, *ahimsa* is totally incompatible with weakness. Ahimsa implies two things: The power to kill and the consciousness that the exercise of this power is incompatible with the sovereignty of Spirit. It is, in fact, another name for the affirmation of the Spirit. It is only unshakable faith in the power of the Spirit that can enable a man to resist the temptation to kill his adversary and transform him by love.

If Hinduism is to be again a living force, it must give up absolutely its present attitude of complacent acceptance of the inevitable. We should banish the word 'inevitable' from our dictionary just as Napoleon wanted to banish the word 'impossible.' What we require more than anything else is the spirit of the late Swami Vivekananda, that "Vedantism on Horseback" (as a distinguished countryman of ours described this philosophy) which refuses to accept any defeat of the Spirit. "Up, India," said the late Swami, "and conquer the world

with your spirituality...The only condition of national life, of awakened and vigorous national life, is the conquest of the world by Indian thoughts." It is this virile faith in our own destiny and in the power of our culture that can alone save us.

Hinduism can be great again by being a creative force. New problems will ever be coming before it and it must be in a position to tackle them in ever new ways. It must possess always the vitality to rise equal to new situations. It must discard the prejudices and superstitions that masquerade under the garb of religion. Above all it must make short work of all forms of 'don't-touch-ism.' Talking of this particular evil in Hindu society, Swami Vivekananda declared: "We are orthodox Hindus, but we refuse entirely to identify ourselves with 'don't-touch-ism.' That is not Hinduism: it is in none of our books; it is an unorthodox superstition which has interfered with national efficiency all along the line."

We should not hesitate to take from the West whatever is of real value. But we are terribly mistaken if we think that what is needed is a gramophone reproduction of the West. We can only command respect if we boldly put before the world the Hindu view of life. It is a sign of our slave-mentality that we hesitate to place before the world our outlook upon life. Do not think that the West has no need of it or that it will reject it with scorn. The world has always need of truth. The West has never hesitated to proclaim its truths to the world and we see the result. The world has accepted its truths and has been conquered by them. What we find today is not merely the political conquest of the world

by the West, but what is of far greater importance, the spiritual conquest of the world by Western thought.

There was a time when Indian thought conquered the whole civilised world. The great king Asoka laid the foundation of a spiritual conquest of the whole of Asia by Indian thought. How much he succeeded is seen from the fact that it was a religion which became the accepted religion of far-off China. India will again occupy the position of a spiritual conqueror of the world if she again acquires the courage to affirm her truths boldly.

"नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः!" The realisation of the soul is not possible to the weak. This means that weakness is destructive not merely of the moral but also of the intellectual life. A fearless pursuit of truth is what alone is compatible with a spiritual life.

The late Swami Vivekananda was emphatic in asserting that India's regeneration could only take place by re-asserting her own ideals and not by a slavish imitation of the West. Let India, he declared, cling once more to the ancient ideal of renunciation and service and the world would once more be hers. Happily, as Prof. Radhakrishnan has pointed out, the Hindu way of life is gradually gaining ground. The West is gradually getting disgusted with its outlook upon life. There is slowly creeping into it a world-weariness which is the inevitable result of a headlong march towards a mechanical view of life which characterised the previous century.

Everywhere there is evident a growing protest against a mechanical scheme of life. In the nineteenth century mechanism invaded the realm of Science. In the twentieth century it has invaded the realm of social and domestic

life. The machine rules the hearth today as completely as it does the organisations of labour and capital. It has assumed such gigantic proportions that it is fast becoming a menace to civilisation. This is the Nemesis of Western civilisation. It is now being slowly devoured by the very child which it reared with so much affection and care in the last century.

The evils of the mechanical civilisation of the West form the theme of two of Tagore's plays. In the "Waterfall," as well as in the "Red Oleanders" he has dealt a terrible blow at the modern mechanical civilisation of the West. The present civilisation, says the poet, is a completely dehumanising civilisation. It reduces man to a mere number. He is either 69A or 72B. It is only that aspect of man in which he is not a man which interests the modern Western man.

In the name of democracy the West is perpetuating imperialism. Capitalism is imperialism in industry, just as the world-empires are imperialism in politics. It is often said that more crimes have been committed in the name of religion than in any other name. I would make an exception in favour of democracy. It is an undoubted fact that in the name of democracy the West has perpetuated more

outrages upon humanity than has ever been done in any other way. It is therefore no language of exaggeration when I say that the greatest menace to world-peace and world-progress is the so-called democracies of the West.

To use a beautiful illustration of Tagore's, Western civilisation is like a mountain that is crumbling away under its own weight. We seem almost to hear the cracking and bursting of this gigantic mountain-mass.

Oswald Spengler is a prophet of the present age. I only want to brush up his picture, to retouch a line here or a line there, and to say that the West must look to the East for salvation. But the East must make itself strong to be able to impart a message to the West.

The lesson of Amanulla ought to be enough to teach us that no progress is possible which runs counter to the spirit of one's culture. If India is to advance, she can only do so by being true to her own spirit. By this I mean, of course, the eternal and undying spirit of her culture and not any particular custom or institution. Let India realise her destiny, let her shake off her age-long inferiority-complex and the leadership of the world will once more be hers.

THE GITA AN APOSTLE OF PEACE

By Prof. P. M. Bhambhani, M.A.

MAN must acquire the attitude of disinterested performance of one's function. The tree, the sun, the moon and the stars have already got this in the form of a natural tendency, but man, having self-consciousness, must acquire this attitude *by volition*. Hence the need of knowledge or *Jnana* and self-discipline or *Tapasya* through the mastery of the flesh, in order that he may burn his desire and yet awaken his consciousness of the need of duty and acquire the readiness to do it through Dharma.

One difficulty, however, remains. It may be said that if I disregard the consequence of action, it means that a motiveless action is possible. "Nothing of the kind," is the answer. What I disregard is only a part of the consequence and not the whole of it. In my place in the universe I have a function and the consciousness of this function leads to the consciousness of the effect of this function; as that, as true as the law of cause and effect, the fruit of my actions is bound to follow both for me, the doer, and for the organic unity of which I am a part; and yet while I have the fruit, it is possible for me to form an attitude in which I personally do not care whether I have the fruit or not. What I care for is the doing of my duty and if in spite of it or consistently with it, the pleasure of my actions comes, well, let it come as long as I do not directly and wilfully desire it. Supposing I am working for the uplift of the poorer classes by giving them education, their uplift is the motive

of my action. If with the realisation of the motive comes also some gain without my wishing it and, what is more important, without allowing my personal gain to interfere with my duty to the business I have undertaken, let it come; for I lose nothing as long as my adherence to duty remains. For on the contrary this attitude of disinterestedness and detachment also keeps me equipped with the power to suffer pain if my duty entails it. The man who does it for the pleasure of pursuit, will resign his action if pain follows from it or even if the expected pleasure fails to come. On the other hand the man with the attitude of doing duty at any cost and by a thorough disregard of personal consequences will hold on, come what may to himself. That we ourselves act up to this principle even in ordinary affairs to which we attach any value, is clear from the rules that a flag-bearer in war must keep on holding the flag at the cost of life; a soldier must keep on fighting until he dies; a man must defend his family honour even if he has to give up his all, including his life, or he is a coward; and so on. This implies a disregard of consequences *for one's own self and not with respect to the ideal*. It is clear therefore that the action enjoined by the Gita is not motiveless.

Again, the disregard of personal consequences implies *Vairagya* (feeling of distaste for sensualism and indignation for all evil) or a recognition of the frailty, evanescence and ephemerality of the

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world and its things, an attitude of refusing to regard these as more than what they are worth, much less to fall in love with them and count them as the be-all and end-all of life. 'Vairagya' literally means "without love" and indicates a feeling of indifference to the objects which make for sensual satisfaction. It is not indicated by this disposition that the objects of sense-satisfaction must be shunned without cause or occasion and a pure puritanic attitude observed; but, true to the spirit of the Gita, it does imply that while considering sense-satisfaction as having some life-value in the economy of nature, we should realise that after all they are not all, and being changeful and transitory, do not in themselves form the *permanent*; although they may be utilised as means to the attainment of the permanent. They are therefore to be had recourse to only as means to this end or at least when they are not inconsistent with it. It also implies that if resorted to as an end-in-itself, sense pleasure makes us blind to the real and true object of life and forms an obstacle to the attainment of the same ideal of liberation for which the school of thought recommending the elimination of all action, stands. A human being has its source in the eternal and the unchanging, so that the life of pleasure, though not alien to the true spirit, is, if divorced from its superior influence, yet far apart from it and does him the service of brutalising and *in a great measure dehumanising him*. Man has therefore to understand the worth of the sensual side of his life in its true perspective, to know its real worth and value and keep it within its bounds; so that while we have it, we yet remain above it, and on the occasion of a call to duty prove

ourselves too strong for its insinuating, benumbing and succumbing influences. That is why Gita recommends the spirit of *Vairagya*. Thus Gita wants us to acquire a sort of feeling-tone which holds the world, worldliness and their goods as after all not of a lasting value and as considerably of an inferior order when compared to the goods of man's *superior self*. It is with the true apprehension of the comparative merit of life's goods that man is able to rise superior to the fruit of his action and be able to have the feeling of complete abandonment of the desire for it. It is the feeling of the surrender of one's entire self and its duties to the Eternal Self or the God within, so that to a man of this temper of mind, being and non-being, pleasure and no pleasure, life or no life, riches and no riches, power, position and other acquisitions of the world and their absence feel all the same; *in the sense that* in the varied conditions of life he remains in a balanced state of mind, in which his reason does not fade the lamp of his understanding does not flicker; and seeing *the real and its truth*, he occupies a height at which his mind and spirit are in a state of constancy and unchanging perception of truth. In such a state of mind, difficulties affect him not; failure and pains move him not; success, power and prosperity swell him not; so that in life and death, in health and disease, in joy and sorrow, in youth and old age, in royalty and subjectivity, he is one. To him all men have access, he is all men's man—a true cosmopolitan or one to whom the false distinctions of race, colour, caste, creed, religion and sex are nothing because he has transcended them all. His patriotism is universal love, his politics a world-Government in

which superiority and privilege by conquest, self-aggrandisement and power are deemed a nonentity, his brotherhood that in which all human beings are looked upon as of one blood.

Thus the Gita is an apostle of peace, because it is in a state of peace alone that the arts of the attainment of this ideal can be cultivated and fostered. The state of war is a state of unrest and draws the mind away from the purposes of life and liberation. We want on the contrary to rise into the region which transcends earthly life and makes for freedom from attachment. And *the science of salvation can only grow in the garden of peace*.

Then why war? "Then, why, Oh Krishna, are you goading me on to fight when you yourself maintain that peace is superior to war? Pray reveal this truth to my confused mind." The answer is simple. The Gita, like all other books of Indian literature, is literal as well as figurative in its narration. It indicates that on account of man's partially material nature which causes him ignorance and illusion, a war between Good and Evil is always going on, and will go on, until Good triumphs over Evil and masters it completely. The *Kauravas* and *Pandavas*, the two opposing armies in the great war of the Mahabharata, represent the sides of the *Good* and *Evil* respectively; and, decidedly, it is every man's duty to engage in this righteous war against evil and to overcome it. It is clear that Krishna the great Teacher, sides with the party representing the Good and persuades Arjuna who was at the head of this party to fight bravely against his enemy, *the Evil, no matter who and however related to him the fighters on the side of Evil may be—kinsmen or no kinsmen*. The words in italics declare the great truth that the Gita

stands for justice and knows no favouritism, patronage or partiality. Whoever does wrong has to reap the fruit of his wrong, and the disbursor of justice must be impartial even when his own kinsmen or friends are involved.

Again, this kind of war has two sides: the inner and the outer. The former represents a fight within man's own heart between his sensual and ideal nature, and inasmuch as this is the war which every one must wage for himself, it cannot be eliminated as long as the human race continues to exist. But the question really pertains to the second or outer side, namely the war in the world outside; and even this, so long as men continue to be blind to their lasting permanent good and look upon the world merely from the private point of view in its separation from the social and universal one, *so long* the war between good and evil cannot end. But even in this case the question is asked whether the war involving bloodshed is justified; and this question certainly remains to be solved with reference to the present-day movement to *abolish war*. The answer is that there is no book which speaks more *than the Gita* in support of this new movement; so that there is no doubt that war as a social institution *ought to go*. But the attempts on the part of the more sympathetic, honest and disinterested section of mankind have so far failed in achieving the object, because the more selfishly-minded class of men is loud in its cries for self-satisfaction and would not let it be abolished due to their encroachment on others' rights which they will not give up. Now if such people, by organising armies or otherwise come and encroach upon our rights and privileges, invade our hearths and homes, and

violating the higher principles of human life, truth and justice, become a danger to our institutions, traditions and culture which are admittedly good for the realisation of human ideals, then the question is raised whether it is not time to realise our duty and stand up against the wrong and be ready to fight. And the answer that the Gita gives is in the affirmative. The Gita then permits defensive war in circumstances which create a call to righteousness and condemns offensive war in every form. And once the need for a defensive war arises, i.e., if after attempting all conciliating means to avert it, we find that it is necessary and have decided to enter into it, then, it is opposed to the true nature of a Kshatriya (warrior), who has been trained into a warring personality and whose duty it is to go to war in time of need, to lag behind, whatever may be the consequences. "Once you decide to go to war, then, do your duty regardless of the consequence: "कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन"; for then it is below the dignity of a true soldier to lag behind for any ulterior reasons. But we must be sure that it is war from duty and not from the motive to gain a selfish advantage. Therefore "First determine your duty carefully and once you definitely know your duty to go to war, once you find that Dharma-Raksha demands it, then fail not; for a call to duty is supreme and you must swerve not."

There is yet a higher reason why Arjuna is persuaded to fight; and that is in accordance with the doctrine of Karma and based on the belief in the presence of the Divine Hand behind all the scenes of the world's great drama. "You falsely think, O Arjuna, that it is you who are killing and being killed, for it is

the Unseen Hand behind the curtain of appearances that holds the key to all these appearances." Arjuna should therefore have nothing to fear so long as his movements are controlled by the Hand of the Invisible and so long as the consequences of his action are dedicated to Him, the Prime Mover.

Nor, again, is any one really killed; for the real dweller in the body is immortal. "You are unnecessarily afraid, O Arjuna, of the death of your kinsmen; in fact no one is really born, nor does any one die." The true man is immortal and lives on through ages. "Nor can any one work the destruction of the imperishable one." (II, 17)

अविनाशी तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।

विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति ॥

"He who regardeth this as a slayer, and he who thinketh he is slain—both of them are ignorant. He slayeth not, nor is he slain." (II, 19)

य एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यश्चैनं मन्यते हतम् ।

उभौ तौ न विजानीतौ नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥

"He is not born, nor doth he die; nor having been, ceaseth he any more to be; unborn, perpetual, eternal and ancient, he is not slain when the body is slaughtered." (II, 20)

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचि-

न्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।

अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो

न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥

The apparent changes are, thus, an appendage of the body alone. "Who knoweth him as indestructible, perpetual, unborn, undiminishing, how can that man slay, O Partha, or cause to be slain?" (II, 21)

वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम् ।

कथं स पुरुषः पापं कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥

"As a man, casting off worn-out garments, taketh new ones, so the

dweller in the body, casting off worn-out bodies entereth into others that are new." (II, 22)

वासंसि जीर्णानि यया विहाय

नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।

तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा-

न्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥

"Weapons cleave him not, nor fire burneth him, nor waters wet him, nor wind drieth him away." (II, 23)

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।

न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥

"Uncleavable he, incumbustible he, and indeed neither to be wetted nor dried away; perpetual, all-pervasive, stable, immovable, ancient." (II, 24)

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाहोऽयमक्लेशोऽशोष्य एव च ।

नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥

"Unmanifest, unthinkable, immutable, he is called." (II, 25)

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।

तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं नानुशोचिषुमर्हसि ॥

"These bodies of the embodied one, who is eternal, indestructible and immeasurable, are known as finite. Therefore fight, O Bharata." (II, 18)

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीराणि ।

अनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युद्धयस्व भारत ॥

Does the Gita permit killing then? This question is really unnecessary, if not irrelevant. What the Gita wants is a faithful discharge of duty without care or concern for personal consequences and with the willingness to suffer everything and to make all sacrifices for its sake; and if perchance the perception of one's duty point to the necessity of killing, 'Well, then, kill,' although at the same time one should be ready to be killed if that is the duty indicated. What is really important

here is the necessity of realising the nature of one's duty and this is a very hard task and requires knowledge. Some men ask such questions, however, with a view to serve some ulterior motives, as they have some private axe to grind, and wish, on the pretext of permission from the Gita, to excuse themselves for doing everything. But in this sense we must remember the Shakespearean adage that 'the devil may quote the scripture for his own advantage.'

There may be indeed men who can with the power of their yoga deal with the most incorrigible of creatures and sometimes even with the most ferocious of animals and just by a sign of the hand make them powerless to do harm. A story is told of the Buddha that at one time one of his cousins, who was jealous of him on account of the great following he had, let loose a ferocious and badly drunk elephant to kill him. But the Buddha, who was then going to take his food in a place where he was invited, just made a sign of hand to the huge animal as he approached, and it is said that he quietly stood before him like a docile, domesticated animal and, during his march to the house of his host, followed him with his trunk spread out over his head for his protection; so that the animal who came to kill him became his friend and protector.

Is it then possible that even such men may sometimes find it their duty to kill? It is clear that the duty of such powerful men is not the same, if perchance, such men there be. For, then, as they can do without killing, it is no more their duty to kill, their purpose being served without killing. But even here it is a question of relativity and susceptibility. There may be men worse than brutes and not suscep-

tible of such influence; and if that be so, *when such men stand in the form of an organised army* they cannot be rendered harmless until removed from the stage of human action. The Gita will not forbid killing in such extreme cases and the duty is obvious. But, as it has already been said, the knowledge of the duty on a given occasion is necessary, for it is by means of knowledge only that killing or being killed can be resorted to when duty demands it. The emphasis is on duty, and the more practical point of view is that there are multifarious vocations and that each vocation has its duties. Now this should be recognised, and in each vocation our duty understood relatively to its different occasions. The Gita recognises a division of mankind into four classes as has been said above, and this division apportions duties in an appropriate manner. But there are also emergent or casuistical duties which should be understood in their true perspective, so that they may be done at the right time. And it is on such occasions that the method of performing an action may depend on the power and capacity of the man called on to perform that action. If therefore you are luckily a sage and can avert an impending evil due to an offensive attack without killing or entering war, well then, there is no need of killing or starting a war.

It is therefore important to notice that the Gita does not enjoin a useless waste of life. It is a mistake to suppose that because killing or being killed may be indicated by duty, therefore suicide or homicide is recommended by the Gita. Far from going forward in the fight for the triumph of the Good over Evil, regardless of the chances of death in the struggle, suicide is, on the

contrary, an attempt to run away from the pain of duty and therefore to act like a coward: "He who relinquisheth an action from fear of physical suffering, saying 'painful,' thus performing a passionate relinquishment, obtaineth not the fruit of relinquishment."

Nor is a useless wasting of the body and bodily comfort indicated by this message of duty. Some persons think that trying to give pain to the body and denying it all kinds of comfort is meritorious as an aim or end in itself and not as a means to an end. But such people misunderstand the spirit of the Gita. This kind of denial is certainly welcome as a method of self-discipline and a means to attainment of self-control, or for the sake of training the mind to a readiness to respond to the call of duty whenever it comes. But without having such an aim, putting the body to pain and suffering of all kinds, with the idea that this course of conduct is in itself a form of religion, is the most mistaken way of behaviour. *On the contrary this great book would have us live in the world and in the midst of all our surroundings which are sometimes painful and sometimes pleasurable, with such an attitude of the mind as to remain free from its attachment to their fruit, so that when Dharma (Duty) calls we may leave them, and we may be able to do so without regret.* Even the Buddha hesitated a little, while renouncing his hearth and home, his baby and its mother, but he hesitated because he had not yet gone through the stages of *Tapasya* (austerity or self-discipline) which he practised after he left his home and went to the forest. But when the training has been acquired such a regretless resignation should be possible in the midst of all the joys of the earth. Live in the world, therefore,

in a disinterested manner, having the fruits of the earth and yet remaining unattached to them, so that when it is time to leave them you may lose them without a tear; just as when our journey is over we leave the railway train not only without a pang, but with pleasure because we are proceeding homewards or to a place of greater importance. Let us live with the star of duty ever before us above the horizon of our worldly life and ever on the ascendant; and when this star twinkles and points to another direction, let us move with it like the sun-flower turning its face to the sun to which-ever direction he may turn.

This is the renunciation that the Gita enjoins—*the renunciation not of the world or its duties requiring action, but of the fruits of that action for personal pleasure; a dedication of all activity and its fruit to God and doing them in His name, and living in the world in such a way that the mind remains unaffected by its binding influences:* "He who acteth placing all actions in the Eternal, abandoning attachment, is unaffected by sin, as a lotus leaf by the waters." (V, 10)

ब्रह्मयात्राय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।

लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥

"Renouncing mentally all works in Me, intent on Me, resorting to the Yoga of discrimination, have thy thought ever on Me." (XVIII, 57)

चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि सन्त्यस्य मत्परः ।

बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव ॥

Such is the man, then, who sees himself and sees God, for he lives in his life the gospel of *duty* and becomes to others an embodiment of it. But as there is duty-to-do for all men, so is the Gita intended for all men, of all ages, professions and vocations. Every one conversant with the Indian lore knows

that human life is divided into four great periods, each of which has its duties and discipline. These are—*Brahmacharya* or the period of adolescence, education or student life during which sex-life is forbidden until 25 years; *Grahashta* or the family-life entered into by marriage; *Vanaprastha* or retirement from the worldly duties to acquire spiritual attitude for the sake of absorption into the Deity; *Sannyasa* or the renunciation of the world and its connections and relations *in toto* and acceptance of disinterested service, *Paropakara*, for the remaining period of life. These periods of life are called *ashramas* and have duties and disciplines assigned to them, which must be carried out by every man at these stages of his life.

These four periods indicate functions or duties for every human being in any walk of life he may be pursuing; for even when some men do not stick to this sort of distribution of their lives into periods, they must nevertheless follow some kind of vocation or other. Then, again, since every one in this world is found to be bound up in various relations, namely, those of brother and sister, parent and child, husband and wife, master and servant, king and subject, the social functions cannot be well performed and social peace cannot be attained unless we have good brothers and sisters, good parents and children, good husbands and wives, good masters and servants, good kings and subjects,—in one word, good citizens realising their private and public duties and doing them well by means of proper discrimination in the names of social and domestic happiness. Family and society, the world and the individual are inter-related terms and react upon each other for mutual benefit. Good individuals,

therefore, make for good families and happy homes, and the latter in their turn make efficient units of the society and respond to the requirements of a true citizenship in which the family affections expand into an attitude of love and service to the motherland and humanity at large, fulfilling at once the ideal of patriotism and cosmopolitanism, both in one. And it is for the attainment of this great height, this high peak on the mountain of human evolution that the Gita stands like a lustrous star in the firmament of Eastern literature: "Man reacheth perfection by each being intent on his own duty." (XVIII, 45)

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।
स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥

So does Krishna, the Lord, trumpet his clarion call to *Duty* and so

does the Gita, His Great Song, end declaring peace to all the world: "Wherever is Krishna, Yoga's Lord, wherever is Partha, the Archer; assured are there prosperity, victory happiness and righteousness. So I think."

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पाथो धनुर्धरः ।
तत्र श्रीविजयो भूतिधेनु नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥

(XVIII, 78)

Therefore, O Arjuna, do thy duty without caring for the consequences.

And perchance, I hear a western muse sing in the same strain:—

"Glory of virtue, to fight, to struggle, to right the wrong,
Nay, but she aimed not at glory,
no lover of glory she;

Give her the glory of going on, and still to be."

BUDDHISM IN JAVA AND SUMATRA

By R. C. Majumdar, M. A., Ph. D.

(Continued from previous issue)

WE may now survey a few texts belonging to Buddhism. The earliest and best-known works in this field are Sang hyang Kamahayanan Mantranaya and Sang hyang Kamahayanikan, both Mahayana texts.

The first work consists of Sanskrit verses with Javanese translation while the second consists of a somewhat free Javanese version of a Sanskrit original interspersed with a number of original Sanskrit verses. The latter text is known in several redactions. It was probably composed in the Sailendra period and modified at a subsequent date. During or shortly after Sindok's reign, in the first half of the tenth century A. D., it was further modi-

fied in a manner which has been regarded as a Hinduised or Saiva version of a Buddhist original. This in itself is of great significance, as marking an important landmark in the religious evolution of Java.

As to the two texts, one may justly doubt how far the Sanskrit original really portrays the actual faiths and belief in Java. But the selection of one or more particular Mahayana texts for commentary and translation and their currency in Java for a long period undoubtedly entitle us to regard them as giving a fair picture of the Mahayana doctrines prevalent in Java.

The Sang hyang Kamahayanikan is a much larger text than Kamahayanan Mantranaya, and as the

preamble says, is an exposition of the sacred principles of Mahayana. It begins with an admonition against austerities and torture of the body, and sums up its views in this respect as follows: "Take care of your body, because, on the welfare of the body depends happiness, happiness leads to a fixed mind, fixed mind is the means to Samadhi and Samadhi is the means to the attainment of Nirvana."

The ultimate aim is to get rid of the passions, Raga (anger), Dvesha (jealousy or envy) and Moha (infatuation). For this purpose one should not be attached to the various branches of learning such as Tarkka (logic), Vyakarana (grammar) and even the Puranas, Agamas, the religious texts of Samayakosa, Tantra, etc. One should equally avoid stories, recitations, music, dance and similar things.

But one should follow the six great virtues (Sat-paramita). These are defined as (1) Dana (2) Sila (3) Kshanti (4) Virya (5) Dhyana and (6) Prajna. Dana or gift is of various degrees beginning from the offer of food and drink to that of son, wife and even of the flesh and blood of one's own body. Sila is explained as abstention from doing evils in body, speech and mind, evils done by body being further defined as slaughter of living beings, taking of what belongs to another, sexual pleasure and telling lies. Kshanti is explained as that attitude of mind which makes no difference between friends and foes, or high or low, and which is calm and friendly even to the angry. Virya is constant effort to do good deeds both day and night. These good deeds are enumerated as the writing of sacred texts, the worship of the gods, reading of sacred texts, the installation of Stupa and images of Buddha, practice of Yoga, recit-

ing Mantras before the images of Buddhas and the Devis, contemplation of the welfare of all created beings, etc. Dhyana is explained as a realisation of unity between oneself and all other created beings, attachment to truth, and mercy for all, both high and low. Prajna is defined as the realisation that Sunya (void, emptiness) is the essence of all existing things. To these six Paramitas are added four others, Maitri (friendliness), Karuna (mercy), Mudita (joy) and Upeksha (even-mindedness) making a total of ten Paramitas.

Five goddesses represent the essence (Tattva) of these ten Paramitas. The goddess Vajradhatvisvari, wise, beautiful and devoted to her husband, is said to be the six Paramitas. Of the remaining four Locana, Mamaki, Pandaravasini and Tara represent respectively Maitri, Karuna, Mudita and Upeksha.

The author then proceeds to explain the four Yogas, taught by Dignaga, the four Bhavanas leading to them, and the four Arya-satyas. The four Yogas are belief in the existence of the Great God (Bharala) (1) in the Akasa (firmament), (2) in our body, (3) in the world and (4) in the Sunyamandala (circle of emptiness). The four Bhavanas are possibilities of getting rid of Raga (anger), Dvesha (envy), Moha (infatuation) and the Klesas (sufferings). The four Arya-satyas (sacred truths) are Duhkha-satya (truth of the sorrow), Nirodha-satya (truth of its suppression), Samudaya-satya (the truth of its origin), and Marga-satya (the truth of the ways). The ten Paramitas, the four Arya-satyas, together with Yoga and Bhavana constitute the Maha-guhya or the great mystery.

Then comes the Parama-guhya or the excellent mystery, which

concerns itself with the body of the Great God (Bharala). Here we get an interesting account of the theology of Mahayana according to the Yogācāra system. The starting point is Advaya, whose union with Advaya-Jnana created Divarupa. From Divarupa sprang Bhatāra Buddha, and from the latter originated Sakyamuni. From the right and left sides of Sakyamuni originated Lokeshvara and Vajrapani. These three had respectively white, red and blue colours and Dhvaja-, Dhyana-, and Bhuhsparśa-mudras. They were called Ratnatraya, the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

From the face of Sakyamuni originated Sri Vairocana. Lokeshvara divided himself and created Akshobhya and Ratnasambhava. Similarly from Vajrapani originated Amitabha and Amoghasiddhi. These five Tathagatas were named Bhatara Sarva-jnana.

From the all-embracing knowledge (Sasvata-jnana) of Vairocana originated the almighty gods, Isvara, Brahma and Vishnu. At the command of Vairocana they created the three worlds, Svarga, Martya, and Patala.

The text then proceeds to give an account of some of the Buddhist philosophical conceptions such as the five Skandhas (Rupa, Vedana, Samjna, Samskara and Vijnana), the five Bijaksharas (Aum, Hum, Tram, Hrih, Ah); Trikhala (Raga, Dvesha, Moha); Trimala (Artha, Kama, Sabda); Trikaya (Kaya, Vak, Chitta); Triparartha (Asih or love, Punya, Bhakti); Panchadhatu (Prithvi, Appu, Teja, Vayu, Akasa); Pancharupaskandha (Kalala, Arbuda, Ghana, Pesi and Prasakha); Pancha-jnana (Nishprapancha or Sasvata, Prabha-svara or Adarsana, Grahya-grahaka-rahita or Akasamata, Sarva-dharma-nairatmya or Praty-

vekshana, and Krtyanushthana or Krtya-jnana).

The text concludes with an account of the Tathagata-Devis or the female counterparts of the Buddhas. These are Dhatvisvari, Locana, Mamaki, Pandaravasini and Tara, wives respectively of Vairocana, Akshobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha and Amoghasiddhi. The last four goddesses have as their essence (Tattva), Maitri, Karuna, Mudita and Upeksha. The first two, Dhatvisvari and Locana are really one in essence (Tattva). They are co-workers of Vairocana, possess Sasvata-jnana, and have the forms of the omnipotent viz., Satvabajri, Ratnabajri, Dharma-bajri, and Karmabajri.

This short account of the text would give us a fair insight into the leading conceptions of Mahayanism in Java. Its close resemblance to and minor differences from, the form of the religion current in India are interesting subjects of study but cannot be attempted here. Specially noteworthy is the attempt to bring the Hindu Trinity, Isvara, Brahma and Vishnu, into organic relation with the Buddhist Pantheon. It is also remarkable that these Hindu gods are admitted to be the creator of the three worlds. We thus get a valuable evidence of the syncretism of the gods of different sects which formed a conspicuous feature of the religious spirit of the age.

A more popular but degraded form of the Mahayana doctrine in Java is preserved in the Kamahayan-Mantranaya. It contains a short preamble, followed by forty-one Sanskrit verses with Javanese commentaries. The preamble refers to the mystic syllables Aum, Ah, Hum and also to their equivalent words 'Paramartha, Kaya, Vak, Chitta and Vajra.' The first verse

is a sort of introduction in which a preceptor addresses his disciple, "Come, my boy, I shall teach you the Mantrācāryanaya rules of Mahayana (Mahayanam Mantrācāryanayam Vidhim)." This Mantrācāryanaya is evidently a full form of Mantranaya, the title of the book. This Mantranaya has been rightly identified with the Mantrayana. About its nature and origin Waddell observes: "The excessive use of the mystic Mantras, consisting mostly of unmeaning gibberish, resulted in a new vehicle named the Mantrayana which is a Tantrik development of the Yoga-phase of Buddhism." It teaches that one can attain the Buddhahood by the mysterious knowledge of Kaya, Chitta and Vak.

As a matter of fact, the text is throughout devoted to an exposition of the Tantra cult both in its theoretical and practical aspects. The ideal of the attainment of Buddhahood is clearly expressed in the following verse:

एष मार्गवरः श्रीमान् महायानमहोदयः ।

येन यूयं गमिष्यन्ते भविष्यत्यथागताः ॥

"This is the famous Mahayana system which yields both material and spiritual bliss (Bahya-adhyatmika sukha, as explained in the Javanese commentary) and by following which you will become Tathagata (Buddha). A clear reference to the five kinds of sensual enjoyments is continued in the following verses:—

नास्ति किञ्चिदकर्तव्यं प्रज्ञोपायेन चेतसा ।

निर्विशोकः सदा भूत्वा प्रभुश्च कामपञ्चकम् ॥

The plain meaning of the above seems to be that a votary who has attained Prajna, can do everything and should always fearlessly enjoy the five senses. The Javanese commentary on this verse is a characteristic one. It says that since it is difficult to avoid Karma, he should work for the possession of the high-

est spiritual knowledge and the sensual enjoyments are forbidden to him.

It is definitely said in other verses that one should not torment his body by austerities (तपोभिः नातिपीडयेत्) but should become a Buddha by following pleasurable ways (ययामुखं सुखं धार्यम्).

There are references to Mandala and several verses refer to the high honour which should be shown to Guru (preceptor). The Guru is equal to Buddha and should never be despised. A devotee should dedicate to his Guru not only his own life but also his son, and even his wife, not to speak of material wealth. For while Buddhahood is normally attainable only by immense troubles through millions of births, the Guru enables the disciple to attain Buddhahood even in this life. Thus we read:

यथावमन्येदाचार्यं सर्वबुद्धसमं गुरुं ।

सर्वबुद्धावमानेन नित्यं दुःखमवाप्नुयात् ॥

नित्यं स्वराज्याचार्यं प्राणैरपि निजैर्भजेत् ।

अदेयैः पुत्रदरैर्वा किमुनर्घिर्भवेत्तैः ॥

यस्मात् सुदुर्लभं नित्यं कल्पसंख्येयकोटिभिः ।

बुद्धत्वमुद्योगवते ददातीहैव जन्मनि ॥

The text concludes with the exulting description by the Guru of the Buddhahood to be attained by the devotee on that very day.

अथ वः सफल जन्म यदस्मिन् सुप्रतिष्ठितः ।

समाः समा हि देवानामथ जाताः स्वयंभवः ॥

अद्याभिषिक्ता युष्मन्तः सर्वबुद्धः सवज्रभिः ।

त्रैधातुकमहाराज्ये राजाधिपतयः स्थिताः ॥

अथ मारं विनिर्जित्य प्रविष्टाः परमं पुरम् ।

प्राप्तमयैव बुद्धत्वं भवद्भिर्नात्र संशयः ॥

In addition to the above, the text of Kamahayanam Mantranaya contains clear references to Mahayanist conceptions of various Buddhas, and particularly to Bajrasattvas. The

esoteric character of the teaching is clearly indicated by a verse which forbids the devotee to communicate the secrets of Vajra, Ghanta and Mudra to those who do not belong

to the Mandala. It is not necessary to go into further details, but on the whole the text gives a very interesting picture of the Tantrik form of Mahayana, called Mantrayana.

(Concluded)

[From the author's forthcoming work, "Ancient Indian Colonies in the Far East, Vol. II—Suvannabhumi or Malayasia (Malay Peninsula and Malay Archipelago)."]

THE SYSTEM OF THOUGHT REVEALED IN THE BHAGAVAD GITA *

I LOOK upon it as a great honour and privilege to be asked to address the members of the Sanskrit Academy on the system of thought in the Bhagavad Gita. The Gita forms an integral part of our scriptures from which all our notions of Vedanta are derived and takes equal rank with the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras. Each of these sources has unique virtues of its own and they confirm or supplement one another. The Upanishads lay stress on Knowledge and Meditation. The Sutras give a systematic and rational exposition of the Great Truths and the Gita discloses the spirit in which they are to be applied to practical life, the spirit of love and devotion which ought to inspire our acts and purposes. While the central truth is never lost sight of, we find in the Gita no abstruse principles elaborated by subtle reasoning, no conscious attempt to justify every point by reference to a higher scriptural basis, but an insistence throughout on the control and purification of mind, on single-hearted devotion and on righteous action, in a tone of absolute authority warranted by the situation. Its teaching is modulated to suit the capacity of all and the popularity it

has won is due to its theological aspect and the prominence it assigns to devotion, above all meticulous and mechanical performance of works and a passive absorption in abstract speculation. The generality of men and women delight in concrete images and crave for a Personal Being to whom they would offer worship in all meekness of soul.

In dealing with the subject of this paper, namely the system of thought expounded in the Gita, I know I am sailing not on "smooth seas" but on tempestuous billows created by the numerous and powerful interpreters whose conclusions are at open war with mine. A word on interpretations will not be out of place. Now, interpretation of scripture is no doubt necessary and helpful to comprehension, but its guiding principle must be furnished by Life, not by Scripture. Otherwise we shall be involved in the fallacy of mutual dependence. One part of the scripture cannot be reconciled with another part, apparently opposed to it, except by subjecting both to interpretation. Surely there must be an external standard by which we judge the statements. We are not unthinking

machines to accept the arbitrary doles from the hands of the interpreter who, as a man, ought also to depend on some objective criterion on which he relies for common acceptance. What is this objective standard? It cannot be tradition which is many-tongued, being subject to change by time and social contingencies and divisions. It cannot be individual predilection which will not appeal to all minds. It cannot be perception or inference, as these are confined to a narrow part of Life, while the Truths disclosed by the scriptures relate to all Life. The only trustworthy point of reference, the only basis on which all interpretations must take their stand, if they are not to be of a merely scholastic sort, must be Life and Experience as a whole. The dicta of Texts must be checked by experience which includes our intuition of the three states, waking, dream and dreamless sleep. A harmony between these two terms of the equation establishes the authority of the scriptures, whose service in enabling us to realise the highest Truth becomes thereby invaluable and incontrovertible.

In my work entitled 'VEDANTA or THE SCIENCE OF REALITY' I have endeavoured to show by reasoned steps that the voice of Life is clear in pointing to the unmistakable unity which it presents, and which is in perfect accordance with the teaching of the scriptures. The system of Truth is known as Non-Dualism or what I call 'Vedic Monism.' Its main doctrines briefly are (1) the empirical reality of the Non-Self, (2) the absolute reality of the Self, and (3) the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Spirit or Pure Consciousness. To explain the appearance of the Non-Self a

principle is assumed known as Maya, and a Ruler known as Iswara. Since this implies the reality of Maya and God as distinct entities, the reality so granted is only of the empirical grade, for all assumption of empirical life is due to ignorance of our real nature, to realise which is to dispel that ignorance and get rid of the fancied second element. All, then, which appears to favour multiplicity, God, Maya, the external world and the human soul—are, both collectively and individually, in the highest sense, Reality which abhors a second entity. This knowledge that we are essentially Brahman, or Reality, strikes at the root of narrow views based on selfishness, and is the foundation of ethics. This Higher Self is of the nature of Bliss, as displayed in our instinctive love of Self; and to recognise it in others is to bring about social harmony, for no one will be inclined to harm himself. It paves the way for spiritual and moral perfection, and no higher destiny can be conceived for man. Action based on desire leads to pain; and the soul is visited with repeated births and deaths, so long as desire originating from ignorance is unextinguished. I shall now proceed to show that the divine utterances of Lord Krishna inculcate beyond doubt this doctrine of Vedic Monism. To imagine that they endorse Dualism or Pluralism or Qualified Monism, is to seek the pitfall of grammar and misapplied logic, and ignore the straight road of facts and reason. The path of devotion which the Gita emphasises, demands, not that the manifold must be absolutely real, but relatively so, is real for the time being; and devotion is not only perfectly possible but only possible on the supposition that the soul and God are essentially identical, as otherwise no reason can be shown why

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God must be merciful to man, or how man can cultivate the deepest love to an alien entity. The popular figures of speech by which God is represented as Father, Mother, Protector and Grandfather, would still leave a chasm of distinctness unbridged, and no real comfort or consolation can be achieved by an afflicted soul, or depressed heart, from metaphorical conceptions. God is our Saviour, because, in truth He can never cease to be our Self. We can never cease to love God, for He is our Own Self.

Some scholars are of the view that the Gita teaches mysticism. The stress laid on meditation on God and the reference to Samadhi would seem to support the position. But this meditation is simply a theistic form given to the various meditations dealt with in the Upanishads, and is evidently meant for those that wish to be engaged in some kind of mental activity sanctioned by scripture which they regard as the practical way in which to intuit metaphysical truth. If they attain to Samadhi or trance, they feel their end accomplished. But as all meditation presupposes duality, the activity is still within the region of Karma and therefore of ignorance, and can never take the place of direct knowledge. In the Gita, accordingly, we find knowledge elevated to the first rank, and the Lord identifies Himself with the Jnanin.

We may here dispose of the question how far Sri Krishna's system was influenced by (1) the Upanishads, (2) the Sankhya, and (3) the Bhagavata systems. As to the first, verbal reproduction of the views of the Upanishad Seers, is an incontestable evidence of their influence, and I believe that the fact is indisputable. As to the second, references to *Prakriti* and

the *Gunas* place it beyond controversy that the Sankhyas can claim a reasonable share in determining the position of Sri Krishna. One pre-eminent feature, however, should not be lost sight of. Whereas the Sankhyas declare the independent reality of *Prakriti*, side by side with that of *Purusha*, so that their view is plain, unvarnished dualism, Lord Krishna concedes to it but a subordinate place, and makes it subservient to the Will of *Iswara*. And as He claims that the whole phenomenal world, dyed in the different colours of the *Gunas*, proceeds from Himself and is absorbed in Himself, He becomes the only Reality, and Monism is left intact. Coming now to the Bhagavata system, I must insist that its existence previous to Sri Krishna has got to be wholly discounted. It is putting the cart before the horse. Although in the uncertain condition of Hindu chronology, it would be dangerous to dogmatise, yet having an eye to facts, I must say that in the Gita there is very little justification for the view that the system known as the Bhagavata preceded it and influenced it to any sensible extent. On the contrary, the omission of Sankarshana, Aniruddha and Pradyumna, which are names imbedded in the technics of the Bhagavata system, and the absence of the doctrine of God's embodiedness, are irrefragable evidences of Sri Krishna's system being totally innocent of the Bhagavata touch. "All this is Vasudeva," is too wide a statement by itself to support that system exclusively. In the Vishnu Purana, incidents in Sri Krishna's life are pointed out in which He acquired the various names by which he is now known and the names Sankarshana &c., as those of members of His family, occur in it. The more probable view is that Sri

Krishna Himself is the origin of the Bhagavata system which developed after him into all the details which characterise it. Its popularity was increased by its emphasis on the independent reality and distinction of the souls and matter, and on theistic devotion which appealed to the emotions, and demanded no intellectual strain, in any high degree.

To determine the system of Truth advocated by Lord Krishna we have to bear in mind the epic setting in which it is disclosed. Arjuna, placed between the two forces, marshalled on opposite sides, casts his eyes on the figures of the Great Heroes who were to take part in the fatal fight. There were Drona, Bhishma, other relations and friends ready to sacrifice their lives in the struggle. Naturally, Arjuna is overcome by humanity, throws down his weapons and exclaims, "How can I, Oh Lord, think of slaying my preceptor and my own grandfather who are entitled to my reverence and affection? How can I knowingly commit this atrocious sin? I should sooner die myself than engage in such a brutal act. I feel I am confused. I know not if it is not preferable to retire from the field, even at the cost of my life. My sense of Duty is disturbed and I would fain withdraw from the contest. Do tell me, O Lord, what I'd better do." The poet's sense of humour is notable here. Although the smoothness of the flow of Sri Krishna's words, pregnant with wisdom, is never ruffled, He is shown to have been rather warmed to a mild heat on two remarkable occasions. This is one of them. "Whence," says Sri Krishna, "this wretched hesitancy at the wrong moment, which no self-respecting man would approve, which slams the door of Heaven in the face of the Hero approaching it and which

would redound to your eternal infamy?" The second occasion presents itself at the close of the Lord's teaching. "If you fail," the Lord warns, "to follow my directions, you will surely make your way to perdition." With these exceptions, the current runs smooth and deep throughout.

Now let us ponder the situation. Arjuna does not wish to kill Drona, Bhishma and others. He does not solicit a discourse on philosophy. But the Lord knows that Arjuna's error lies deeper. He has confounded the physical body with the Spirit. Drona is not the figure standing before Arjuna's eyes, but the Spirit which lies within. Now Arjuna has to learn that though the physical appendage may be subject to change and destruction, the Spirit is eternal.

If so, Lord Krishna's first care must be to disillusion Arjuna of his grave error and unwarranted sorrow. The soul was to be shown to be eternal and the body perishable. Accordingly he addresses himself to the task, and throwing himself into the common category of souls, denies the non-existence at any time, of himself, of Arjuna, or of the royal heroes. He then makes an axiomatic statement that the real can never cease to exist, nor the unreal ever have being. In illustration of this truth, he says that the soul, which is a reality, can never perish and the body, being unreal, must be subject to destruction. The terms in which the soul is described—immortal, all-pervading, uncognisable constant, immutable—are such as can be indifferently applied to the finite soul or the Absolute Spirit. This indiscriminate depiction of the soul would have created the greatest confusion, if Sri Krishna meant to draw a sharp line of distinction between the individual soul and the Supreme Self. Besides, it would not

be pertinent to the occasion to refer to the Divine Nature at all. Arjuna showed no solicitude to know the nature of Iswara. His anxiety lay with the fates of Drona and Bhishma, who were but individual souls. Lord Krishna's directly launching into panegrics on the glory of God's being would have been particularly out of place. Yet the Gita is called Brahma Vidya or the Science of Brahman, and there are many texts in which Brahman is named and identified with Sri Krishna Himself. In the whole work we never meet with a question from Arjuna relating to the nature of Brahman except incidentally at the beginning of Chap. VIII, arising from the Lord's suggestion at the end of Chap. VII. This fundamental fact must receive our first consideration in disposing us to affirm or deny the identity of the soul with God.

Besides this circumstantial evidence, there is that of the intrinsic nature of the soul itself, which is the basic argument, a clincher, on which its eternality is founded. Lord Krishna describes the soul as "Aprameya" (II, 18), uncognisable, "Drashta" (XIV, 19), the Seer, and Himself as "Sakshi" (IX, 18), witness, "Atman" (X, 20), Self. Now the concept underlying these terms does not by its very nature admit of plurality. It baffles all the commentator's ingenuity and learning to smuggle plurality into the concept. "Aprameya" is that which cannot be an object of knowledge, being the eternal subject. The mention of this characteristic feature of the soul within the body is portentous. It knells the conception of plurality. "There is no other Seer than the Atman," declare the Upanishads. Nānyōtōsti drashta; 'Drashta' or witness can be but one. 'Self' cannot be pluralised as, to the Self, all else is "Non-Self." Hence if

the soul is *Drashta*, and God is the *Witness*, they can be but one, for, a distinction between them is unimaginable. Also the characterisation of the soul as 'Nirguna' is just in keeping with its nature as the witness. For the soul as witness naturally isolates itself from all qualities and Gunas, of all attribution.

The third evidence is in the form of authoritative statements made by Sri Krishna Himself. In II, 45, the Vedas relating themselves, as they do, to the Gunas, Arjuna is urged to rise above them. Now it is impossible to conceive plurality in the plane in which the Gunas are wholly absent. In II, 72, Arjuna is advised to attain to a position of desirelessness by true knowledge which Sri Krishna calls the stand in Brahman, for, that would secure the Peace of Brahman. ब्रह्मी स्थितिः, ब्रह्मनिर्वाण (II, 72). In III, 42, a profound psychic analysis is made, in which we rise from the objects to the senses, from these to the mind, and then to the intellect and lastly to the Reality beyond. The guiding principle is one of greater and greater inclusiveness, and of a nearer approach to Unity from multiplicity. From the infinity of the objects, we are led to the senses which are definite in number, from these we are taken on to the mind with its multiple functions, then to the intellect with its judgments, and lastly to the unchanging Witness, the deepest element in man, the all-inclusive 'Self.' The realm of plurality is thus transcended and we are set down on the shore of Reality, Bliss-Eternal. One commentator on this profound teaching which is a variant of what is to be found in the Upanishads, identifies the sense-objects, mind, Buddhi, Mahat, and Avyakta, with Parvati,

Rudra, Sarasvati, Brahma and Lakshmi; and intimates that Sri Krishna's aim is to show the superiority of Vishnu over all these deities. This unfortunate blinking of the real issue has frightfully punished itself. In an analysis of man's nature, his very soul fails to claim a place—a tragedy of scholasticism to which the history of thought scarcely furnishes a parallel. The pernicious tendency reappears in Chap. XIII where the division of all existence into Kshetra and Kshetrajna, is confined by the commentator to God and inanimate nature, to the utter exclusion of the individual soul. Another commentator regards the whole group of the senses, etc., to be foes to the struggling soul, and the greatest of the foes, greater than the intellect, is desire, which Arjuna is enjoined to vanquish. On this line of interpretation, we should expect the mention of Rajoguna, parent of desire, as the worst of the lot. Besides, "Kama" being a mental function cannot overpass the mind in its entirety. Such interpretations miss the essential truth conveyed by the verse, namely, the identity of the soul, as witness, with Reality.

Lord Krishna's Statements

In IV, 10, the enlightened one is stated to have attained the nature of Sri Krishna or the Godhead. In IV, 14, those that realise that God is unaffected by acts or is unattached to results, are said to be themselves not bound by action (Karma). This is impossible unless the identity of the nature of both is presupposed. In IV, 24, it is said that he who identifies all accessories of sacrifice, the sacrifice, and the sacrificer himself with Brahman, attains to Brahman. In V, 2, the self of the Yogin, is identified

with the Self of all beings. In V, 24, it is said that the Yogin, who realises the light within himself, being Brahman, attains to the Peace of Brahman. In VI, 14, Sri Krishna says, "The Yogin ever absorbed in the contemplation of Brahman, attains the highest bliss characterising Me (Sri Krishna)."

Extracts

- IV, 35. Thou wilt see all beings in thyself and likewise in Me.
- VI, 27. The pure-minded Yogin who is Brahman, attains the highest happiness.
- VI, 31. The Yogin who meditates on Me lives in Me, the Lord, for he is established in Unity or Identity.
- VII, 18. The enlightened is Myself (the Lord).
- X, 20. I am the Self residing in the heart of all beings.
- X, 37. I am thou among the Pandavas.
- XIII, 2. Know Me as the witness in the body.
- XIII, 16. I remain undivided among beings, though seeming to be divided.
- XIII, 18. Knowing this, one attains to My nature or essence.
- XIII, 28. He who perceives the one Lord dwelling in all beings as their Self cannot harm another, for the Self cannot harm itself.
- XIII, 30. Who perceives that the manifoldness of beings has its locus in the One, attains Brahman.

- XIV, 19. When the soul as the witness refers all agency to the Gunas and realises what is beyond them, he attains to My nature (Godhead).
- XIV, 26. My devotee transcends the Gunas and becomes fit for Brahmanhood.
- XVIII, 16. He that looks upon the *secondless Self* as the agent is deficient in understanding.
- XVIII, 20. That is pure knowledge by which the undivided One existing in all beings is realised.
- XVIII, 55. My devotee enquiring into My nature, and knowing Me as I really am, enters Me.

It may occur to one that the Lord's statement that the Jiva is a part of Himself,—in XV, 7—militates against the idea of perfect identity. But we must not overlook the fact that the Jiva spoken of is the Spirit individualised by the mind, the senses and the body, and acting in Time and Space; and a Jiva is certainly one among many such. But the Spirit, which is the essence of the Jiva, which is not limited by the *Upadhis*, cannot be divisible or partible by Time, Space or any other circumstance; and this indivisibility of its nature is explained in both XIII, 16 and XVIII, 20, particularly because, the witness

cannot be conceived to allow of division. The concept of Reality as the witness is thus the keystone of the monistic edifice and no arguments or interpretations can prevail against this fundamental law of thought.

The charge of Solipsism is easily met. When one realises himself as Brahman, he identifies himself not as one being with another, but with all Reality. For Brahman includes all, and, as individuality is so transcended, there will be no unreality to be negated or vetoed.

The opponents of Non-Dualism may set some store by the division of Purushas into Kshara (the Varying), Akshara (the Constant) and the Supreme Atman, the Highest, different from the two former. But this distinction need not present any difficulty, when Purusha in its primary sense is understood to be the witness dwelling in the heart. As there can be no other witness, the term Purusha applied to the rest is only by courtesy, and the Atman's title to it is established not by comparison but by its absolute nature. For there can be nothing common between the witness and the objective element. *Uttama Purusha* would only mean Purusha in reality. Thus the Gita indubitably teaches the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Spirit. The reader who cannot break with his own nature or cease to play the role of witness, must realise himself to be Lord Krishna.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

A Shastric Challenge

The Hindu of 20-12-33 gives a report of a lecture delivered at the Madras Sanskrit College premises the previous day by His Holiness the Sankaracharya of Puri on "The Present Situation." Just prior to this there had been published an account of an open challenge thrown out by certain learned Shastris and Pandits to Mahatma Gandhi to meet His Holiness by appointment, and discuss with him, on the basis of the Shastras, the justification for demanding the admission of Harijans into the temples of the orthodox party. If the Mahatma was worsted in the duel, he was, as the spirit of chivalry must dictate to him, to make public acknowledgment of the blunder he had been committing all along in preaching his pet dogmas. The challengers ensured the acceptance of their challenge by the Mahatma by issuing it in the name of the latter's "sincerity," regard for "truth," etc., etc. In spite of the generous intentions of the scholars, the public of Madras were not destined to witness what would have become a meeting of "modern gladiators," although they were moving in circles which often crossed and even overlapped.

We were unable in this instance to make out whether the challengers meant that they were economising the personnel of the whole show by constituting themselves the judges as well, or they were prepared to make either of the combatants, and preferably the Sankaracharya, the sole authority to decide the issue. It was not known also whether they had in mind another

alternative, a very democratic alternative and one consistent with the gladiatorial shows of good old Rome, to make the spectators themselves, although undoubtedly inferior to the challengers or the combatants in point of learning, to sit in judgment and announce who won.

Un-Sanatanist Jumbling up

Anyway, as the parties did not meet as intended, the Sankaracharya's performance had perforce to end in a few studied strokes. His Holiness began by pointing out that in modern India "all the various branches of life, religious, political, social or economic, had not merely been mingled together but actually jumbled together." "There was a time," he reminded his hearers, "when they had great leaders of the Congress, beginning from Dadabhai Noworojee, insisting that the Congress should deal with purely political and economic matters and absolutely refrain from interfering in matters relating to religion and to socio-religious order." But "at the present day they had, in the name of the Congress, persons encroaching on the field of religion and socio-religious affairs of the various communities." "This jumbling up of socio-religious questions with politics has been responsible for sounding the death-knell of nationalistic politics in the country." This pronouncement he was competent to make, "having been and still continuing to be a Nationalist with nationalistic views all the time." His settled opinion and advice to the country, therefore, was that "Indian nationalism could only be built on the basis of injunc-

tions and prohibitions contained in Sanatana Dharma."

With due deference to His Holiness' learning and authority we beg to point out some serious flaws in his reasoning. If His Holiness has been, and can continue to be, a nationalist all the time, and this involves no contradiction to his evolution into a religious leader at the present time, why should not the same privilege be conceded by him to others who are yet in the Congressite stage of nationalism and are "picking up" the threads of religious life, although they may not aspire ultimately to blossom into World Teachers? Religious men can lawfully preach and organise in matters national or political, for H. H.'s own "scientific reasoning" ended with his declaration that "Indian nationalism could only be built on the injunctions and prohibitions of Sanatana Dharma" and with an appeal to all Sanatanists to "organise" their forces forthwith. The question now is whether Mahatma Gandhi and "others," individually as nationalists of a particular type, or collectively as the Congress, are entitled to "mix up" politics and religion—the "pure" religion which, on H. H.'s own admission, condescends to form an alliance with society and create a "socio-religious" category, but refuses to "touch" the same society in the matter of its governmental machinery lest it should form an unorthodox "politico-religious" category!

Sanatanic Precedents

Well, if we are to judge from precedent, not merely of H. H., but also of the old heroes of Sanatanic mythology, "mixing up" appears quite lawful. Krishna, the religious Teacher who taught his Gita on the battlefield, was throughout

a politician and "King-maker," and the same might be told of Rama, son of Dasaratha and slayer of Ravana, Bali and Tataka. Any reader of the Mahabharata will also be struck by the fact that the best discourse on Dharma proceeded from the lips of Bhishma lying on his bed of arrows,—Bhishma who carried off princesses from the place of Swayamvara for the sake of his brother, Bhishma who acted as "King-preserver" all along, and even fought to the last on the side of wickedness although he knew that his Lord himself was on the opposite side. There is no need to mention King Janaka, for his is an oft-quoted example showing that religion and "other" affairs can be "mixed up."

On analysis we shall find that "mixing up" has been of great significance in the life of the pious Hindu. To him there was no airtight compartment among the Purusharthas necessitating, for instance, that he should look upon Artha and Kama as having no business to "encroach upon" Dharma or *vice versa*. In the pursuit of the Purusharthas every activity was to be performed, not merely lightly but fully "mixing up" religion. For "Man attains the Highest Good by doing all his actions in the spirit of 'offering' to the Lord." Indeed it has been told of the Hindu that he eats "religiously," sleeps "religiously," and does everything else "religiously." How is he, then, consistent with Sanatanic "injunctions and prohibitions" to cease carrying on his educational, economic and political schemes and campaigns "religiously"?

Rigidity seen Less where Profit is More

The truth is that religion has ever been making itself elastic enough to

cover every conceivable act in life, be it the first or subsequent shaving, the first or subsequent marriage, or meeting and dealing with people, or eating, dressing, travelling about, etc. Naturally whenever a new force was generated in society or an innovation was attempted it has been religious orthodoxy's special characteristic invariably to take fright and make violent protests; but it has nevertheless yielded and cooled down finally on coming to know of the material advantages certain to accrue from such yielding. Study in English schools is a case of this type. Manu lays down clearly that "The Dwija who, not having studied the Vedas (as prescribed), tries to acquire other forms of secular learning, is degraded to the status of a Sudra with all his progeny in this very life-time" (II-168). Yet with what rapidity of adaptation the orthodox mind has come to consider Vedic study as perhaps too "light" an item to be allowed to stand in the way of education, high, higher and highest—education accompanied, in the beginning, by a compulsory vaccination of "poisons" no doubt, but bringing in due course Artha and Kama, which, according to the convenient and "unmixed" compartmental theory, can with perfect equanimity be clean divorced from religion!

Actual Level of Enforcers

Now, however, the printing press has made the scriptures accessible to all, and people have begun to find that these books aim not at perpetuating distinctions between man and man on the ground that they have bodies, but at unifying them by making them conscious, first of their own "soul nature" and then of their Eternally Pure Common Background. It is also seen that the Smritis which the orthodox party

bring forward to support their treatment of the Harijan, were primarily meant solely for checking the undue competition, etc., of the upper castes who alone were then considered eligible to read them. His Holiness himself laments that "The moment they fell down from Sanatana Dharma they had declined all round." All impartial observers will realise, in addition, that these same upper castes have now given up ninety per cent of the *essential* principles of the Smritis (like entering on the stages of Vanaprastha and Sannyasa), and at present retain intact only the holy resolve to enforce the maximum possibilities of the "law" upon the defenceless Harijan. It is quite well known how the Adi Sankara and the Advaitic school of Vedanta interpreted the Vedas in their own way; even now the mutual bitterness of the various schools must be manufacturing "poisons" in the fanatically boiling blood of many of their respective followers, although we suspect there may be in some quarters a temporary rallying around the "Banner of Advaita" to combat the Harijan movement. What crime is there, then, if modern "scientific" reasoning of the Congress camp proposes to interpret some of the Smritis and if necessary, refute and overthrow them? There is only one reply possible: That the Mahatma and "others" who support the Harijan are not "religious men" of the type that can be safely allowed to interpret the Shastras. Well, if this position is taken up without sufficient proofs, reasoning will be substituted by dogmas.

Inevitable Multiplication

His Holiness, we read, dwelt "elaborately on the question of castes". Multiplicity of castes, ac-

cording to him, was a "necessary and inevitable consequence of the existence of four castes. If all had been of one caste it would have been a different matter, but even if there were only two castes, there were bound to be any number of combinations therefrom." This is tantamount to saying that even in their best days Sanatanists were constitutionally incapable of adhering strictly to marriage, etc., "within" the prescribed circles. It would also lead to the unwelcome inference that the practice of this "splendid" Dharma which, in the inimitable words of H. H., "has been conquering not a few mighty enemies nor many feeble enemies," and could lead its votaries to the *summum bonum* of life, Moksha, was yet never, and will be never, able to conquer this single enemy, viz., the habit of "mixing up" in the matter of marriage! When therefore we see H. H. using "scientific reasoning" and exhorting his flock not to "fall away from the knowledge and practice of Sanatana Dharma," we wonder whether we shall be witnessing anything but a fresh enthusiasm on the part of the hearers to imitate their ancestors and continue the "inevitably" Sanatanic multiplication of castes by a theoretical marriage "within" the same caste!

The Poison Theory

Once the castes were formed, however, all further contacts had to be shut off, for we are told, with the force of a revelation, that "poisons have been discovered in human being by modern scientists, where it was not individual but tribal poison, and had to be taken into account not merely for purposes of marriage, nor merely for purposes of associating in social

functions, but even for purposes of approachability. There was such a tremendous difference between blood and blood, race and race." And with the same breath we are assured by H. H., that "there was no question of inferiority or superiority involved. The question simply was whether two bloods were of such a nature as might be mixed up without injury to the race." Granting this theory of "poisons" and absence of inferiority and superiority, we wish to know what scientific research has been made with qualitative and quantitative tests, etc., to prove that Harijan blood is of such a nature that the blood of the Sanatanist group, with its "inevitable" non-condemnable habit of "mixing up" by Anuloma marriage, will develop injurious and fatal poisons when Pratiloma marriage is attempted. Experiments *must* have been made with Harijan and Sanatanist blood; else the particular assertion of H. H. that "Pratiloma caste alone was described as untouchables; modern science has its own confirmatory evidence" would be without "scientific" basis. It would at any rate be quite interesting and profitable if, under the able guidance and unerring spiritual vision of H. H. and other certified religious Teachers, a scientific association is tagged on to the Sanatanist party to publish periodically the results of *actual* research into Harijan "poisons" and their alleged effects upon the four "God-made" and more than four thousand "Sanatanist-made" castes.

In all this "jumbling up" talk of poisons, etc., one misses the main issue shining once through H. H.'s question: "If the Avarnas had no faith in Sanatana Dharma, were the Sanatanists to offer them bribes

to keep within its fold?" Even admitting that poisons may get "mixed up" to the detriment of the race (Sanatanist?) by inter-marriage, what actual experiments have demonstrated that Harijan poisons are so deadly that by a few minutes' approach in a temple, the poisons of Sanatanists would acquire race-ruining properties? We do find that every approach of Harijans *real*, and of Harijans *transformed* into Mussulmans and Christians, necessitated by train journeys, marketing and school studies (the modern money-making Sadhana for most Sanatanists too) is tolerated and connived at by the orthodox. Are Prayachittas, like doses of Panchagavyam, administered to neutralise these "inevitable" con-

tacts? If it is true that some holy remedies have been in use throughout these ages, then why not extend their use to effectively neutralise the contacts of Harijan poisons expected to take place in temples as well? Or does research reveal that Harijan poisons are more irremediable than "small pox poisons," etc., which every Sanatanist schoolboy, even, complacently takes directly into his blood through vaccination and other processes compulsory in the earlier stages of life-pilgrimage in modern times?

Anyway, Sanatanists, nationalists and "religious" men of all types will eagerly await further developments, scientific and philosophical, of this "Poison Theory" of castes.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ROMANCE OF THE FORT OF GWALIOR: By Hem Chandra Rai, M.A., Ex-Senior State Secretary, Sirmoor State, with a Foreword by H. L. O. Garrett, M.A. (Oxon), I.E.S. Price Rs. 1-4-0.

In this little monograph of 74 pages the author has set out in clear, accurate historical detail, what he characterises as the romance of the Fort of Gwalior. Yes; it is a romance. The origin of the Fort, according to tradition and folklore, is romantic and its subsequent history is equally romantic. This famous rock-fort which lies on the confluence of the high roads into Central India from the North is a stupendous structure and is described as "the pearl in the necklace of the castles of Ind." As for its origin, it appears that Dev Nag, the last of the Nag Bansi Kshatriya kings who ruled over Central India and Bundelkand in the beginning of the 3rd century A.D., was overpowered by Torman, the Kutchwaha general of Gopal Rai, a neighbouring potentate. Gopal Rai was so pleased with his general that he granted him and his heirs a large fief in perpetuity, round a flourishing village

named Sehonja, situated at a distance of 30 miles from the present site of the Fort. Thakur Sur Singh, one of the lineal descendants of Torman, was afflicted with leprosy, but like all true Rajputs, he was a keen lover of the chase. While out on a hunting expedition one day he was overcome with thirst and fatigue, but no water was to be seen anywhere near. Suddenly he descried a holy man, an aged Sadhu, whom he begged for a drink of water. The Sadhu not only helped Thakur Sur Singh to quench his thirst in a neighbouring spring, but also advised him to bathe in it. As soon as the Thakur dipped himself in the water of the spring he found himself cured and clean. At the command of the Sadhu, Thakur Sur Singh widened the bed of the spring, built a masonry tank over it and erected a fort round it about the year 274 A. D. The ancient spring of water is now the pucca built Suraj-Kund inside the Fort of Gwalior. It is unnecessary to follow the fortunes of this interesting Fortress. It has passed through many vicissitudes. "First the Rajput fortress,

then the Bastille of the Moghuls, its ramparts have more than once rung to the feet of a British sentry. It played its part in the Great Mutiny also, and was the scene of the last stand of the mutineers under the warlike Rani of Jhansi. Today it stands a venerable relic of the past, the precious possession

of the historic House of Scindia." This quotation from Mr. Garrett's Foreword sums up in a few words the history of the fort from the time it was founded by the Rajput, Thakur Sur Singh, to the time it was handed to the House of Scindia, the friend and ally of the British. A. S.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Miraculous Saving from Fire

On the night of November 22nd, 1933, a devastating brush and forest fire, which had started the night before, swept over the Ananda Ashrama, Swami Paramananda's beautiful Peace Retreat in California. By the grace of God, however, it spared the lives of the resident members as well as all the buildings with one or two minor exceptions, and the beehives. Writes Sister Devamata in The Message of the East: "These lovely mountains, fragrant, sequestered, upon which the Ashrama has lain like a jewel, will never more lure the eye and invite the soul as they once did. They lie stripped and naked, bare to the bone, and generations must pass before men will see them again as they were. The setting is gone, but the jewel remains, glowing with a new lustre, vibrant with a new meaning. Beauty can be reborn, and on that night of terror when it seemed that all was lost, it was reborn in an ethereal form of enduring loveliness, built from the faith, the devotion, the unshakable poise and consecration of the human beings concerned—the men and women resident there, and the hundreds of fire-fighters who with magnificent courage were ready to be consumed in their efforts to save the place and the people." Ananda Ashrama stands strengthened by what it has been through.

About the terrors of the fiery ordeal the Sisters wrote: "The fire began this way. George left the Cloister at half past eight to go to bed. He hurried back to say there was a terrific fire quite near us...It was in the Bissell property just next to Oak Canyon...The fire crept nearer and nearer. We

gathered together a few holy things that we would not have destroyed...Men were working then on the fire from our end. Although Mr. Bissell's place lay waste and was still smouldering, he came to help us. They put their picked men from the Fire Department here and gave us the finest fire-fighters they had.

"Through the night we watched the fire creep down the mountain-side to the reservoir and to the tunnel. They caught it just before it reached the reservoir and a hundred feet below the tunnel. At dawn it seemed as if the fire had abated and the danger passed.

"Firemen began to come down the mountain-sides to refill their canteens with water. Hilda offered them hot coffee. That was the signal. On her own initiative, she opened a commissary department, and with the help of Mrs. Rheil, Sister Achala, Jessie, Amala and Alice, served one continuous line of men coffee, potato soup, bread, fruit, eggs and fried potatoes from Wednesday morning until Thursday noon. There was plenty of dish-washing and plenty of serving.

"We felt the danger over but the firemen did not. All Wednesday afternoon they were making preparations for a possible return of the blaze. They laid over a mile of fire-hose around the property...They stationed men all along the line and at sunset the much feared wind came up at fifty miles an hour. We could see Oak Canyon a blazing furnace. Flames leaped fifty feet in the air, then spread to Quail Canyon. Then they crept up the back of the Canyon to the reservoir the roof of which caught and fell in. The flames leaped across to the unburned part of Ward

Canyon, went further over towards the Temple. The solarium went down, the barn was threatened, the stone-house was on fire. Ward Canyon was a fiery furnace.

"As soon as the alarm of the fresh outbreak reached us, every one went to his post. George let loose the animals and tried to chase them to the vineyard...He stayed with them until the flames passed. They came within fifteen feet of the barn, but he kept it wet and saved it. Mr. KISSAM watched the Community House and Lower cabins...Mr. Carlson guarded the upper cabins and garage. George acted as foreman...All the men were wonderful. The women were busy feeding the men and looking after the Cloister. In a short time the fire-engines and tanks began to come up the hill.....Later the fire-hose was burned in two and they had to stop to mend it. Our water (the Ashrama has its own water supply from the hills) did wonderful service and did not give out.

"As soon as the cry of new fire-outbreak was given, I went to the Temple to pray and guard the holy things...I refused to leave until Sava came to guard the Temple...Those few minutes cut off all chance of escape: flames were on every side.

"In a moment the fire-chief came in and said, 'The fire is going to strike us, but we will do our best to save you.' He spoke very quietly and went out. Then there was a roar and shower of flaming cinders, a rush of flame. We sat and repeated the chant until the whole house seemed to vibrate with it.....In an instant the bushes on the front terrace bank were aflame. The flames leaped twenty-five feet up into the air. Twenty picked men around the house lay on their faces and kept the hose playing on the vegetation and the windows. They literally risked their lives.

"In a short time the fire-chief returned and said in almost trembling voice, 'The fire has gone over you and your lives are saved.' The next morning he said to me, 'You have a mighty fine lot of people up here. The way they have gone through these two days is wonderful.' And another fireman said to Alice, 'We boys have been talk-

ing about you people. Although we do not know anything about your philosophy, we said it must be pretty fine to make people like you.'...All the men with one voice said it was the Hand of God that saved us: they had little hope of doing so....

"We are the one green spot in a desert of ashes and every one who looks up at the Ashrama says, 'It is a miracle, a miracle!'.....

"When morning dawned, the Ashrama property lay waste, nothing but charred branches of bushes, scorched trees and white ash. Ward Canyon was completely burned. Oak and Quail Canyons were gone, all our supply of wood for many years was burned, several thousand books in the store house and all of Sava's bee supplies were gone, and yet we were safe and the beauty of the Ashrama is not wholly lost. It was a great miracle to have the flames leap over us and not burn the vegetation or houses.".....

To complete the picture one must needs have a glimpse of Swami Paramananda in his Vedanta Centre at Boston. On the night of the 22nd the Swami retired early, after conducting the usual weekly class. "He spoke of feeling strangely restless, even weary; also the next morning at six-thirty he was expecting as his guest Swami Nikhilananda...of New York."

At one o'clock, midnight, came the telephone information of a wire—signed 'Ashrama.' It read: 'Terrific fire on Bissell property. Going up mountain, North east wind. Pray.'

In the dark he (Swami Paramananda) listened to the message...Then very quietly he said, 'All right.'...

When the third wire reported "Danger abating," a great weight seemed to slip from the Swami's shoulders and the Centre breathed again. "It was then that the long distance telephone was mentioned again.....Little did he know, as he spoke to the Sister at the other end of the wire, and to the little group clustered around her to get the echo of his voice, that they were about to face the supreme crisis of their fiery ordeal, that even then the flames were burning the telephone poles, which shortly afterwards crashed to the ground, cutting

the Ashrama off from outside contact, and from electricity.

"Never mind if the whole Ashrama is wiped out," the Swami told them, 'take no risk. Your safety is paramount.'.....at midnight, when he tried once more, the wires were silent, and the only word that came was from the Central, that the house had been abandoned and the people had all left. This was disquieting, and the more so because at half past ten o'clock the fourth wire had reached him.....'New outbreak. Oak, Quail Canyons gone. Valley in flame. Feel safe.' He had smiled at the anomaly—'Valley in flames. Feel safe.' But his heart yearned over his Ashrama children....

"About 11 A.M. a friend who was calling, announced that she had just seen a newspaper with a big headline about the California fire. It said that a hundred and seventy men were trapped by the flames, so that they could not get out and no one could get to them..... The household could only guess how these reports were torturing the Swami's heart—the depth of his inward prayer. He grew very silent, deeply indrawn, but did all the things that had to be done with a dignity and a control and a careful attention to detail that never wavered. He was a true King Janaka, watching his kingdom burn to ashes with magnificent detachment of spirit...As Swami Nikhilananda expressed it afterwards, he exemplified the great ideal of the Bhagavad Gita—equal-mindedness in pain and pleasure. Yet he was suffering profoundly. The human side of him recalled a recent tragedy in Hollywood, when a score or so of men had been trapped by just such flames, and had burned to death. He knew that if his workers had left the Ashrama and even one of them were conscious, word would be sent to him. In desperation one of his household wired a La Crescenta friend, the eminent artist, Mr. Seymour Thomas. The reply came within the hour: 'Ashrama all safe from fire. No buildings burned.' This brought assurance. But why was there no direct word? Why?

"One o'clock came—two—three. There were many in the kitchen now, assisting the Swami, who was stirring the big cooking pots. Four o'clock!

The doorbell rang. One went to answer. It was the longed-for wire! "the wire announcing how all was safe and the buildings were intact except stone-house, solarium, etc.

"As the words were read aloud, the Swami's face was lighted with a great exaltation. 'I always told you,' he said, 'that they were golden souls, and now the fire has proved it.' The tension broke and tears flowed freely from many eyes, with a sense of thankfulness of awe and wonder."

While addressing the group at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on the morning of 26th November, Swami Paramananda referred to this "Miracle of Faith" and said amidst other things: "Sometimes I have heard a person say with a sense of pride, 'I have the faith I was protected, but my neighbour was consumed.' Do not allow your faith in Divinity to cause you to feel set apart from your fellow-man, even when you feel that he is walking in blindness. It is misguided superiority complex."

Announcement

The Tithi-Puja in connection with the 99th Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa will be performed this year on Thursday, 15th February 1934. The public function will be held on the Sunday following, i.e., 18th February.

R. K. Mission Earthquake Relief in Muzaffarpur

Immediately on receipt of the news of the terrible earthquake havoc in the Muzaffarpur District, the Ramakrishna Mission despatched its representatives to Muzaffarpur on the 17th January to organise relief. They have wired to us that they have started work. Acute distress is prevailing,—shelter, food, water and medical relief are urgently needed. Further details will be published in due course. Contributions in aid of the sufferers will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses:

1. The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math P. O., Dt. Howrah.
 2. The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.
 3. The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.
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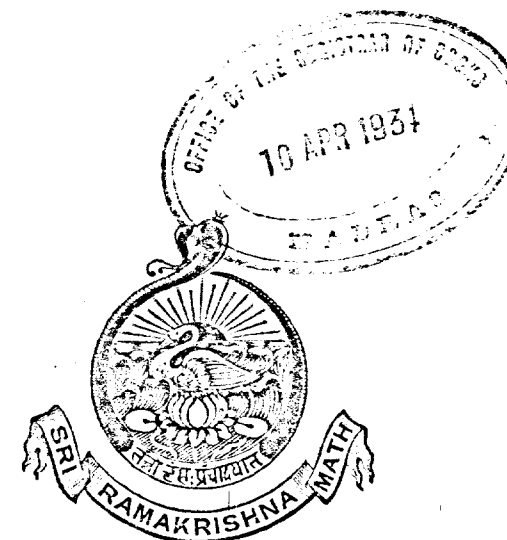
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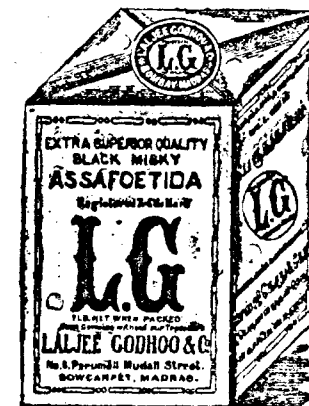
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Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

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MARCH, 1934

[No. 11

HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

पापस्य यदधिष्ठानं तच्छृणुष्व नराधिप ।

एको लोभो महाप्राहो लोभात्पापं प्रवर्तते ॥

अतः पापमधर्मश्च तथा दुःखमनुत्तमम् ।

निवृत्त्या मूलमेतद्भि येन पापकृतो जनाः ॥

लोभात् क्रोधः प्रभवति लोभात् कामः प्रवर्तते ।

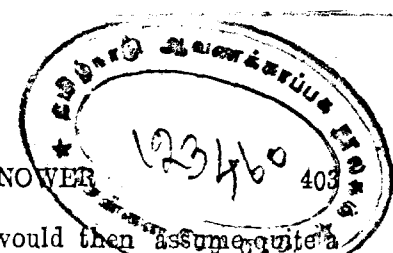
लोभान्मोहश्च माया च मानस्तम्भः परासुता ॥

Hear, O King, what the foundation is of sin. Alone covetousness acts as a great destroyer (of merit and goodness) and from this covetousness proceeds sin.

It is from this source that sin and irreligiousness flow, together with great misery. This is the spring also of all the cunning and hypocrisy of the world. It is covetousness that makes people commit sin.

From covetousness proceeds wrath; from covetousness flows lust; covetousness is the parent of loss of judgment, deception, pride, arrogance and moral death as well.

SHANTI PARVA (CLVIII, 2, 3 and 4)



SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

Although the Bhavamukha is by a few steps lower than the plane of the Attributeless, yet in this state, too, the aspirant retains quite a vivid realisation of Non-duality. The Master's experiences serve as illustrations to this fact.

NEEDLESS to mention here again that when the Master would experience the Cosmic Ego consciousness in the state of *Bhavamukha*, he had to come already a few steps down from the plane of the Attributeless to the higher regions within the province of Nescience. But here, too, the realisation of unity was so vivid that whatever thought or deed happened to occur in any part of the world seemed to the Master in this state as proceeding directly from his own self. Even a faint glimpse of the experiences of this plane is simply marvellous. The Master described before us how he had once been seriously troubled by the sight of a man walking over a patch of grassy field, as if the man were walking over his own chest. He felt excruciating pain and actual black marks were visible on the chest.

At a still lower level in the field of Nescience one realises oneself as the servant of God or His devotee, His child or part and parcel.

When the Master would come down to the still lower planes he

would ever look upon himself as a servant or a devotee of the Divine Mother, or as Her child, or as a part of Herself. Still lower lie the baser regions of Nescience where lust and anger, greed and torpor, hold their sway. As the Master rose above these planes with earnest and persistent efforts, his mind would never come down so far; or, rather, the Divine Mother would never allow it to do so. For, the Master would often say, "The Divine Mother never allows that child of Hers to take a wrong step who has resigned himself entirely into Her hands."

The complete destruction of the Master's false ego and his prolonged stay with the real Cosmic Ego. His attitude of the Guru was in consequence of his having this Cosmic Ego consciousness. It is not impossible for one and the same man to have humility and yet to be in the Role of the Teacher, these different attitudes being in conformity with the different planes he lives in.

Thus we understand that with the attaining of the Nirvikalpa Samadhi the false or limited ego of the Master was almost completely destroyed, and the little remnant of it that still survived, would always perceive itself as inseparably connected with, or as a part and parcel of, the Real or Cosmic Ego; or, approaching It

closer and closer, would at times be completely merged in It. That is why the Master could understand and control all thoughts that arise in all minds. For, the thoughts of the limited minds are wholly dependent on the Cosmic Mind for their existence, and inasmuch as the Master could ever remain identified with this Cosmic Ego he was always able to grasp the various thoughts of the individual egos. In that high spiritual plane, even the idea of his being a part of God would gradually fade away and the Cosmic Ego or the Ego of the Divine Mother would manifest Itself through him in the form of the Guru who has the authority to confer favours on, or to mete out punishment to, all his disciples. During those moments the Master never appeared to be the lowest of the low. His whole be-

haviour would then assume quite a different form. He would then ask the devotees what they wanted, as if like the Tree of Plenty he was bent upon granting at once whatever the disciples might pray for by means of his Superhuman Power. At Dakshineswar we have seen the Master daily taking up this attitude in order to bestow his favours on particular disciples; and most striking in this respect was the incident on the first of January in 1886. On that day the Master got into this mood and by mere touch transmitted his spiritual energy to, or roused up that which was lying dormant in, all the devotees who then happened to be present there. It was indeed a great miracle and will not be out of place if presented here (in a separate section).

THE MYSTIC AND THE KNOWER

"In all men lurks the light; yet in how few
Has it blazed forth, as it rightfully ought,
Illumining from within, our fleshly lamp,
And kindling cosmic flame in nigh-brought souls!"

(Illuminanda)

Doubt and Fear Natural

THE very mention of the word 'meditation' is enough to frighten some. In many it arouses disgust, while to still others it stands as a symbol of a dreamy life, a life divorced from all practical ability, filled at best with fruitless longings and aimless wanderings, and wound up at the worst by a quiet and irretrievable slipping into imbecility or

insanity. They are not to blame for forming opinions of this type, for out of the thousands who have deliberately embarked on a life of meditation, a mere "one" here and a mere "another" there attained the Highest and "saw" the Immanent Reality. The rest, perhaps due to wrong calculation or an imperfect grasp of the main principles of mind control, got side-

tracked in spite of their sincerity, were dragged down by temptations or had all their enthusiasm spent up after a few months of overstimulation and hankering after "powers". Surely it is nothing short of a tragedy that quite a large number of those who set out heroically, and often with an air of superiority, on this much-exalted path of meditation, could not effect in their personalities any tangible "rounding up" or awakening of nobler impulses to warrant such a marked departure from the path trodden by men of commoner stuff. It is quite natural, therefore, that this certainty of non-attainment and failure, as against the possibility of a remote success, should tend to dissuade fresh men from leaving the familiar world behind to undertake a risky voyage upon unknown waters.

An Able Plea

We are now, however, living in an age when chances of failure and even death are found to exercise no deterrent influence on growing numbers of men and women when once their competitive spirit happens to be directed towards the scoring of an endurance record in swimming or flying, or the climbing into the highest possible regions of the snow-capped Himalayas. It is, therefore, not too much to hope that enterprising men and women will come forward in equally large, if not larger, numbers and venture into the realm of mind control, when the veils of mystery covering the subject till now are all clean lifted,

and its various steps are arranged and explained in a manner which can be easily comprehended by persons of normal educational qualification. Nay, it is quite possible that as psychology "pushes back" a few "horizons," and the advantages of a systematic practice of graded steps in meditation are more widely recognised, mind control of the type which specially qualified individuals alone attempted in the past, can be safely and profitably incorporated into the scheme of studies for future generations. Such is the view held by Mrs. Alice A. Bailey, "whose experience of seven years with more than three thousand students has resulted in her conviction that the educational system of the West should include a technique not heretofore a part of formal curricula." Her book, 'From Intellect to Intuition', is an able plea for such inclusion, and reminds all educators that it is time to "prepare men for the new and divine experience" and for that wonderful experiment which will put them everywhere in possession of themselves—a thing hitherto the choice prerogative of the mystics and the knowers of the race."

Not Freaks of Nature

There are many who think that, as men belonging to a "scientific" age, they ought to refuse to believe in anything that cannot be seen. Recently we had the example of a writer disproving the existence of God by means of what he considered a single, scientifically delivered

blow. Wrote he: If there be a God, then he will know all things, and he can but acknowledge that he has never made himself so plainly evident to man that his existence could not be questioned. Therefore, as we may also assume that he is a righteous God, he cannot with any justice blame those who do not find him.....Bah! the thing is a farce. Not a scrap of evidence, not a signal flag, not a murmur to convince the wayfarer worn by life's toil and worry." Against this kind of unbelief, we have Mrs. Bailey's refreshing and cautiously-worded presentation of the experiences of genuine spiritual life. Let us, says she, use the word "spiritual" to signify the world of light and beauty, of order and purpose, about which the world scriptures speak, which is the object of the attentive research of the scientists, and into which the pioneers of the human family have always penetrated, returning to tell us of their experiences. These pioneers, the mystics and the knowers, are not "freak products of divine caprice or of blind evolutionary urge, but are themselves the guarantee of the ultimate achievement of the whole."

Zenith not yet Reached

Looking at the problem of evolution itself from a new angle, we find that man, as a thinking, feeling entity, has now arrived at a fair measure of understanding his instrument of knowledge, namely, the mind. He has become equipped with a wonderfully developed sensi-

tive response apparatus and a tolerably reliable faculty of reasoning. It is also found that he possesses the rudiments of a sense which may be termed the intuition; and with this equipment he is standing before the gates of the future, pondering within himself, "What does the future hold for me?" Has man reached the zenith of his development, and can he go no further? Or are there shades of meaning to life which have till now escaped his attention, and has such escape been due to the fact that he has latent powers and capacities *as yet unrealised*? For thousands of years, says Mrs. Bailey by way of reply, mystics and knowers all over our planet have borne witness to experience in subtler worlds where they have been brought into contact with forces and phenomena which are not of this physical world. Much of what they speak about meeting with angelic hosts can no doubt be discarded on the grounds of hallucination; and it may also be true that many of the "Saints" of old were psychopathic cases and neurotics. But there still remains "a residue of testimony and a sufficient number of reputable witnesses, substantiating this testimony, to force our belief in its verity." These witnesses to the unseen world have spoken with "words of power" and given forth messages which have moulded the thoughts of men, and directed the lives of millions. They the Buddhas and the Christs, the Founders of all the world religions

—all “Asiatic in origin”—have claimed besides, that there is a science of spiritual knowledge, and a technique of development whereby men could attain to the mystical experience and whereby they could know God. This technique is meditation; it is, as Mrs. Bailey describes in her characteristic style, an individual technique which will enable the student, who has profited by the usual academic training and experiences of life, to *expand his consciousness* until he *gradually transcends* his present limitations and reorients his mind to wider realisations.

Two Different Schools

Hitherto the mental development of man may be roughly said to have proceeded along two different lines. In the East persons of special qualification, as opposed to the masses, were given the benefits of a training which made them recognise, through direct experience of *failure* in control, that they had a wonderful mechanism, namely, their mind, and then led by means of graded steps to a state of complete mastery over it. By learning to make it one-pointed *at will*, it was found possible from this “inner laboratory” to effect connection with new energies and to awaken a new awareness. People have laughed, and still may laugh, at this Eastern “wisdom” and prefer to have it disposed of always in “quotation marks” as an example of crude faith and superstition. But, as Mrs. Bailey quotes from Dr. Jung, “it does not consist of senti-

mental, exaggeratedly mystical intuitions bordering on the pathological and emanating from ascetic recluses and cranks; the wisdom of the East is based on practical knowledge.” In the West also, up to the eighteenth century, specialised culture was imparted in the monasteries to those who could profit by it, and this produced rare individuals who have been responsible for giving unalterable shape to some aspects of human thought.

But the modern West, and the rest of the world following it, is now adopting in the main a policy of mass education. “Viewed from its most uninteresting aspect,” says Mrs. Bailey, “education can briefly be defined as the imparting of knowledge to a student, and usually to an unwilling student, who receives a mass of information that does not interest him in the least.” It is no doubt recognised that there is a mind, but its handling consists in a mere attempt to fill it with a little information on a vast number of unrelated topics, to train its memory aspect to be retentive and to make the content of that memory easily available for any occasion. Children, under such a discipline, evolve from a simple state of being alive into a stage of self-consciousness, they develop a sense of group relationships and through vocational training, etc., bring out their hidden capacities to such an extent as to function as economically independent and self-supporting members of society. They are taught to utilise their instincts and

intellect as part of their apparatus of self-preservation in the external world of human affairs. Only a relatively few pass on to a higher use of the mind through a genuine interest in scientific research or some similar field of activity, but the majority never achieve the maximum possibilities of mind control. The good work done by the academic training of the present day has therefore to be carried forward further until intellection itself is utilised to “release” the power of intuition and make it act *at will*. While, then, the mass of men would continue to be lifted by a standardised system of education calculated to bring “the greatest good to the greatest number,” the new scheme should be made to provide for the individual’s attaining his full heritage and experiencing illumination and direct apprehension of truth. “In this way,” points out Mrs. Bailey, “we may ultimately unify the methods of the past and of the East with those of the present and of the West.”

Wherein Each Failed

The value of such a synthesis will become more clear when one views impartially the virtues and defects of each method in its own sphere of adoption. The modern West has employed all its mental power for the control and utilisation of material things, the perfecting of physical comforts and accumulation of wealth. Its applied science has discovered labour-saving devices which turn out products on a scale large enough to flood a world market; but

men, instead of being relieved of labour and enabled to engage in the culture of the mind, have been thrown into greater uncertainty, confusion and misery than before because of wrong methods of distribution, spirit of cut-throat competition, passion for exploitation and a host of other evils. That there is a “spiritual centre” in man, from which he invariably expands into a state of group awareness with no “barriers” intervening, from which he recognises all men as “sons of God” and “heirs of immortal bliss” and therefore becomes incapable of “tearing down personalities” or fanning flames of hatred or widening the gulfs existing between races and groups, between rich and poor,—all these remain mere theories which the generality of men do not think it worth while to attempt to practise. In the East, spiritual realities have no doubt been more uniformly believed in, and mental power has been used for concentration and meditation and deep philosophical study; but the masses of the people, who could not profit by these practices owing to various reasons, have been left in “peculiar and strikingly terrible conditions” in the matter of physical living. Every one will recall to mind the forcible expressions in which the Swami Vivekananda gave vent to his righteous indignation at the neglect of the Indian masses. “No religion on earth,” wrote the Swami, “preaches the dignity of humanity in such a lofty strain as Hinduism, and no religion on earth

treads upon the necks of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism." "Oh, how my heart aches," he continued, "to think of what we think of the poor and the low in India! They have no chance, no escape, no way to climb up. The poor, the low, the sinner in India have no friends, no help—they cannot rise, try however they may. They sink lower and lower every day, they feel the blows showering upon them by a cruel society, and they do not know whence the blow comes. They have forgotten that they are men."

The Only Remedy

The ultimate solution of the problems of the East and the West, in short, of the world problems—if such a solution is possible at all—can thus lie only in a synthesis resulting in a system of education which is neither eastern nor western, but which is known to both and negates none of the virtues of either. When the East and the West will join hands and unite their best thoughts, "we shall have," as Mrs. Bailey assures us, "a synthetic and balanced teaching which will liberate the coming generations." And this is after all not a strange thing, hard to accomplish, for: "We are now one people. The heritage of one race lies open to another; the best thought of centuries is available for all; and ancient methods and techniques must meet and interchange." Each, of course, will have to modify its mode of presentation and make an honest attempt to understand the spirit underlying the

teachings of the other, and this, fortunately, has already begun to take place; both the East and the West do take from each other to mutual advantage.

The Two Ways

From the earliest stage of human existence, in the East and the West alike, there has been present the inner drive towards "a consciousness of something Other, of a factor lying beyond known human experience, of a goal or quest, of a Deity." This subtle awareness defies all attempts at definition, but it has emerged inevitably and kept men "rushing forward" yearning for an experience which neither the mind as ordinarily understood nor the environments, however pleasant, have been able to provide. This has been the religious impulse, the mystic urge, becoming increasingly manifest in each life in a manner appropriate to the stage of evolution reached. About the mystic and his experience, Mrs. Bailey makes a very interesting and useful distinction. The words 'mystic' and 'mystical', says she, have been very loosely used and made to cover not only the pure mystic with his visions and peculiar sensory reactions, but also those who are transiting into the realm of pure knowledge and of certainty. Devotion and aspiration of an intense type lead to states of bliss, but they come "unexpectedly" and are of a fleeting character; these form one type. In contrast to these stand those states which are the result of a well regulated and intelligent approach

to Reality, and which can be repeated at will according to laws learnt through direct experience. These may be spoken of respectively as the way of the *heart* and the way of the *head* or *intellect*.

Prayer and the Mystic

Taking her stand on this distinction, Mrs. Bailey gives us an interesting description of prayer and contrasts it with meditation, the subject matter of her book. The masses of the people, she says, being polarised in their desire nature, and predominantly mystical in temperament, ask for various things when they think of God. They long to possess certain virtues and graces of character; they petition to the Deity to alleviate their own sufferings and grant them material benefits; often they intercede for those who are near and dear to them; they also struggle with all earnestness to make God answer their request for illumination and divine realisation. Whatever it is, there is a demand for what is wanted and there is the anticipation that something will be eventually acquired, should the faith be sufficiently strong. Of these the fourth type which expects to be blessed with heavenly bliss and a vision of the Lord certainly ranks as the highest, but even here it is the emotional nature and the feeling part of the aspirant that is involved; the approach has been through the *heart*. Persons of this type, the pure mystics, we are told, no doubt gain a flash of insight when properly disciplined; they see

the Beloved and rise to higher states of awareness. The ecstasy that they get has, however, been the result of devotion and intense emotion, of the 'lifting up of the heart unto the Lord and the outpouring of the love nature at His feet'. Afterwards, as the writings of the mystics themselves show, there has always followed a painful period of readjustment to the life of every day, accompanied by a feeling of depression and disappointment because the blissful experience has ended, and cannot be recovered at will. This becomes the occasion, therefore, for a fresh cycle of devotion and struggle, till "the spirit beats her mortal bars" and the vision of the Beloved is contacted anew.

The Way of the Knower

The Knower, on the contrary, says Mrs. Bailey, has a different method. His is the method of directing the *intellect* to the object of his search; his is the way of the mind and its discipline and control. Whereas the pure mystic proceeds with a belief in a God who can *give*, the Knower goes through his practices with the belief in the divinity of man himself, a belief that does not in any way require a negation of the premises of the mystical group. Indeed the mystical way is a preparation for the way of knowledge; and where the mystic stops in adoration and ecstasy, the seeker after true knowledge, who is but a "convinced mystic," takes up the task and carries the work forward. It is here that meditation and the steps connected with it play

their part in utilising the higher faculties of the mind to fulfil the new function of revelation. To do this successfully and with ease, the aspirant will need a clear idea of his goal, of the results eventually to be demonstrated in his life and conduct, when his interest has been given a healthy shift from the things that now engross his attention. He will also have to acquire an accurate and impartial estimate of his mental equipment, of the virtues and defects with which he is pursuing his quest. The personality has thus to be properly studied and then, through an ordered process of unfoldment, integrated and finally transcended. A conscious, as opposed to "unexpected and fleeting," at-one-ment is then achieved between the lower or personal self and the higher or divine self. "The hitherto disorganised, separate aspects of the human being are synthesised and unified and brought into harmonious relation with each other and with the soul, their creator, their source of energy and their motivating power."

The Life of Inspiration

The results of this realised union, says Mrs. Bailey, of this union "which is realised in the contemplative stage" is illumination of the mind and of the brain, its instrument, "provided both have been held positively steady and in a waiting condition." This illumination, when it has become frequent, and finally, capable of being drawn upon at will, produces invariably the "life of inspiration." And as to what the

life of inspiration consists in, she explains in clear terms: "True servers of the race and those who have contacted the world of the soul, through meditation, have no time for platitudes; these can safely be left to the parrots of the world; they are too busy serving constructively to care to pick up mantles which are only a veil to pride; they are not interested in the good opinion of any person, incarnate or discarnate, and care only for the approval of their own soul, and are vitally interested in the pioneering work of the world... They will fan the flame of love wherever they go; they will teach brotherhood in its true inclusiveness, and not a system which will teach brotherhood to a few and leave the rest outside... They will recognise all men as sons of God and will not set themselves upon a pedestal of righteousness and knowledge from whence they proclaim the truth as they see it, and consign those to destruction, who do not see as they do, or do not act as they feel they should... They will, in short, occupy themselves by building up the characters of men and not waste their time in tearing down personalities, and dealing with effects and with results; they will not regard one race as better than another, though they may recognise the evolutionary plan and the work that each race has to do."

A Bright Forecast

"What is going to save the world," asks Mrs. Bailey in her concluding chapter, "from its present agony,

economic distress, and chaos?" Straight comes the answer with a ring and tone which will recall to many the utterances of the Swami Vivekananda: "May it not be the emergence into active being of a group of practical mystics, who, banded together in the sense of a divine unity, work in practical ways on earth? They will not retire into monasteries or to the silent places of the world, no matter how alluring that may appear, but they will participate in the normal life of the planet. They will be the business executives in our great cities; they will carry forward our political programmes; they will lead the young along paths of right

education; they will control our economic, social and national destinies. They will do all this from the centre of their being and from the standpoint of the soul; they will know the secret of illumination; they will know how to submit all problems to the omniscience of the soul; they will know the secret of the life that makes all men brothers." "This integrating group of mystics and knowers is the hope of the world and constitutes the World Saviour."

"Ours," then, is the "privilege of joining their ranks by submitting ourselves to the technique of meditation, to the discipline of right daily living and to the influence of the pure motive of Service."

WHAT IS MEANT BY "DISINTERESTED ACTION?"

By K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, M.A.

THE question raised in the title of the article and the answer given to it in what follows will, it is hoped, supply an ample apology, if one were needed, for adding one more article on the Gita to the numerous writings on the same already in the field. The contention of this paper is that the Gita teaches not merely different paths (Jñāna mārga, etc.) but the Path of spiritual life—a full and whole life, a life lived in accordance with the demands of the entire personality of man. The possibility of living such a total life of the spirit and how such a complete life alone can solve the practical problems of life—these, in the opinion of the writer, are the two fundamental issues with reference to which the whole argument of the Gita is developed. In themselves

they contain both a question and its answer. How best to perform actions so as to get the maximum benefit out of them with the minimum risk of danger and failure? Only by living a total life of the spirit, which is equivalent to a life in accordance with God.

The underlying interest then is mainly practical. Even the doing of action, which it may be thought comes instinctively to man, requires, according to the Gita, to be learnt and cultivated by men (IV, 16, 17). The uniqueness of the Gita consists just in this, that it raises a problem which has not even been perceived to be such by other peoples, the problem, *viz.*, how should action be performed? This includes (1) the ethical problem of what actions should be performed or avoided,

(2) the practical problem of achieving success in works, and (3) the cathartic problem, so to say, of purifying action, of counteracting its evil after-effects. These problems presuppose three types of difficulties involved in all action which must now be discussed. The Gita attempts to solve them all in its own way and small wonder therefore that the Teacher claims for this philosophy of life the virtue of imparting "skill in works" (*Yogah karmasu kausalam*, II, 50).

The Hindu believes in the operation of the law of cause and effect so absolutely that he extends its application even to human deeds and their consequences. Every action must bear its proper fruit either immediately or in the remote future. But in ethics (unlike in the physical sciences) where imputability is ascribed to the agent, we should consider the effects of an action not merely upon the persons directly concerned and in the immediate present, but upon all persons indirectly affected and in the remote future as well. Since, however, most of these future effects cannot rebound upon the agent in a single life, the Hindu postulates a series of lives—future births—for the *jiva* in which he may enjoy out fully the results of his actions. But the possibility of generating fresh seeds of action in these lives makes the process really unending and this prospect is truly terror-striking to the Hindu mind. One cannot sit still without performing action and yet every single action performed means welding one more link to the already endless chain of *samsara*. The only way to escape through this veritable *impasse* is to learn the secret of non-germinating action and such a secret the Gita proposes to impart to the disciple.

There is a more immediate practical difficulty involved in action and that is, that many of our actions do not realise the results we expected of them. The "cussedness" of things in general is such that we intend one thing and realise another (*krta hāna*, *akrta abhyāgama*), the action seems to have failed of its intended effect. The only way of overcoming this difficulty is to gain more and more adequate knowledge of nature in order finally to be able to control and direct her to work for our purposes.

And finally there is the ordinary ethical difficulty of choosing from among alternative courses of action. What we usually call a duty—being only a relative conception depending on our relation to others—may sometime become a terrible sin—as Arjuna's duty became in *his* eyes—in the light of the awakened inner conscience. In such a case of conflict would not action be arrested and its purpose frustrated?

Arjuna was confronted with all the three difficulties and that is the reason why he refused to fight in spite of many plausible arguments put forward by Krishna in favour of fighting. The metaphysics of the self (II, 11-25, 30), worldly wisdom (II, 26) appeal to his sense of social duty (II, 32-33)—all leave him entirely cold and unmoved. It is only when Krishna began to paint the picture of the *Sthita-prajna* as one supremely unconcerned with all the vicissitudes of life and yet incessantly practising the *dharma* of *karma* (II, 40)—the Yoga following which one can break through the bonds of *karma* (II, 39)—that Arjuna got interested in the discourse. The *karma-yoga*, however, taught in this stage solves only one of the three difficulties discussed above. And since a satisfactory

philosophy of action must solve all of them, Krishna attempts to meet them all by developing his present argument into two higher stages later on. And only at the end of it all, when the argument was brought to a final conclusion through seventeen long and weary chapters, when Krishna queried whether the delusion of his ignorance had been finally destroyed, did Arjuna humbly yet touchingly reply:

नद्यो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥

(xviii, 73)

In this article, however, we are concerned only with the first stage of the argument and it is the philosophy of action contained in about half-a-dozen verses of the second chapter—the philosophy of *nishkama karma*, (disinterested performance of duty) as it is called—that has been on the lips of everybody in recent times. Everybody glibly talks of *nishkama karma* without fully understanding its implications and the expression has become so hackneyed indeed that it is small wonder that unsympathetic critics have condemned it as a portmanteau for stowing away undesirabilities and unintelligibilities. What really is the significance of this ideal for practical life?

On a first look the idea of disinterested performance of duty—"to work only thou hast a right but not to the fruits thereof"—seems to be fairly intelligible and it is this idea that has been made familiar to us in the writings of Kant, Hegel, and Green in modern, and of the Stoics in ancient times. Every school-boy knows copy book maxims like "Do your duty for duty's sake" "My Station and its Duties" etc., and if this was all that the Gita intended to teach, there was really no need for making

so much fuss about it. The really eccentric, unintelligible and absurd part of the teaching—according to the critic—is contained in the latter half of the 47th and in the succeeding two verses. "Be thou not the producer of the fruits of the actions" (47); "Remain unconcerned as regards success and failure" (48); "Work with desire is really far inferior to that performed with the mind undisturbed by thoughts of results.....Wretched are they who act for results."

This is really something more radical. Roughly speaking it comes to this: Act disregarding the consequences of your action. It is certainly quite a novel teaching about work, but is it really wholesome advice? How can any sane person be expected to act without thinking of the consequences of his action? Is it not clear that this is teaching intended for political revolutionaries? And going a step further, how can any one act disinterestedly? Is not this idea, as Bentham long ago showed, a psychological fiction as well as a logical contradiction? Every motive must in fact be interested or disinterested according as we connect it with some human satisfaction or other (not necessarily selfish) or view it as not having the self and its happiness primarily in view. An action presupposes a mind and a purpose towards the realisation of which the mind is directed; it involves, *i.e.*, conscious deliberation which implies regard for the consequences judged to follow from it, whether the consequences relate to motive or intention. Only fools and mad men can act thoughtlessly, *i.e.*, disregarding the consequences of action. Does the Gita then in its condemnation of "acting for results" intend to teach really thoughtless, motiveless, intentionless action? And if it once

be granted that regard for consequences is necessary for action, how is disinterestedness or desirelessness (*nishkamatva*) in regard to it possible? If certain consequences are envisaged by the agent as those which are going to be realised by his action, he must perforce will them, actively desire them. Otherwise desirelessness would only be a disguise for spiritual starvation or anaemia, opposed to the true development of one's mental and moral capacities.

Let us begin by admitting at once that the Gita teaches neither thoughtless nor (in the ordinary sense) desireless action. The Gita is well aware of the fact that action implies mind and intellectual deliberation. Says Krishna: "Devotees in the path of work perform action only with body, mind, sense and intellect (*buddhi*), forsaking attachment, for the purification of the heart" (V. II.)¹ Since *buddhi*—which is the faculty of deliberation and determination—and mind which implies consciousness, are admitted as the causes of action, it cannot be said that the Gita advocates thoughtless or purposeless action.² And as regards the alleged advocacy of action in disregard of all consequences, here is Gita's own declaration about the matter.³ "That action is declared to be *tamasic* which is undertaken through delusion, without regard to consequences, loss, injury to others, and (one's own) capacity." Can anything be a clearer refutation of the doctrine of neglect of consequences?

In the light of these unambiguous admissions on the part of the Gita, we must interpret the philosophy of

1. Cf. also XVIII, 13.

2. Cf. also XVIII, 18.

3. अनुबन्धं चयं हिंसात्मनोपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् ।
मोहादारभ्यते कर्म तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥

nishkama karma in an altogether different manner. And to begin with, it is well to remember that when the Gita talks of *karma*, it intends to refer not only to duties proper but to all kinds of action. As regards the duties themselves—*niyata karmani*—religious, social, neighbourly—the injunction, "to work only thou hast a right but not to the fruits thereof," means that the duties which are debts to be paid in certain situations and on certain conditions accepted by the agent, must be performed without any hope of reward or return to oneself (III, 8, 19, XVIII, 5-7 and 9). Secondly the injunction applies also to cases of action which are strictly not duties at all but arise out of the relations between *men as such*. In such situations, the ideal of *nishkama karma* evidently means that although one has nothing to gain for oneself by the action, still it should be undertaken for the good of others, for *loka-sangraha* (the leading of the peoples) as the Gita puts it. This is clearly brought out in verses 20-25 of the third chapter. Krishna, the perfect Lord of eternally perfected desires, gives His own example to show that He is still continuously engaged in action lest otherwise the worlds should perish. Hence the wise should act without attachment *desirous* only for the guidance of the world. It is interesting to observe here that the Gita deliberately employs the words "desirous of" (चिन्तयन्) and "having in view" (संपश्यन्) thereby making it clear that action need not be desireless or disinterested (*nishkama*) in all cases. Actions aiming at the good of others must be sustained by the force of desire, with a conscious striving, for their good. But even so, does not a contradiction arise in view of

the emphatic and general statement that has already been made that "work with desire is verily far inferior to that performed with the mind undisturbed by thoughts of results?" And here we come upon the central secret of the philosophy of action at this stage. In the case of all actions whatsoever, self-regarding or other-regarding, duty or no duty, the secret of performance, the Gita tells us, lies in not worrying oneself about the success or failure of one's actions. *Nishkama karma* does not mean that the agent should not think about the consequences at all but having calculated all the probable consequences and striven only for such as he desired, the agent should still have the necessary firmness of mind not to be either unduly elated by the success, or unnecessarily depressed by the failure, of his actions (II, 48). This is the reason why Krishna always takes care to emphasise *sthita-prajnatva* in the man of action and couples the two ideas together (II, 38, 48, 50). This evenness of mind (*samatwam, buddhi*) is inculcated by the Gita not merely on grounds of common sense but for scientific and philosophical reasons as well. The explanation of these takes us to the second and third stages in the Gita's philosophy of action but so much of it as is necessary for the present purpose cannot be avoided. For, in the second stage it is clearly taught that it is not the individual who is the doer of the action, but *Prakriti*, the Nature-soul, with her triple *gunas* of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, that is the real doer, the executive force, of all actions. The individual has not even the claim to be the doer of the action; if so, what right can he put forth for the fruits thereof? By all means let him calculate the consequences;

let him even desire such results as he has envisaged; but let him not identify himself with the results to such an extent as to make himself miserable should he fail to realise them. For the results are clearly beyond the control of the agent; when once a course of action has been set in motion in the world, its further development—its consequences—are clearly left to the inscrutable workings of nature. And science tells us that in nature there are such things as counter-action of causes and intermixture of effects (II, 40.) Natural phenomena are so complex and interwoven that even the most expert knowledge is not able to thoroughly analyse them and anticipate the probable results of each or to prevent the modification of one effect by another; there will always be some portion which must be left to the chance, caprice, goodwill—call it what you will—of nature. In the circumstances, wisdom consists in doing our best and leaving the results to nature's hands. Verily, wretched are they who act for results, who suffer "from (mental) fever" on account of consequences (III, 30). And finally this same explanation applies to those peculiar cases in which the action, though self-regarding, is still a duty, *e. g.*, self-development. Even here *nishkama karma* requires that we should develop such capacities as we possess and as there are opportunities for developing. Let nobody therefore incur 'waste of the unfinished attempt' by trying to become an artist, a scientist, a philosopher, etc.

Further, it is not *disinterestlessness* so much as *disinterestedness* (non-attachment, mental detachment from feelings and desires) that is inculcated by the Gita everywhere (III, 19, 25; XIV, 6-7; XVIII, 6, 9, 10-11, etc.). And the significance of this is

partly ethical and partly philosophical and eschatological. For as Kant has taught us, actions rooted in natural affections cannot claim that logical necessity and strict universality which belong to the perception of the moral law. And we take a great practical risk when we let our natural goodness of heart merely take the place of a sense of duty. For feelings are after all contingent, fleeting, unreliable; the right feeling may not be there; it may not be there in the right intensity; nor can we be certain that it will not be partial, one-sided. But above all inner attachment to results binds. It forges innumerable links in the endless chain of *samsara*. When you yearn with your whole soul for the attainment of a certain result, success makes you yearn for more things, and even failure, like success, prolongs the process of birth and death. For in nature there is

a subtle force called the law of desire according to which anyone strongly desiring to obtain something, upon which his whole heart is set, is bound to obtain it, if not in this life, then in future lives. It is the mental bond—the psychological magnet that attracts objects to itself—that lays the foundation for future birth. The only way then to break through the bonds of *karma* is not to set our heart and soul upon it, to do it indeed (for through inaction nobody gained anything and it is psychologically impossible—III, 4-5, 8; XVIII, 11) but to do it impersonally, purely as a matter of duty or *loka-sangraha* (in this stage), or as sacrifice, an offering, to that Supreme Lord Who is ultimately the Source of all action and the Giver of all fruits (in the third stage). So doing, the individual will kill the germinating potency of action, *burn it up*, so to say, and attain to the Highest (III, 19).

HOW PRESENT-DAY SCIENTISTS LOOK AT RELIGION—I

By Swami Iswarananda

OF the many problems that are agitating the mind of thinkers as well as of the common man not the least important is the question of the future of religion. A century and half ago the reign of religion was supreme, no suspicion was entertained as to its need or its *raison d'être*. With the advent of modern science, however, which insisted upon evidence for any belief whatever and which made sensational discoveries of facts and laws of nature which flatly contradicted the biblical cosmogony, etc., scepticism about the veracity of the revealed teachings of the scriptures increased apace among the educat-

ed section. The validity of religious experience was questioned everywhere. The scientists were looked upon as demigods fit to sit in judgment on every subject. The word 'scientific' carried an authority which could not be questioned further. The popular attitude of submission to 'scientific' was based on the fact that scientists did not believe more than what was warranted on the evidence of facts. Many scientists were either agnostics or sceptics about religion, some openly professed materialism or secularism and either disbelieved or denied a spiritual domain. It was thought that science had

completely undermined the basis of the most sacred institution of mankind. The religious-minded everywhere felt that the ground was slipping under their feet and everything looked dark before them. The Church of Rome, in fear and despair, persecuted the new rival with anathemas, prisons, and the gallows for its votaries. This was followed by a period of theological ridicule and attack of the scientific ideas which clashed with the biblical ideas of creation and cosmology, etc., but this could carry no conviction to the scientific-minded. Scientific ideas gained ground in spite of clerical opposition and theology had to surrender post after post to the advancing tide of religious knowledge, until at last it began to change its attitude. The theologian withdrew from the fields covered by natural science. It was felt that, after all, doctrines and dogmas about the nature or origin of the physical universe may not be the essentials of a religious faith and could best be left to be investigated by scientific methods. Theologians proposed to confine themselves to the spiritual domain to which physical science as such had no access and on which it could not pronounce any authoritative opinion. It was felt more and more by theologians that there need not be an irreconcilable conflict between the religious and scientific attitudes, and some openly embraced and incorporated into their theology the facts and laws newly established by science. The new theology went further and read a meaning unsuspected by the older theology into the scientific discoveries, which, according to it, gave support to the religious concepts such as soul, God, immortality, free will, personal responsibility, creation, etc.

Thus the twentieth century opened with a decreased opposition and an increasing rapprochement between science and religion. Eminent scientists pronounced that physical science had no right to trespass into the province of religion, that religious ideas must be taken for what they are worth on independent evidence. It was also becoming increasingly evident that the multiplication of material comforts did not bring with it an increase of happiness promised by science. On the other hand the Great War had proved that science which invented destructive weapons had made human life more miserable on a vaster scale than before, and that there must be something other than the scientific outlook, if humanity is to be saved from tragic destruction. The War opened the eyes of scientists to this fact. They openly confessed the inability of physical science to make man more ethical or more happy. Biologists recognised more and more the insufficiency of the description of the phenomena of life in terms of physical science. Psychology drew more and more attention to the reign of the mind and to the importance of the inner man and to the study of religious experience. But the psychological study of religious experience has only undermined the basis of religion, in so far as it has been mostly undertaken in a spirit of destructive criticism. The historical method applied to the study of religion has discredited it further by tracing the beginnings of religious ideas and practices to the worship of nature, or ghosts, or ancestors &c. But none of these methods has been able to appraise so far the modicum of truth in, and the value of, religion. It is now being recognised that neither origins nor psychological motives

of faith could detract from the need and value of religion. A constructive study of religious psychology has yet to be undertaken in order to show the place of religion in the development of the human mind. Today the pragmatic and biological values of religion are getting recognised by scientific thinkers.

Meanwhile the following questions have been pressing for an answer: Is there any inevitable incompatibility between man's religious and his scientific outlooks upon existence? If he adopts the one, must he discard the other? Or, in other words, are they only incommensurables?

It was desirable that answers to these questions must be got, for on them depended the question whether the foundations of the religion of millions of believers in christendom as well as outside were held in flat contradiction to the established laws or principles of science. As it is unscientific to believe any more in a flat earth, or the revolution of the sun round the earth, or the sudden creation of a world in a trice, so it may be that soul, God, immortality etc., have been disproved by science. It was at one time believed that science had disproved the truth of such ideas and that only unscientific minds could any more continue to be religious. Yet the fact remains that millions still continue to hold religious beliefs and feel an intensely intimate personal relationship with the Supreme Being. In spite of all scientific knowledge men's faith in a spiritual domain could not be exorcised. May it be that there is no incompatibility between the two standpoints? It was felt necessary that a direct answer to these questions should be obtained from the scientists themselves. Are leading men of science, as indivi-

duals, opposed to the religious outlook on life? Do they consider that natural science as a whole discredits the theistic view of the Ultimate Reality?

In 1932 the Christian Evidence Society of England determined to clear up this doubt and ascertain correctly the views of scientists by addressing the Fellows of the Royal Society with a series of six questions on the most cardinal tenets of religious faith. The undertaking was intended to elucidate directly their own version of their faith, beyond the possibility of misinterpretations or misrepresentations. The questions, though issued on behalf of Christianity, are not the less interesting, or of less concern, to the followers of other religions when science seems to be undermining the foundations, not of this or that religion only, but the very basis of religion itself. India is passing through a phase of thought through which Europe passed in the 19th century, and is witnessing a revolt against all traditional beliefs, the basis of it being the scientific, rationalistic outlook of the 19th century Europe. It will therefore be of great interest to know how far Europe is forging ahead of its 19th century thought and revising and modifying its views with regard to questions of momentous importance not less to India than to the rest of the world. We propose to give below an analysis of the replies to the questionnaire given by the two hundred Fellows of the Royal Society, which represent more or less the views of the scientific world in general.

At the very outset it may be objected that scientists, being specialists in their own branches of research, are not qualified to speak on questions of religion. As well may we consult medical men for legal advice or go to lawyers for

medical opinions. As against this objection the following considerations may be urged. Religion is every man's concern, and we should consider how different types of men regard it. Every religion has its own cosmology which should not be out of harmony with the best scientific thought of the day. What men of science think soon becomes the property of the educated whose deference to the scientist, in any case, is not less than to the theologian. Moreover Truth is a whole, and man inevitably philosophises, endeavouring to form one coherent whole of all experiences and ideas, however much he may be a specialist. It is the whole man that answers the question of the nature of the whole of existence. As the religious man also does not wish to divide up his mind into idea-tight compartments but tries to form a coherent philosophy embracing all human experience, he desires to know whether any of his ideas which he classifies as "religious" contain conceptions which are discredited by the best natural science of the day. Religious people believe in a God of Truth who could not be supposed to be pleased with ignorance. The scientist being a seeker after Truth, his knowledge of nature or God's creation may help us in our knowledge of God. Lastly, quite apart from the fact that the Fellows of the Royal Society are leading men of science, their pre-eminence in the world of culture and their great love of Truth for its own sake, together with the fact that cautiousness of statement is one of the most general characteristics of scientists, render their opinions on the subject of religion, theology, human responsibility, etc., of great value to those who are interested in the *modern environment of religion*. Urged by these con-

siderations the Christian Evidence Society thought itself justified in seeking first hand information from the scientists by asking them their opinions about a subject which falls outside their field of specialisation. The religious as well as the scientific world will feel equally thankful to the Christian Evidence Society for getting up the analysis of the answers in a book called the "Religion of the Scientists," edited by C. L. Drawbridge, M. A., and published by Ernest Benn, London, to which we are indebted for the following information.

The general comments, made variously by the Fellows of the Royal Society, on the project are not less illuminating than the replies to the questions themselves, with regard to their general attitude towards the problem of religion. Of the many scores of replies received, all except one assumed that the aim of the sponsors was to discover facts, irrespective of whether they found them congenial, and gave them credit for being equally honest and straightforward as themselves. Only one supposed that they would not care to quote him, his opinions being what they are, but nevertheless answered candidly all the questions. One Fellow, an orthodox Christian, threw cold water on the project and did not see his way to reply to any of the questions, remarking that nobody would care to reply. Two hundred Fellows of the Royal Society answered the queries. Several others sent apologies and explanations as to why they had not answered the questions. Others answered all the queries in a sentence "I don't know." Other Fellows, well known to be religious, did not at all reply. For some the questions were too difficult to answer. Others considered it un-

scientific to answer the questions the terms of which were not defined. Some were afraid of being misunderstood. Many Fellows said that their religious views were of no value or interest to others and some, in any case, preferred not to be catechised. One scientist replied it is seldom worth while to mix oil and water (meaning religion and sciences). One Fellow simply wrote, "In the great hand of God I stand." Another replied, "The fool has said in his heart, 'there is no God,' and nothing I can say is likely to change his opinion." Other Fellows said that Truth cannot be arrived at by counting heads and no purpose will be served by answering the questions. Some excused themselves as they feared they would be disturbed in their regular work. Others refrained from answering the questions on the ground that they are not qualified to speak on the subjects dealt with in the questions. Others wanted to avoid all controversy on religion, they neither asked about other people's faith nor gave out their own. Very few resented being questioned by strangers. One said he was an agnostic and left it at that. Another had not thought about the questions for the last sixty

years. Some others referred to their books and the articles published by them. One church member and a lay preacher, a professor of chemistry, wrote that the catechism did not appeal to him. Several drew a distinction between believing and knowing, and said the man of science concerns himself only with what he knows. Many Fellows welcomed the attempt to discover the religious views of scientists and the large majority replied 'yes' or 'no' to the questions. A large number of Fellows said that "natural science" merely means the ever-developing and changing views of men who aim at evolving their beliefs as the evidence accumulates.

For more than one reason the sponsors did not think it advisable to define the terms in the queries. Busy men of science could not be expected to read lengthy explanations. If the terms had been defined, probably they should not have elicited the ideas of the various men of science as to what meaning such words as 'spiritual' convey to them. Besides definitions limit the conceptions, and the idea was to know whether men of science believed in any kind of spiritual existence.

(To be Continued)

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION*

By A. S.

THE fearful unemployment among the educated middle classes in India has drawn pointed attention to the defects of our educational system and its failure to provide a living wage to the thousands of graduates who are every year turned out of the portals of the universities. The feeling has been growing that something must be done, and that immediately, to relieve the economic distress of educated young India, and the hope is expressed that all will be well if only vocational education is provided on a large scale for the youth of the country, instead of the present "literary" education. What exactly is meant by vocational education, what its implications are and what are the conditions necessary for inaugurating a system of vocational education are not sufficiently understood. In the brochure "Vocational Education" by N. S. Subba Rao, M. A., Bar-at-Law, which is a reprint of the article the author contributed to the educational supplement of the *Hindu*, the salient features of the problem are set out.

By vocational education is ordinarily understood the training of the young to fit them for specific occupations. Simple as the definition is, it is in the application of the principle to the varying economic conditions and human material that complexities arise. Even in the West the system is a comparatively recent development. Each

boy or girl is a potential citizen of the country and must be equipped with the basic education to discharge the duties of citizenship. So the purpose of education is not only to secure the highest development of the individual but also to fit him for effective participation in social activities. In other words, the education which is made available to the individual should be such as to fit him for his future place in society, by providing him practical preparation to become a useful and productive member of society. It follows that the present educational system of the country, judged by this standard, needs to be organised so as to enable the pupils "to acquire the mental attributes and abilities which will make them efficient and happy economic producers."

It is admitted that only a small percentage of the pupils who are in the school go to the universities. So in evolving a scheme of vocational education, care should be taken that boys and girls are not trained for occupations for which there is no place in the economic life of the country. The present excess in the supply of university trained men has already created a problem of wastage which will become even greater when expensive institutions and courses are established to impart vocational education without a proper understanding and appreciation of the economic needs of the country. An eco-

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conomic survey which will indicate the kind of occupations for which training may be given, the distribution of industries actual and potential in different parts of the country, etc., is a necessary preliminary to the inauguration of any scheme of vocational education. It is to be remembered that preparation for earning a livelihood is not the sole or even the principal object of education and that life is more than livelihood. The promotion of vocational education, so vital in itself to the life of the community, should not therefore be allowed to obscure higher values. The courses of study in the high schools should be sufficiently diversified so as to provide appropriate training for the varying aptitudes of the pupils with a view to equip them for further studies either in the universities or in technical institutions outside the university.

In the essay on "Vocational Tests" the author gives valuable suggestions for establishing an organisation to give the youths the advantages of scientific guidance to vocational preparation, and refers to what are known as employment conferences, held in a number of countries in Europe to give guidance to children and parents in the

choice of occupation, in the testing of children in respect of aptitudes and emotional qualities as well as physical tests. We agree with the author that this organisation will also be useful in bringing employers into touch with the educational organisation of the country, and enlist their sympathy and support in the task of occupational adjustment. The author also refers to what is known as the "Sandwich" system which is very much in vogue in England by means of which work for livelihood goes side by side with training in a vocational school. This is evidently the counterpart of the "try-out" courses in vogue in America to help the pupil and discover his individual fitness for an occupation. The pupil tries his hand in various lines of work before settling down.

The author who is the responsible head of the educational department in Mysore, has an intimate knowledge of the youths of the country and their needs and is evidently fitted to advise on the problem of vocational education which is the cry of the hour; and it is to be hoped that educational reformers and others interested in the welfare of India will contribute to its solution.

THE SYSTEM OF THOUGHT REVEALED IN THE BHAGAVAD GITA

By K. A. Krishnaswamy Iyer, B.A.

(Continued from previous issue)

HAVING dealt with the question of Identity, I shall proceed to the other points of the Monistic system which next claim our attention. First in importance stands the problem of Maya. Sri Krishna identifies Prakriti with Maya, for he derives the Gunas from either

indifferently. In VII, 14, Maya is described as consisting of the Gunas. In III, 29, the ignorant are referred to as deluded by the Gunas of Prakriti. In VII, 13, the Gunas of Prakriti are described as deluding the ignorant. In VII 4, Sri Krishna refers to His Prakriti

or Nature as being twofold, the Superior which manifests itself in organic life, and the Inferior made up of the five elements, together with Mind, Reason, and Egoism. In VII, 14, the Lord says, "Those that seek Me transcend My Maya." In VII, 25, He declares, "I am enveloped in Power-Illusion." In V, 15, the understanding is shown to be enveloped in ignorance which deludes all mortals. In XIV, 8, Darkness is traced to Ajnana or ignorance which dwells in all embodied beings. In X, 11, Sri Krishna says He destroys the ignorance of His Devotees, out of compassion. From these extracts, it is evident that Maya is not merely the Power of Iswara which may be exercised by Him solely for the good of the world, but is an agency of delusion which has its root in ignorance, and which has to be transcended by wisdom or True Knowledge. This is in perfect consonance with the system of Non-Dualism, which refers all multiplicity to Avidya or ignorance, by which we naturally transpose the qualities of the Seer to the Seen and *vice versa*. Arjuna's delusion itself is based on his confounding the physical body with Atman. When by Avidya the Supreme Spirit is invested with qualities and is converted into the Creator, the same Pure Spirit passes over into the individual soul wrapped in ignorance, and the world as an appearance is born, with all its features of time, space and causation. Accordingly we read in VII, 24, "Men devoid of reason regard Me, the Unmanifest, as having become manifest, for they know not My higher nature, which is not subject to change or destruction, and than which a better cannot be conceived." The notion of Iswara, then, as the Creator of the world, through the instrumentality of Maya, is a pro-

duct of ignorance, and He loses His separate entity, when ignorance is dispelled by wisdom. But this does not mean the unreality of God, of the world, or of the soul. Their reality and distinction are not diluted in the smallest degree so long as wisdom has not arisen. With the rise of the Knowledge of Oneness, all these phantoms of the Maya-ridden intellect must disappear and the soul come into what is his own by birth-right. This disposes of the stock objection of the Realists, namely, why, if the Omniscient Lord knew that the world was unreal, did he address His teachings to Arjuna, as if he were a distinct entity? Now the whole picture of distinctions presented by the epic poet is of the empirical grade and is entitled to empirical reality. To the unenlightened reader, they have an empirical validity. When, however, he realises his own nature, he becomes one with all beings; and the distinctions of life such as the Scripture, the Preceptor, Duty, Meditation, in short, the whole panorama of the diversified universe becomes transmuted into the One Great Reality; and objections and answers are alike put out of court, silenced.

When Sankara was similarly questioned, "Which is the locus of ignorance—the soul or the Supreme Self?", he replied unhesitatingly, "It is you, the questioner." "But according to you, I am the Highest Self," rejoined the objector. "In that case," answered Sankara, "there is no ignorance, for all distinctions are extinct."

An explanation of the world now becomes easy. "All this is Vasudeva" in VII, 14, is but a verbal variant of "All is Brahman" of the Upanishads. The antithetical terms in which Sri Krishna describes himself and the true Yogin, can be

reconciled only if two points of view, empirical and transcendental, are admitted.

IX, 4 & 5. All the beings are in Me, yet they are not in Me. Behold my Yogic power!

VI, 29. The Yogin sees the Self in all beings and again all beings in the Self.

IV, 13. I am their Creator though I create nothing and am indestructible.

V, 8. The Yogin, while he is seeing, eating, moving, etc., will, knowing the truth, think that he is not doing any act.

IV, 20. The unattached, though engaged in acts, does none.

VII, 26. No one knows Me.

IX, 4. This world is pervaded by Me who am unmanifested.

IX, 15. Those that seek wisdom meditate on Me as the One and as the manifold.

XIII, 14 & 15. Without the senses, I seem to shine with sense-qualities; attached to nothing, yet supporting everything; free from qualities, yet enjoying them; not moving, yet moving.—Here a note is called for. In commenting upon *Gunabhokta* the master-hand of Sankara laconically adds the necessary word, "iva" (as if), to intimate the impossibility of imposing Gunas or their

enjoyment on the pure witness. In V, 19, which describes the immediate release from birth even in this life of those whose mind rests in the Oneness of Brahman, Sankara bases the purity of Brahman from the taint of the Gunas, on its being of the nature of consciousness. *Samam* he interprets as "one" (V. 18) so that *Samye* means 'In the Oneness of Brahman', a use analogous to that of "*Samane*" in "*Samane Vrikshe*," on one tree; (Mundaka).

XIII, 16. Existing undivided in all beings, yet like one divided.—In these descriptions the one set relate to Empirical Life and the other to Transcendental Truth. To conceive that the soul is atomic in size or forms the body of Brahman, is to convert it into a corporeal entity, to degrade Spirit to the level of matter. The idea is repugnant, even revolting to its nature as the witness. There is no conceivable way of embodying the witness as such.

The essence of the world is declared to be the Lord Himself.

XIV, 3. I impregnate the Mahat, the Material cause of the world.

XIV, 2. I am the seed, the Mahat is the soil.

IX, 17. I am the object (percept).

VII, 6. I am the origin of the entire world and its dissolution.

VII, 12. The Gunas proceed from Me alone.

X, 8. All emanate from Me. Arjuna says addressing the Lord:

XI, 38. Thou art the Knower, the Known and the Highest Abode of Release.

XI, 39. Pervading all—Thou art all.

The attributes of pervasion and support predicated of the Lord are imagined to favour Pluralism; but it is forgotten that the idea of all-pervasiveness pushed to its logical extreme leaves nothing external to itself. For if a residue is left, then the spirit ceases to pervade it, just as an angle continuing to widen infinitely ultimately attains to the form of a straight line in which no inclination or sides can survive. The idea of support, similarly, is sublated by the identity of the elements, supporting and supported, before creation and after dissolution. If the Lord started with Himself, He must have Himself alone to manifest and relapse finally into Himself, though remaining ever the Unmanifest. Creation, &c., can thus be admitted only in an empirical sense. That the world is the body or the eternal wrap of the Lord is further untenable, *first*, because the Lord is essentially the witness, and *secondly*, because the world is declared to issue forth from Him as the pre-existent, and *thirdly*, because time, space and causation, which are eternal and inevitable constituents of the

world, and which all action presupposes cannot admit of creation, cannot admit of expansion or contraction. The mythicity of the world-process is further brought out in the likening of the world of Samsara to the Asvattha Tree, which Arjuna is exhorted to cut down by the weapon of unattachment. Surely, no real tree can be destroyed by a mere change in our subjective attitude towards it. In XVIII, 20, the purest knowledge is declared to consist in the recognition of the One Reality in all beings, which remains undivided. The idea of plurality, as of embodiedness, has therefore to be banished altogether.

The transfiguration of Lord Krishna described in the XIth chapter is of central importance in enforcing Monistic truth. Krishna, who appeared as an individual person both before and after the event, suddenly grew in stature and power so as to include the three worlds; and Arjuna beheld the transformation of the Lord into the whole universe and back again into Himself. How can we explain the miracle? Did a new universe suddenly develop before the eyes of Arjuna, side by side with that which was familiar to him already? Were the two identical and real? If so, how can there be a duplication of time, space and causation, all real, at the same time? In the actual world, the heroes of the battle were still alive and kicking; in the other, some of them had their heads already 'crushed to powder'. We cannot make up our mind whether to believe the prodigy as fact or fancy. All the miracles related in other sacred works dwindle into insignificance before this display of Divine Power. You cannot have possibly two different universes, the one representing an advanced stage

of the other and both real at the same moment. All realistic commentaries are tongue-tied. The only explanation lies in the truth of Vedanta. The supernatural occurrence is intended, as in the calf-miracle of Bhagavata, to take a concrete hold on our soul, to appeal to our realistic instinct and produce in us the conviction that we, every one of us, is the Lord Himself, and the multi-coloured, multi-tongued realm of objects and events spread before us is but an exhibition of His Eternal Magic, neither real nor unreal (XIII, 12), being the effect of His Maya, who is pre-eminently the Lord of Yoga.

The theory that God is an embodied being, all else forming His body cannot hold water for a moment. The fact that Arjuna stood out as spectator to behold the Divine Thaumaturgy before him, ought to show that he was not the body of the Lord. Otherwise he must have been taken up and wholly inserted in the show. Besides, His (Lord Krishna's) identifying Himself with Sankara, Vishnu, Vasudeva, and Rama, cannot be understood to mean that they are His Vibhūtis or highest instances of His Power or Splendour: for, one of these, Vasudeva, happens to be Himself. To invent an ever-varying and precarious principle by which identity can be evaded is to betray the inadequacy of the comment and the futility of the commentator's device. The sentence "Behold in My body, the whole world of Gods, men and other beings," distinguishes between His body as the container and the Gods etc., as the contained. In truth, the picture is but an empirical representation of the All-inclusive Reality. God as the witness, cannot be cumbered with a body. The idea of all-pervasiveness breaks to bits, when an indepen-

dent distinct entity is let in. For however porous it may be, it must still retain the threads of its individual texture. Hence the explanation that God pervades all and is therefore said to be all, will not rest till the all is dissolved in God and nothing is left to exist, besides. Finally pervasiveness is a material concept, and will do only for an empirical description of God.

The identity of Sri Krishna's teaching with the Vedic Monism of the Upanishads being established, I shall on a future occasion touch on the ethical and devotional elements which are the unique characteristics of the Gita. I need not discuss whether the Gita is a medley of various and divergent systems of thought, as held by some modern scholars; for after showing that in all the essentials, the teaching clearly gravitates towards Monism, I feel that other considerations are rendered unprofitable and fanciful.

It is not only the metaphysical value of the truths of the Gita—Immortality, Freedom, Bliss, and Oneness of Reality—that has made it so irresistibly attractive, but its sublime ethics, its insistence on devotion, its universal tolerance, and the correct guidance it gives to conduct in practical life. These, however, demand a separate treatment.

Non-Dualism or Advaita is often anathematized, dreaded, abominated, avoided, evaded, repudiated, compromised and apologised for. But it is a simple, innocent, undeniable view of life, which need not evoke any pain, terror, or opposition. Put into modern words, it is the doctrine of the Sole Reality of Spirit. The world is Spirit, the individual soul is Spirit and there is really nothing but Spirit. It is often offered, accepted, or believed in, not in its full strength but considerably watered and

scented with theistic forms. I hope I have shown that this venerated scripture of the Gita inculcates from beginning to end this Unity of Spirit, and makes an irresistible appeal in diverse ways to the modern mind, torn by doubt, uncertainty and despair. One of the most serious problems we have to face in India is the religious. Fanaticism awakens in men the most destructive forces making for social disruption and disaster. The Nationalist who neglects Vedanta will deprive himself of the most effective means of educing order out of chaos, of replacing ill-will, hatred, suspicion and discord by love, sympathy, trust and harmony, in an atmosphere seething with antagonism and dissidence. India, the birth-place of warring creeds, is also the spring-head of Truth and Peace, supplying a heavenly balm for distracted souls.

Vedic Monism is not opposed to devotion, but is its truest nursery. For, a devotee, trusting in God as an alien power may, in times of trials and tribulations, be overcome by despair or serious doubt. But a Vedantin knows that he puts his trust in the Reality, in his own higher Self, and will not, cannot, under any circumstances, give way to vacillation or uncertainty.

F. C. S. Schiller, referring to the rarity of really important novelties in the history of thought, says, "I find I cannot recognise more than nine of such (first class) discoveries. Of these I should credit the first, the Absolute or one of Monism, to the Hindus, although a case may perhaps be made out for Parmenides for an equal share in this discovery. Still it was in India that the ethical and logical implications of the monistic line of thought were worked

out in their completest and most consistent form." If Schiller had realised the value of the concept of Reality as the witnessing consciousness, which appears as a revelation for the first time in the Brihad-aranyaka, he could not have wavered in assigning the merit of the discovery wholly to the Hindu Seers. This concept is the highest to which human mind can rise, and is still unknown to the West. Its profound significance in the realm of thought remains unappreciated to this day. The only other concept of the same rank must also be adjudged to the credit of India, for it is to the genius of Sankara that the world owes the idea of Adhyasa, superimposition. Hence we may claim to have enriched world-thought by not one but at least two original concepts, which are destined to live for all time. But the greatest contribution to the Science of Reality,—the critical analysis of the Three States—dates from the Upanishads and has been developed and perfected by Gaudapada and Sankara, the two incomparable lions of thought. By the less gifted Indian Critic and System-builder it has been turned, alas!, into additional Puranic grist brought to the mill of Theism.

Thus Vedic Monism, originating in a keen study of life and experience on the part of the Upanishadic Seers, rationalised into an immaculate system by the Brahma Sutras, and declared to be the highest Truth by Reality itself in the person of Lord Krishna, has in its favour all the evidence which can be adduced—Scripture, Life and Reason—and is an impregnable stronghold laughing alike at the destructive power of time and the uproarious voice of adverse criticism.

MAHAPURUSHAJI MAHARAJ

OUT of that devoted band of young men who gathered round the Godman of Dakshineswar and had the blessed privilege of learning from him the ways of realising the Lord, Time, the grim Measurer, had counted off one by one as the years rolled by till only a bare handful remained amongst us. It was quite recently, as the readers of *The Vedanta Kesari* will remember, that we had to record with sorrowful heart the passing away of Sjt. Mahendra Nath Gupta, the revered writer of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, and of Swami Subodhanandaji, more often known as Kokka Maharaj among the devotees of the Order. Not satisfied with this "tragic loading" within the space of twelve months, Death has again stalked into our midst and laid his icy hand on another of the venerable group.

Swami Shivanandaji, familiarly known as Mahapurushaji Maharaj, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, shook off his mortal coil and entered Mahasamadhi on Tuesday the 20th February 1934, at 5-35 p. m. For some time past the Swamiji was almost bed-ridden owing to the infirmities of old age, more than eighty winters, the major portion of which had been spent in hard Tapasya and austerities, having left successive, indelible marks upon his originally powerful frame. In April last he got a stroke of apoplexy; but through the grace of the Lord his life was spared to the great relief of the entire Order, although for him, personally, pain and discomfort were never destined to cease altogether. For it was found,

when consciousness revived after the stroke, that he had lost the power of speech along with the use of some of his limbs. In spite of all these disabilities, however, his serene countenance always wore his usual smile of welcome and every one who went into the presence of Mahapurushaji Maharaj afterwards, came away impressed with the remarkable detachment from body consciousness he manifested in all his dealings. It was true that he could not talk himself, but he would listen with interest to all the information the members of the Order and the devotees would carry to him and it was quite possible for him with gestures and his characteristically expressive looks to respond to the needs of each occasion as it arose. The best medical assistance continued to be given and it sometimes looked as though he might even recover the faculty of speech to some extent. But a few days back he got a sudden attack of pneumonia; and the worn-out frame finally gave way leaving the soul absolutely unfettered and united with its Master in Eternal Peace.

Swami Shivanandaji's father Ram Kanai Ghoshal, the legal adviser for Rani Rasmani's estate, was a great devotee of the Divine Mother and used to frequent the Kali temple of Dakshineswar during the Sadhana period of Sri Ramakrishna. At that time the Master was suffering from a burning sensation all over his body which medicines could not cure. One day when Ram Kanai visited him as usual, the Master told him of his affliction and asked if he could suggest any remedy. Ram Kanai re-

commended him to wear on his arm his Ishta Kavacha—an amulet with the Lord's name on it—and there was instantaneous relief. Years later, when young Tarak Nath,—the name by which Swami Shivanandaji was known before he took the vows of Sannyasa,—went to Sri Ramakrishna for instruction, the Master was agreeably surprised to find that he was the son of Ram Kanai who was so intimate with him and had rendered such valuable help to him in the days of his suffering.

From his boyish days Tarak used to practise meditation and was impelled by the noble desire to pierce the veil that separates the seen from the unseen. Like many of the religious-minded young men of the time, Tarak too became a member of the Brahmo Samaj and came to know of Sri Ramakrishna first through the writings of Sjt. Keshab Chandra Sen. As the ideas of the Brahmo Samaj gradually lost their charm for him, and as he became more and more eager to dive deep into the mysteries of spiritual life, Tarak's mind turned definitely towards Sri Ramakrishna about whose constant experience of the state of Samadhi he had begun to hear much from many friends besides. One day, therefore, when he knew that the Master was going to visit Ramachandra Dutt, he resolved to avail himself of this opportunity of meeting him and learning from him about the means of attaining Samadhi. Accordingly he went to the house of Ram, where he found the Master talking to a crowded audience in a semi-conscious state. Listening with rapt attention, Tarak was astonished and overjoyed to find that the Master was discoursing on the very subject he had been desiring to hear expounded. He left that day deter-

mined to go to the temple of Dakshineswar and interview him there.

The Master was walking on the bank of the Ganges just prior to the evening service in the temple when Tarak approached him and touched his feet. The Master began to enquire of him about the health of Ramachandra and Narendra Nath (afterwards Swami Vivekananda), and although he did not know much about them and could reply only that "they must be well," he was surprised to see the keen interest the Master appeared to take in the affairs of his devotees. The next query was whether he had seen him the previous week in the house of Ram. Tarak replied in the affirmative. Sri Ramakrishna then led him to the verandah near by and asked him whether he believed in God with form or without form. "In God without form," answered the boy. "You can't but admit the Divine Shakti also," so saying, the Master then took him to the Kali temple where the service was going on. Tarak at first hesitated to follow the example of Sri Ramakrishna who prostrated before the image; for according to the ideas of the Brahmo Samaj, the image was nothing but stone. But, "Why should I have such petty ideas?" the boy began to argue within himself, "God is omnipresent; He must then be present in the image as well." All scruples being thus set at rest, he also prostrated himself before the image.

When Tarak had become better acquainted with the Master, one day the latter took him aside and asked him to put out his tongue. Then he wrote something on it and immediately the boy's mind was withdrawn from the external world and he went into deep meditation. This thing was repeated on another occa-

sion with similar results. Referring to the state of his mind at the time the Swami used to tell that he often "cried" in the presence of the Master. The Master is said to have encouraged him with the remark that God favours those who can weep for Him, "tears thus shed" washing away "the sins of former births". Another day, while he was meditating in the Panchavati, the Master's simple glance was enough to make him burst into tears and tremble all over with a "creeping sensation" within. The Master congratulated him on attaining this state which, he said, was the outcome of divine emotion. Tarak was now convinced that he had come to a man who could arouse the latent spiritual powers of others by his mere look and could illumine the way to the ultimate goal of existence. Married though he was, all worldly ties fast lost their hold on him through the silent influence of his Guru, who, he felt, was the consummation of all religions and to know whom was to know God. Sri Ramakrishna cherished a great love for this disciple and moulded his spiritual life in all possible ways.

After the passing away of the Master, Tarak, who had become Swami Shivananda, continued to practise hard austerities just as he had been wont to do before. He was stern and grave by temperament and one of his desires was to carry on his Sadhana in complete silence. Once when he had told the Master about this he had replied, "Yes; but Mother will make it (talk) come out of your mouth." This was of course literally fulfilled, as the Swami himself narrated to a group of his disciples when, after the passing away of Swami Brahmanandaji in 1921, he became the President of the entire Order and had to minister to the spiritual

needs of all those who flocked to him. Anyway, feeling glad at the time that a sort of consent had been given by the Master, he maintained almost complete silence for many long years, some of which he spent wandering, with scanty clothing—just a mere blanket—in parts of the Himalayas and of the plains of Northern India. In his diet he was always extraordinarily strict; and even in his later days when with the spread of his influence it became possible for him to command the luxuries of the table, if he so chose, he clung to his spare diet consisting of limited quantities of rice, his particularly simple Jhol (vegetable soup) and so on. Even after physical weakness prevented him from moving about with ease, he would not break those items of his daily routine which he considered to be of vital importance to a Sadhu. Until he was completely disabled he would, for example, never miss his evening meditation facing Mother Ganges from the eastern verandah adjacent to 'Swami Vivekananda's room.' As for his vast correspondence, as long as his fingers were able to handle a pen, he managed the major portion of it himself, setting apart definite hours for the purpose. Once when a novice with an immature mind talked as if he had worked too long and stood in need of "rest" and "change," Swami Shivanandaji, a little sternly but lovingly, turned round on him and, pointing to the pile of letters he had kept apart for answering that day, said, "What? You tired of work? Don't you see me doing so much writing at this age?" It was remarkable how even in what we consider "little things" he was the embodiment of the principle he laid down for all in his Presidential Address at the Convention of 1926: "Be like the arrow that darts from

the bow. Be like the hammer that falls on the anvil. Be like the sword that pierces its object. The arrow does not murmur if it misses the target. The hammer does not fret if it falls on a wrong place. And the sword does lament if it is broken in the hands of its wielder. Yet there is joy in being made, used and broken; and an equal joy in being finally set aside."

Being austere in all his habits himself, Shivanandaji was not the person to tolerate laxity or indiscipline in those for whose progress he felt himself responsible. But if his rebukes were sharp and unforgettable, his love and readiness to protect and elevate were equally marked and unforgettable. As Head of the Order his influence extended to all parts of India, and wherever he went on tour, people flocked to him in hundreds, got caught up in his love, accepted him as their Teacher and began Sadhana under his instructions. Married or unmarried, lay or monastic, male or female, young or old, there are literally thousands today whose lives have been transformed by his contact and blessings. Even when his health had broken down, he would listen patiently to the tales of difficulties which these numerous disciples were experiencing in the matter of their Sadhana or their work, and all who were sincere could count upon his love and blessings and encouragement. Was one's mind confused as to the Mantram or the manner of Japam or the form of the Ishta Devata? One had only to approach Mahapurushaji; with a few words he could clear up the doubts. Another wanted to sit up with him on an evening; he was given permission; and when Maharaji's mind came down a little from his meditation he prayed perhaps for the narration of some anecdotes of

the days he spent with his Master. Slowly came the story of how he was once asked by the Master to massage his leg, and how after a time the Master gently lifted the leg and placed it on his shoulder and how this touch awakened his spiritual energy and plunged him into the depths of meditation, into Samadhi for which he had yearned long during his boyish days. Or it might be the story of his visit to the temple of Jagannath at Puri, where he had a vision of the Lord as *Bhuma* or the Infinite.—There are many who have thus been blessed with the closest contact with Swami Shivanandaji and can recall to themselves countless memories of evening meditations, of explanations of difficulties which crop up in spiritual practice and of the recounting of scenes enacted during the earthly life of the Master.

It was not formal disciples only that enjoyed the warmth of Swami Shivanandaji's love. Every visitor who came to Belur Math, not necessarily to take initiation but simply to witness the working of the institution founded by Swami Vivekananda, was treated with the greatest consideration and Shivanandaji would invariably enquire what additional arrangements, if made, would render the guest's stay comfortable while it lasted. Thus people from South India with their stomachs accustomed to tamarind preparations or to buttermilk, Westerners with their different ways of cooking and eating, all found that the regime of Shivanandaji had made it possible for them to stay for a time in the Math without impairing their physical health. The servants at the Math enjoyed his love in as great a measure as the regular inmates and the guests, and examples are numerous of his sending railway fare to the

cooks and other attendants of distant Ashramas who yearned to go to him and pay their respects in person. Indeed he was most broad-hearted in this matter, considering the interests of the servants and their families and those of the members of the Order as equally deserving of his attention and active support. Even the animal kingdom got a proportionate share of his affection. Any one who has stayed sufficiently in Belur Math would not have failed to notice how at stated times Mahapurushaji would specially send down one of his attendants to tend the "Black" dog, wash him with soap and give him his slice of bread or plate of dinner.

Due to all these personal qualities Swami Shivanandaji has left permanent influence even in the places where his stays were short. It is well known how his hard austerities created the Advaita Ashrama in the holy city of Benares. When Swami Vivekananda returned from the West, Shivanandaji had occasion to live for some months in Colombo, and there are many still alive who cherish vivid memories of the Gita classes he held and of the happy days he spent in their midst. Madras had the privilege of being visited by him a number of times, and on each occasion he personally supervised the various activities carried on by

the Math and Mission here, especially the Students' Home, many of whose inmates, teachers as well as boys thereby got ample opportunities along with other devotees to benefit in general by his spiritual presence and to shape their lives according to his instructions. The disciples, lay and monastic, whom he made in these tours in the North and South have combined together and succeeded in establishing centres from which diverse philanthropic works, including temporary ones like Flood relief, are being carried on under his inspiration for the welfare of the public. South India may well remember with satisfaction that the Ashramas at Ooty, Mysore, Nattarampalli (near Jalarpet), Trichur and Conjeevaram, and many other places that have not yet been formally affiliated, all owe their origin, growth and development to the direct influence of Swami Shivanandaji. In South and North, West and East alike, not only Hindus but men and women of other faiths as well feel today a void in their hearts; for the tender, enquiring look, the beaming childlike smile and immense reserve of serenity and spiritual fire behind them all, which was the Swami Shivanandaji, their Guru, will greet them no more on earth.

Om. Peace! Peace!! Peace!!!

MANDUKYOPANISHAD

(WITH GAUDAPADA'S KARIKA AND SANKARA'S COMMENTARY)

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

IV Alata Santi Prakarana

Gaudapada's Karika

I bow to that best of men (Sri Narayana) who with his knowledge (or consciousness) all-pervading like Akasa, knows as non-different from himself, all other beings in creation (Atmans) whose knowledge (or consciousness) is all-pervading like Akasa. (1)

Sankara's Commentary

We concluded the last chapter with the words "Advaita is the highest truth", having shown by the description and explanation of Om, that Advaita is in conformity with Veda, having shown (by the aid of reason) that the various objects which appear as external to us, are unreal (false) and having shown (finally) that Advaita can be self-realised, as true, by the authority of scripture and reason.

To the Advaita thus established on the authority of scriptures (Vedas), there are in opposition dualists and nihilists. We have indicated that they (or their doctrines) are false, being opposed to each other and giving room for rousing feelings of desire, anger and misery. Advaita has also been praised as its philosophy does not afford room for (contradiction and) misery, &c. Therefore, here, after explaining in detail their mutual contradictions and showing their untenability, we shall proceed to conclude the treatise by a chapter called "Alata Santi" based on the proof that in the absence of contradictions characteristic of the opposite

parties (Dvaitins &c.), Advaita is the only true philosophy.

The first verse of the chapter is for the purpose of offering salutations to the teacher of the Advaita philosophy, conceiving him as nothing apart from (or non-different from) the non-duality itself. The worship of the teacher at the beginning of a work, is for the purpose of bringing it to a successful conclusion (that is, the fulfilment of our desire for a successful conclusion).

By means of consciousness (knowledge) which is all-pervading like Akasa, are known the indications of Atman, also all-pervading like Akasa. The consciousness by which the indications are known, is not different from the knowable, just as heat is not separable from fire, nor is light from the sun. He who knows by his consciousness (inseparable from himself) all-pervading like Akasa, the indications of Atman (also inseparable from Atman), the known (or knowable), as non-different from himself, is indeed the eternal Iswara known as Narayana. To him I offer my salutations. As he is the best of Purushas (men) he is also called Purushottama. By worshipping the teacher and by refuting in this chapter all the doctrines opposed to Advaita, we wish to establish the science of true Reality characterised by the absence of any distinction between knowledge, the known and the knower.

Gaudapada's Karika

I bow to that teaching of the Shastra (science)—Advaita—which

is spoken of as that Yoga which is devoid of all relations with anything (outside of itself), which is conducive to the well being of all, which is beneficent and which is free from all dispute and contradictions. (2)

Sankara's Commentary

Now is a salutation offered to the Yoga of Advaitic science, for praising it. That Yoga is called Asparsa Yoga, because it is not in relation with anything, at any time or in any way, and is of the nature of Brahman himself. The meaning is that it is well known to be so, among the knowers of Brahman. This is conducive to the happiness of everything existing. Certain practices, such as austerity, though leading ultimately to the greatest bliss, are very painful (in the earlier stages). But this is not of that type and gives happiness in all stages. (It may be asked) if the happiness caused by the enjoyment of certain objects of sense is not pleasurable. (We say) It is true, but the pleasure and happiness of this (Asparsa) Yoga are eternal and of immutable nature. It is devoid of all disputes as there are no thesis and antithesis and the maintenance of the one and the overthrowing of the other by opposing parties. This is because there are no contradictions (allowing persons to take sides). Therefore I bow down to the teaching of such a Shastra (science).

Gaudapada's Karika

Four disputants wish to predicate birth to an existent object, while others who are bolder assert that the existent object arose out of non-existence. Thus each disputes the conclusion of the other. (3)

Sankara's Commentary

How the dualist disputants quarrel with each other is now described. Not

all dualists, but a few such as Sankhyas, maintain that perceived objects (that is, effects) were previously in existence (but as causes). Others such as Vaiseshikas and Naiyayikas, being bolder, that is, thinking themselves to be very wise, hold that the existing (world) came out of nothing (non-existence). Holding such different views they will be quarrelling with each other, hoping to gain victory over the opponent.

Gaudapada's Karika

That which is, does not need any production (birth) and that which is not, cannot be born. Thus quarrelling, they proclaim (unconsciously) the truth of non-duality and of Ajati (there being no such thing as birth). (4)

Sankara's Commentary

As the result of these disputations and attempts to overthrow each other's doctrines, what tends to be established is now described. The Sankhya doctrine of the birth of an existing thing, is overthrown by the holders of the theory of Asat (non-existence), by saying that a thing which is or has been perceived, is like Atman and needs no birth to enable it to be perceived. The Sankhyas in their turn overthrow the theory of non-existence giving birth to an existing thing, by saying that an unperceived non-existence like the unknown hare's horn, cannot possibly give rise to any object. Overthrowing by their disputations the mutually antagonistic theories of birth from existence and of birth from non-existence, they tend to approach the non-dual position of the Advaitins and proclaim that, in truth, there is no such thing as birth.

Gaudapada's Karika

When they thus tend towards the establishment of non-birth (that is,

there being no such thing as birth), we are pleased to accept their conclusion. We see no use in disputing the point of view with them. Know this, then, to be free from all disputes. (5)

Sankara's Commentary

What they (and their arguments) tend to establish, namely, non-birth (of anything), we gladly accept, and do not care to set up thesis and antithesis and maintain the one and overthrow the other by mutual disputations. Therefore, Oh pupils, know this to be the real truth, free from all disputes, as declared by us.

Gaudapada's Karika

Some disputants predicate birth to that which is unborn (has no birth). How can that which has no birth, and (consequently) is immortal, come to be mortal? (6)

Sankara's Commentary

All this refers to the holders of the doctrines of Sat (Being) and Asat (non-existence). These have been explained in the previous Slokas.

Gaudapada's Karika

The immortal cannot become mortal, nor can the mortal (become) the immortal. A thing of a certain nature, cannot change into something quite the opposite. (7)

Believing that a thing, naturally immortal, can achieve mortality, how can one maintain that a thing can remain immortal and unchanged, while passing through birth? (8)

Sankara's Commentary

These verses have been commented upon already (Chapter II, 20, 21 and 22). They are quoted here again to show how arguments in favour of mutually contradictory theories, can serve to establish the truth of Ajata (no birth).

NOTES AND COMMENTS

[We publish below a short note from Prof. D. M. Datta of Patna College showing an "anti-supernatural" way of solving Bihar's problem. An account of what the Ramakrishna Mission has been doing towards such a solution will be found in the Reports Column.]

Lord Buddha's Appeal for Bihar —Where Tagore and Gandhi both meet

When thousands of afflicted souls of Bihar are staggering—homeless, foodless and bereaved—on the verge of death and when every bit of spare energy should be devoted to their immediate relief, it is a pity to find some people losing many a precious moment in theoretical speculation as to whether Tagore is right or Gandhi is right in guessing the temper of God. But both Tagore and Gandhi and along with

them the confounded, wrangling mass may still their voices for a moment to listen to Lord Buddha appealing for Bihar, the land of his enlightenment, to the whole of humanity in the words of his enlightenment (the four noble truths: *chattari ariya satyani*):

1. There is suffering
2. There is the cause of suffering
3. There is the end of suffering.
4. There is a way to end the suffering.

And if they care to interpret these noble truths for the present occasion in the anti-supernatural and business-like spirit of the Buddha they will find them to mean:

1. There is suffering—intense suffering in Bihar since the last earthquake.
2. There is the cause of suffering—the cause being the want of shelter, food, cloth and good health.
3. There is the end of suffering—the end being as possible and sure as the suffering itself.
4. There is a way to end the suffering,—it lies in providing shelter, food, cloth and medical relief by sacrificing at least our extra comforts for the suffering fellow-beings.

In interpreting the tragic fact in this natural, bold and human way one will find also an assent from our ancient philosophers who laid down the general canon for the explanation of all facts: Do not resort to the invisible when there is the visible cause (drishte na

adrishtam). Read in the light of the ancient wisdom, the calamity of Bihar reveals these four truths, which Tagore, Gandhi and all else will unanimously accept and must act up to. These truths present the fact of suffering, along with its cause and remedy so far as it is humanly useful to enquire. They bid us face the fact in a matter-of-fact way and hold out the hope of the end of sufferings that human efforts can achieve.

Shall we not all rise to the occasion to hark back to the appeal of Bihar's Enlightened Soul, The Light of Asia, and utilise this precious moment for sinking all differences of politics, theology and nationality in the service of man as man? Shall we not allow ourselves to be guided by his spirit of restraint and sacrifice to put a curb on futile imagination and spend all our spare energy and resources for the suffering fellow-beings who are piteously looking out for help? Will Bihar deliver through her calamity, once more to the world the impersonal message of truth, sacrifice and universal love for all suffering beings?

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SANSKRIT LITERATURE (VEDIC AND CLASSICAL):—By *Vidyaratna Kokileswar Sastri, M.A., Lecturer in Sanskrit and Philosophy, Calcutta University.* Published by U. N. Dhur & Co., 58 Wellington St. and 2, College Street, Calcutta, 1933. Crown 16 vo. pp. 208. Price Rs. 1-8-0.

This is a short book of about 200 pages covering the whole field of Sanskrit Literature, summarising "the results of modern research" by the western scholars like Keith, Macdonell, Winternitz, etc. In the words of the author himself, "The rich field of Sanskrit literature has been explored by

the western scholars and their labours are enshrined in works which are noteasily accessible to the general public and particularly to the student." He has made "an attempt in this small volume to present the most salient features of the results of their researches, so that they may be read, used and enjoyed by our students." Thus the aim of the author is "to provide in one volume of moderate bulk and price a compendious History of Sanskrit Literature," and to provide "a text-book primarily for the use of the students of the Indian Universities preparing for the B.A., and M.A. examinations in Sanskrit."

The book is of the nature of Notes prepared by a teacher for reference in the class-room to coach up the students appearing for an examination. It contains several incomplete and loose sentences. For example, page 10, "Peculiar characters (characteristics?) of this Sanskrit."; page 16, last three lines; page 26, first sentence of the second paragraph; page 35, second sentence of the second paragraph; page 33, the whole of the second paragraph and so on. In some places the sentences are vague and indefinite leaving the idea to be conjectured. On page 73 are to be found the sentences, "Both Bhatti and Janaki-harana were known to Magha. Nagananda he knew." Nagananda was known to whom, Bhatti or Magha? Again on page 78, we find, "He wrote Lakshanavali in 906 Saka year, in 1042 A.D." The difference between the Saka era and the Christian era is 78 years but the difference between these two eras above is 136 years. One is unable to understand how this mistake for 984 A. D. has crept in. Similar to this, there is another sentence on page 80: "Hence Medini after 1495 and before 1431 A.D." This sounds like a paradox and what the author means cannot be discovered. Equally ambiguous is the meaning of the following sentence on page 82: "For, in Jagannatha's Rekha-ganita book, another book, contains a sloka giving the date 1714 युगवसुनवभूवर्ष इत्यादि". Again a student is at a loss to search for the meaning of the following sentence on page 125, "Vachaspati Misra must have flourished in the 10th cent. A.D. as he compiled his Nyaya Suchi Nibandha in the year 898,—which, if referred to शक era corresponds to 976."

In the same way, defective and careless revision of the proof is responsible for mistakes of the following nature. "This परमायुः wrote a life of वसुवन्धु (28—0360)." Evidently the author means (280—360), page 114. On page 204 there is the sentence "According to वायुपुराण, the female nature of Rudra became two-fold, one half white (असित) and the other half black (सित)." Here the words असित and सित should have mutual transposition. It is not possible

in a short Review as this to give a complete list of the sentences of this kind. It would have been better if an Errata at least had been appended.

Apart from this, the author makes certain unwarranted, inaccurate statements which are far from the actual fact. While describing the difference between the Archaic Vedic language and the classical language, he speaks of "Reduction of a dozen infinitives to a single one." In the Rig Veda are to be found only about half a dozen infinitives and not a dozen as stated above. The author makes this statement in two places, pages 12 and 13.

On page 22, it is said "The more these heroic songs grew in favour and became popular, the Brahmins took possession of the Epic poetry which thus became a religious poem." There are evidences to show that the Epics were recited by Sutas, undoubtedly not Brahmins, at special congregational sessions where all classes of people gathered to hear the Epic-recitation. On page 42, the author says that "In the रामायण also, like the महाभारत, the thread of the principal narrative is interrupted constantly by the interpolation of numerous myths and legends." The interruptions as contemplated here, are to be found in the Balakanda and Uttarakanda alone, which two are regarded as later additions by the western scholars. The principal narrative is not at all interrupted in the other five "original" Kandas.

The author assumes on page 197 that "अग्निहोत्र sacrifice, new and full moon sacrifices, sacrifices of seasons, Soma-sacrifices, etc. could only be performed by aristocratic and wealthy and kings." This statement again cannot be supported by authority or proof.

To crown the inaccurate statements, the author asserts on page 200 that "गायत्री is held in special veneration, the text of the Rig Veda being composed in this metre." Only a fourth of the Rig Veda is composed in the Gayatri Cchand. Nor can it be said that it is most common in the Rig Veda, since more than 2/5 of the Rig Veda is composed in the Tristup metre.

On page 81, the author discusses about the date of the Kavyaprakasa. The

whole paragraph has neither head nor tail and it is not possible for a teacher, much less for a student, (for whom the book is intended) to make out the trend of arguments leading to the fixing of the date of the Kavyaprakasa. Curiously enough, Mammata, the name of the author of the Kavyaprakasa, has not been mentioned in this place. Similarly, many other works have been mentioned without their authors, and many authors without their works, as on page 79, where the following alone is to be found about Sayana; "Sayana—14th cent. Vijaynagore—Haihaya king."

So also about the works of Bhavabhuti on page 68 where his three dramas are merely mentioned by name. The names of only nine out of the thirteen plays of Bhasa are to be found in the book. The author names one of the dramas of Rajasekhara as Pracanda Pandava, which is more popularly known by the name Bala Bharata of which no mention is made.

In the section entitled "Systems of Hindu Philosophy," Mr. Sastri does not even refer by name to a single work or author of the Purvamimamsa Darsana—not even Jaimini and Sabara, not to speak of Kumarila, Prabbakara and others. In the case of other systems, he gives a brief account of the tenets of their respective philosophy but is almost silent about their Bibliography. He has omitted the असत्त्व्याति while describing the सत्त्व्याति-s. In an Appendix the author gives a brief History of Vedic Literature. Here the arrangement of the Mandalas of the Rig-Veda and their contents are not described.

Certain sections are unnecessarily added like the description of the five Sandhis of a drama and the "Theories of the Poetry and of the drama."

So much about the subject matter of the book. With regard to printing, it leaves everything to be desired. There are innumerable spelling and other mistakes which are not less than two per form on an average. Names of authors and their works should be distinguished

by printing them in different types. An uniformity must be followed in giving the names of the authors first and then their works or *vice versa*, preferably the former. Another serious drawback is the absence of the diacritical marks which will facilitate the pronunciation without difficulty, of Sanskrit words, names of authors and their works. The splitting of Sanskrit words in many cases as "Mriccha Katika" (page 95) can never be tolerated. Above all, the book has lost much of its usefulness as a book of Reference to a student by the lack of an Index, at least of the names of the authors and their works.

Now to the merits of the book. The author has adopted "a new plan in arranging the names of the poets and their works chronologically under successive centuries bringing them down to the 18th century. A. D." Another noteworthy feature that requires special mention is the inclusion of four chapters on Ancient Indian History, viz. (1) India's Foreign Relations, (2) India's Ancient Dynasties, (3) Foreign contacts noticed chronologically and (4) Running account of some Indian Dynasties. This will help a great deal to understand and determine the dates of many poets who flourished under the patronage of many munificent kings, some of whom were themselves great poets. Mr. Kokileswar Sastri deserves to be congratulated on his being the first author of a History of Sanskrit Literature, who has included relevant portions from the History of Ancient India, of which the Literary History forms a part.

The book again is unique in its kind, covering the whole field of Sanskrit literature, from the beginning of the Vedic age to the end of the 18th cent. A.D. including systems of Indian Philosophy. It is hoped that the author will bring out a second edition very soon after revising it in the light of the suggestions in this Review so that the book may prove to be of maximum use both to the teacher and the student.

T. Chandrasekharan,
Madras Sanskrit College, Mylapore.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Obituary

Another one closely associated with the Master has been called away to His Presence. Our readers are familiar with the name of Sjt. Ramlal Chottopadhyaya, familiarly known amongst the circle of devotees as Ramlaldada. In the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna we find many a scene charmingly portrayed by "M" where Ramlal is often mentioned. He was Sri Ramakrishna's nephew. At a very tender age Ramlal came to live with the Master and for a period of nearly two decades he had the privilege and blessing to live and move in the atmosphere that Ramakrishna breathed and sanctified. He was one of the close attendants of the Master whom he served with unique love and devotion. He often officiated as the priest in the temple of Dakshineswar, and after the Mahasamadhi of the Master he continued to be the chief Poojari of the shrine. In his old age the services of the temple were conducted by his two sons and Ramlaldada spent his time joyously, ever in living remembrance of those holy days he was fortunate to live with the Master. And every devotee who would go on pilgrimage to Dakshineswar Temple would never miss paying his respects to the nephew of Sri Ramakrishna and he, with his characteristic simplicity, "rich in love and sweet humanity," would entrance the hearts of devotees by recounting with an idyllic charm some of the incidents in the Master's life he was fortunate to share. One peculiar family trait we all could easily note amongst the relations of the Master is their exceptionally unsophisticated nature, and Ramlaldada, and his younger brother Shivuda, who preceded him only by a few days, had this feature in abundance.

We in Madras Math always cherish very sweet memories of Ramlaldada. In 1921, when Swami Brahmanandaji graced this place with his presence, he induced Ramlaldada to accompany him and we can never forget the very happy days we spent here in his company. Hours and hours together he would speak to us of those blessed days with the Master, and in the evening hours after

vesper service he would sing to us those very songs Sri Ramakrishna sang, and at times he would also show us how the Master used to dance to the tune of music and cymbal. When the Durga Pooja was performed here in the same year, Swami Brahmanandaji felt very happy that it could be done under the direct supervision of Ramlaldada. During his stay here he visited our students' home, and seeing the good work he was overpowered with emotion. As a boy in teens he was one day wonderstruck, he told us, to see his uncle's room besieged by a crowd of visitors, many of them men of highest light and leading in Calcutta, who had come to pay their respects to Sri Ramakrishna. The Master did not miss this look of astonishment in his young nephew, and turning towards him whispered in his ears: "What are you seeing now? You will live, to see yet many more wondrous things." This literally came to pass. And seeing the magnificent building of the "Home" he wanted us to tell "Ramu" what the Master had spoken to him—yes, he lived to see how in an incredibly short time his revered uncle had become the Guru Maharaj, of thousands of devotees, hailing from distant lands and speaking different tongues inspiring them to great and greater acts of devotion for the good of themselves and of humanity at large.

For some time past Ramlaldada was in indifferent health and he took ill recently and passed away at 5 p.m. on the 15th January.

R. K. Mission Earthquake Relief Work in Bihar

Immediately on receipt of the news of the terrible earthquake havoc in Muzaffarpur District, the Ramakrishna Mission despatched its representatives on the 17th January to organise relief after inspection. From the reports sent by them periodically we give below a few important extracts:—

"Leaving Howrah on the 17th we reached Samastipur by train in the evening of the next day.

The condition of Samastipur is deplorable. The people are living in a state of continuous alarm in the meadows or

in front of their houses making temporary shelters with cloth, gunny bags, etc.

"Muzaffarpur is 32 miles from Samastipur. The town is completely wrecked....We walked through many of the streets. Many of them are still blocked by the debris of houses destroyed by the earthquake. The surviving members of families are having those heaps dug out in search of the bodies of their relatives.

"In the hospital we found the whole yard filled with wounded patients. We saw the Magistrate shortly after. From him we came to know all about the kind of help that was needed.

"The Marwari Relief Society is also here. The Government is arranging drinking water, cleaning of the town and treatment of the wounded.

"In view of the situation here we have chiefly started giving first aid, temporary shelter, rice and blankets. Arrangements have also been made for medicines and doctors. We have engaged contractors to put up sheds the construction of which will be complete by Tuesday. Tomorrow we shall begin distributing rice. We have done part of the inspection work. Cloth and blankets will be distributed as soon as they arrive. (Belur report dated 25-1-'34.)

"The relief centre...at Muzaffarpur... has succeeded till the 24th instant in erecting 80 sheds accommodating 500 persons. Foodstuffs are being distributed to the needy, and till the 23rd 30 injured persons have been dressed and medical aid rendered to some more. The Mission will work in areas allotted to it by the local authorities.

"Relief work has also been started at Motihari and at the sub-divisional town of Sitamarhi, which are not yet easy of access. In view of the acute distress prevailing in these two places, we have sent Rs. 2,500 and also cloth and blankets there.....

"Measures have also been taken to organise relief at Monghyr as also at Darbhanga..." 26-1-'24.

"The Mission has undertaken to give relief over an area covering half the town. Up to the 27th instant we have distributed 45 mds. of rice and 6 mds. of dal to 821 recipients, besides 600 woollen blankets and 300 pieces of cloth to the needy. In addition to these we have attended to 169 cases of

house to house medical relief. One hundred huts have been constructed, in which as many families have been accommodated.

"We have despatched 150 blankets and 200 pieces of cloth for distribution to Motihari and 60 pieces of cloth to Sitamarhi. Further consignments are being made as our inspection work is progressing.

"Arrangements are already under way to start relief centres at Jaynagar Samastipur. At Monghyr our work is at present principally confined to medical relief..." 28-1-'34.)

"The recent rain added to the sufferings of the homeless in all the centres. Up to the 30th January we have distributed from our Muzaffarpur centre 98 mds. of rice, 14 mds. of dal, 2½ mds. of salt, 2 mds. of sweetened parched rice, 400 pieces of cloth and 800 blankets to 1137 recipients belonging to 323 needy families. Altogether 158 huts have been constructed, which have given shelter to as many families comprising about 800 persons.

"At Sitamarhi the first distribution of rice and blankets took place on the 28th January. The construction of huts has been taken up...

"We have sent further supplies to Motihari which is still inaccessible by rail. . . At Monghyr we have dressed over 300 wounded patients. We have been ascertaining the need of people by house to house inspection. To those who feel delicacy in openly asking for our help, we are distributing here as well as at Muzaffarpur foodstuffs and also some little pecuniary help. Our centre at Laheria Sarai has devoted itself to serving half the town with medical aid, distribution of cloth and blankets, hut-building and monetary help...

"We have till now spent nearly Rs. 25,000 for the different relief areas taken over by us. The timely contribution of Rs. 10,000 from the Mayor's Earthquake Fund, Calcutta, has been of great help to us....." Belur report dated 3-2-'34.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, P.O., Howrah.

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