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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

बाह्यायत्तं चतुर्थैर्मानवानां लोकश्रेष्ठं धर्मसासेवमानैः ।

सर्वे धर्मा सोपधर्मस्त्रयाणां राज्ञो धर्मादिति वेदात् शृणोमि ॥

यथा राजन् हस्तिपदे पदानि संलीयन्ते सर्वसत्त्वोद्भवानि ।

एवं धर्मान् राजधर्मेषु सर्वान् सर्वावस्थं सम्प्रलीनान्विवोध ॥

अल्पाश्रयानल्पफलान् वदन्ति धर्मानन्यान् धर्मविदो मनुष्याः ।

महाश्रयं बहुकल्याणरूपं चात्र धर्म नेतरं प्राहुरार्याः ॥

Amongst men, the highest duties are those which are practised by the warrior class. The whole world is subject to the might of their arms. All the duties, principal and subordinate, of the three other orders of society are dependent (for their proper observance) upon the duties of the Kshatriyas. The Vedas have declared this.

Know that as the footprints of all other animals are engulfed in that of the elephant, even so all the duties of the other orders, under every circumstance, are engulfed in those of the Kshatriyas.

Men conversant with scripture say that the duties of the three other orders afford small relief or protection and produce scanty merit. The duties of the warrior class, on the other hand, declare the learned, afford great relief and are productive of great merit.

SHANTI PARVA (CH. LXIII, 24-26)

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

Why it is difficult for learned and wealthy men to recognise the Master's greatness.

SUCH being the nature of the Master, to correctly understand him is extremely difficult for ordinary men, and still more so for those who are proud of their wealth or education. Unaccustomed to hear straightforward remarks,—because of their exalted position and because of their wealth and honour—mostly they happen to lose the attitude of toleration towards such plain speaking. There is nothing strange if such people consider the Master to be unmannerly, lunatic or egoistic. Hence we are all the more surprised to see the deep love and respect that Rani Rasmani and Mathur Babu had for the Master. It seems, through the grace of God, they were highly fortunate, not only in being able to maintain all along their love for the Master unabated, but also, as their acquaintance with the Divine Preceptor in the Master grew day by day, in being able ultimately to surrender themselves whole-heartedly to his feet. Otherwise it would never have been easy for them to keep up this attitude of loving regard towards the Master at the cost of all their egotism, and in spite of repeated humiliation by him. It is to be remembered how Sri Ramakrishna completely fasted on the very day of the opening ceremony

of the temple, unwilling to accept food from a Sudra, although the food had been offered to the Divine Mother and his own elder brother was the priest. Later, too, for some time he persisted in cooking his food himself on the river bank, for the same reason. Not only that. Although Mathur Babu repeatedly attempted to meet him, the Master felt a great scruple even to speak to him as he knew Mathur to be a "worldly-minded" man. And still later, when again and again earnest requests came to him to accept the post of chief priest, he gave repeatedly his flat refusal.

Mathur notices the Master's state of God-intoxication after marriage and feels attracted towards him. Others' opinions regarding the Master.

The Master's marriage is now over and he is in the full bloom of youth. After his marriage he has returned to Dakshineswar and is engaged in worshipping the Divine Mother. Almost simultaneously with it, his intense love of God has made him almost insane in the popular sense. Sometimes unable to remain without God-vision he rolls on the ground and, rubbing his face against the earth, weeps profusely for the Divine Mother. This goes to such an extent that people throng around him and remark sympathetically, 'Alas, the man must have got some

terrible disease. People writhe like this when suffering from colic pain.' Or again, at the time of worship perhaps he heaps up all the flowers on his own head and remains motionless for a long time! Or, at times mad with fervour he goes on singing hymns composed by devout poets. Otherwise, when in his normal mood, he behaves quite properly, showing proper respect for the superiors and in every other way, as he used to do before. But through his meditations on the Divine Mother, when the Master is possessed with that ecstatic mood,—and this happens not once or twice in a day, nor with a little intensity,—he loses all external consciousness, neither listening to any one nor making any response whatever. But even at this stage people do find a sweet trait in this divine character. Even then if any one requests him to sing devotional songs, for his satisfaction, the Master at once begins to sing with his sweet voice and becomes wholly absorbed in the theme of the song.

Already the mean-minded employees of the lower rank as well as the chief manager of the temple have reported to Rani Rasmani and Mathur Babu about the violation of formalities by the Master in course of worship. 'The junior * Bhattacharya,' they have told, 'is spoiling everything. The worship of the Divine Mother is not being done at

* 'Bhattacharya' is a term of respect. The Master was so called as his elder brother was styled 'the senior Bhattacharya.'

all. For, how can the Mother accept the offerings while such irregularities are going on?' But these and other complaints were all to no effect. For Mathur Babu personally would occasionally give surprise visits to the temple without previous intimation to any one and observe from a distance the Master's devotional attitude and his childlike familiar behaviour with the Divine Mother; and with tears of devotion in his eyes he ordered the employees not to interfere with the junior Bhattacharya in any way, whatever the latter might be doing. They were asked only to report to Mathur Babu whenever necessary and then act according to his instructions.

Rani Rasmani too would visit the temple now and then; and every time she would come she would highly appreciate the tasteful decoration of the holy image and the beautiful songs sung by the Master. So much so that whenever she would come to the temple, the 'junior Bhattacharya' would be sent for and requested to sing the praise of the Divine Mother. The Master too would entirely forget his environments in the course of his songs and think that the Divine Mother Herself was his only audience.

Days roll by thus, one after another; and as in the vast world of the universe, so also in the little world of the temple at Dakshineswar, each person remains busy with his own affairs; and the little time they can spare from their worldly

duties and selfish ends, they spend with much delight in discussing the defects of others or in similar saucy topics. Who cares therefore what changes are going on in the junior Bhattacharya through his love of God? 'The fellow is stark mad. Somehow he has fallen into the favour of the employer. That is why his post is still continuing. But how long can it go on in this way? Some day he will happen to

do some serious mischief and will be immediately driven away. Inscrutable are the ways of rich men. There is no knowing when they will be pleased or displeased. It takes no time for them to become either.' Such are the only remarks that are occasionally made by the temple-employees. That is all. Hriday, the Master's nephew and attendant, has also come by this time to stay in the temple.

TYPES OF RESPONSE IN SPIRITUAL LIFE—II

PEOPLE differ from one another very considerably with regard to the defects of their personality, and consequently in the nature and the order of the responses which they have to master for achieving freedom from them. Religion, if it is to serve the purpose of all, has thus to point out models of various qualities so that sincere aspirants can revolve them in their minds till new and vigorous ideas filter into every part of their being and come out as prompt and righteous action. Just as a sense of happiness manifests itself simultaneously as a beaming smile on the face, why should not a bold, original and constructive idea also transmit its powerful impulses continuously to all parts of the responding mechanism of the man, and spur him on into mighty efforts to accomplish it in "action"?

Where Doubt and Fear Prevail

What prevents such a ready transmission is, in most cases, an

unhealthy fear of the obstacles that might present themselves and create a disaster in place of success. Such people have naturally to look upon the Lord as a breaker of obstacles, as a Vighnesa, as long as they are not able to fill themselves with the opposite idea that He is pre-eminently a giver of success. Many, however, may feel doubtful whether natural forces would not prove too strong for their limited human energies. Their defective outlook can be remedied only by a model in which the Lord appears as the creator and ruler of the elements, as Bhutesa, in addition to His being a lover of his devotees.

Others may be upset by the fact that organised activities of the wicked-minded have from time immemorial wrought havoc among the followers of the path of virtue. And it might appear to them that humanity has not undergone any substantial evolution during all the long centuries through

which it has passed, since vice and misery do yet remain as rampant as ever before. Those who interpret facts in this manner and get into a gloomy and pessimistic attitude have to lift themselves out of it with the aid of a model which can drive into them the conviction that the Lord is invariably a Destroyer and the wielder of the rod of chastisement. They would require the acceptance of a God who has not merely created the world and left it to shift for itself, but who has often, and will in future too, "come down" among men and protect virtue and its votaries as often as vice rears up its head like a hooded serpent ready to strike.

To Fan Creative Spark into Flame

In the case of many, doubt and fear may not be so prominent as a desire to excel, to possess and to conquer in a manner consistent with virtue.¹ Their evolution becomes smooth and easy only if they can conceive of the Deity as the fountain-head of all creative endeavour. Their model must be an all-gracious Being whose touch lets in a stream of original ideas and leads to remarkable achievements in the realm of literature and music and all the other fine arts. Their Deity must be able to confer success in research, in all productive concerns and in leading an auspicious and prosperous life. As the heart expands, the truly pious yearn for the

capacity to make all the weary and sorrow-laden their own. Wealth, influence and every attainment, intellectual and spiritual, they wish to have in increasing measure so that poverty, illiteracy and misery in general can be conquered, and wisdom and inner peace enabled to fill up all hollows wherever met with. Such heroic natures require a model of self-sacrifice combined with learning, prosperity and auspiciousness.

For Direct Manipulation of Inner Forces

There are, however, sections of people whose gaze is fixed more naturally on their own selves and who may not derive satisfaction by conceiving of any Divinity that shapes their ends and rough-hews them from outside. To them the body appears like a car, driven hither and thither by an as yet unknown manipulation of their inherited and acquired tendencies and desires. They are eager to know the secret of this manipulation and bring it under definite control. The Deity can appeal to them only in the capacity of their own higher self, acting from within as the Master of the car or as the Teacher² of the science of driving,—not merely their own cars but all other vehicles as well.

Some, again, have no liking for any of these views of a Personal Deity but have absorbing interest in

¹ Cf. भर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ।
Gita,

² Cf. आत्मानं रयिनिं विद्धि etc. of Kathopanishad and स एष पूषामपि गुरुः of Yoga Sutra.

the play of forces in their theoretically separate body and mind. To them it looks as if there is only a simple question of food and its eater, of the supply of energy through meat and drink *and ideas*, and its expenditure as thoughts which do not stop with the mind alone, but penetrate all obstacles like hesitation or timidity and reach their due plane of physical action with the least possible delay. Their model has necessarily to be Self-regulating Force or Energy and their method judicious exercises in "Pranayama." Some stress the evolutionary aspect of this Force, and their interest lies only in grasping the goal towards which it leads, or to express it in a new way, to find out the constant pressure under which life and its varied activities are carried on. Thinkers of the West concluded that the pleasure principle and the power principle are roughly the basic factors in the mental evolution of any individual. Ancient Indian thinkers thought of the basic principle rather as a three-fold one, as an irresistible urge for realising Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. In this way Brahman appeals to some; and they have to adopt suitable measures to change their responses in the light of this all-comprehensive ideal.

Variety to meet All Needs

The religions of the world have thus laid down means to remove defects in character and outlook by accepting and "revolving" in the mind one or more of these models. Indian tradition has surpassed all

others by providing an exhaustive scheme. Its Shastras do appear contradictory in the eyes of those who like careering about the extensive tracts of theories but have not seriously settled down to grapple with the mind and elevate it to a harmonised state. A complete surgical set must necessarily contain instruments which seem to serve contradictory purposes, as for example, a pair of scissors to *cut* and some needles and thread to *stitch*. But yet, even a layman does not think of damning surgical science as self-contradictory and alleging that it often makes mistakes in cutting open bodies but that it has provision for undoing the mischief by promptly stitching up the parts again. Rather, even the layman realises that both cutting and stitching are essential for a complete cure in certain cases. Similarly, for mental and spiritual health, different processes, different models and different methods of dealing with the responding apparatus are required; and the Shastras have therefore to keep an astonishing variety of Upasanas to meet all situations. From the standpoint of mental surgery, this variety happens to be a supreme advantage, and never a defect as it is sometimes proclaimed to be by advocates of "single methods."

But why is it that in spite of such facilities, we find only very few persons attaining to spiritual eminence in each generation? "It is only one in thousand," says the Gita, "that seriously takes up spiri-

tual culture; and out of them, again, it is only one out of every thousand that succeeds in realising the Lord." This seems to be quite true in the case of grown-up people down to the present day. But evidently almost every one practises faithfully for a fairly long period the methods suggested by the creed into which he finds himself born. Enthusiasm flags, and eventually evaporates only when the reasoning faculty matures and no *tangible* results are experienced in spite of scrupulous adherence to the methods prescribed.

Fruits to be Expected

It is useless to argue that the scriptures stress implicit obedience irrespective of the fruits that accrue. For fruits are certainly to be desired; only not *all* fruits. In essence, the Kingdom of Heaven, or Perfection or Salvation is also no less than a fruit; it follows as a consequence of removing the obstacles that prevented its realisation. And scripture itself, when it has to deal with the problem in a scientific spirit, points out that certain signs are sure to come to the person who adopts the correct attitude.

Says the Svetasvatara Upanishad that "forms" like snowfall, smoke, sun, wind, fire, firefly, lightning, crystal and moon come before, and gradually manifest the Brahman while practising Yoga. It also points out that the very first signs of entering the correct path of Yogic discipline are lightness, health, non-covetousness, clearness

of complexion, a beautiful voice, an agreeable odour in the body and scantiness of all excretions.³

Leaving aside landmarks in mystical training, it is clear that a greater clinging to virtue, greater cheerfulness, resourcefulness, capacity to feel for others and bear one's own cross in life, are fruits which each one ought to desire intensely. Nay, if any practice is found progressively to bring their opposites, one has to conclude that there is something radically wrong in the mental reactions or that the method followed is quite unsuited to the needs of the particular individual. The remedy then is to change the model taken up or to note the flaws in the responses and set them right. There are also schools of discipline which clearly declare the acquisition of these very virtues to be their basic exercise in mental training.⁴

When and Why Mechanical

We often come across persons who are advanced in years and have attained eminence in various walks

३. नीहारधूमाकर्कानिलानलानां
खद्योतविद्युत्-स्फटिक-शशिनाम् ।
एतानि रूपाणि पुरःसराणि
ब्रह्मण्यभिव्यक्तिकराणि योगे ॥
लघुत्वमारोग्यमलोलुपत्वं
वर्णप्रसादः स्वरसौष्टवञ्च ।
गन्धः शुभो मूलपुरीषमल्पं
योगप्रवृत्तिं प्रथमां वदन्ति ॥

(11 & 13)

४. Cf. मैत्री, करुणा, मुदिता etc. अहिंसा, सत्यं etc. शौचं, संतोषः etc. of Yoga Sūtras.

of life, but who yet carry with them intact many childish fancies and reactions. Some literally "cannot stand a gaping pig" or frog, or cannot venture into the dark or arrange their dress and other articles without a nurse-substitute, who in the case of most men turns out to be the wife! In spiritual matters also, —and perhaps with less chance of being detected—people get into fixations, and they continue practices which they ought to have long outgrown. The result is that their observances become mechanical and lifeless; and in due course they are troubled by the question whether religious life itself is not after all a wild goose chase. It is not rituals alone that become mechanical. Contact of virtuous men, too, if not maintained with an ever open, vigilant mind, loses its value for the seeker after a time and what is worse, the charms imagined from a distance appear to him to have been non-existent all along. Meditation is supposed to be a higher exercise than ritualistic worship, but even this becomes mechanical when the aspirant fails to make judicious and persistent attempts to reach higher states of awareness.

Effect on Communities

Inertia is a subtle evil. It does not leave off a man simply because he has once begun to move forward. It reappears in various forms; and unless he frequently takes his bearings and watches the responses of his mind at different stages and to different surroundings, he is likely

to be deluded into the belief that he is progressing whereas in reality he may be standing still and getting fossilised, or imperceptibly sinking back into the planes previously covered. When this disease overtakes an entire community, each member looks complacently at the others and, seeing the mechanical observance of formal religion, makes a wrong inference that they are all following the correct path and are beyond the need for reform. They are the people of "childish fixations" mentioned here and there in the Upanishads. They fail to perceive the frail nature of a raft of rituals and the like, when stuck up to in an immoderate measure. Immersed variously in ignorance, (अविद्यायां बहुधा वर्तमानाः), these children in the spiritual field consider themselves wise and of accomplished aims (स्वयं धीराः परिडितं मन्यमानाः, वयं कृतार्या इत्यभिमान्यन्ति बालाः). They remain perfectly unaware of the fall that awaits them after the enjoyment of a few subtle experiences.

Resulting in Timidity

Often too the aspirant imagines that he is practising a particular response when he is actually doing just the opposite. God as a rewarder of virtue brings along with it simultaneously the idea of God as a chastiser of sins of commission and omission. For a time the devotee may succeed in fingering his nerves and playing on them the welcome notes that he would be blessed with grace. But he can also be unconscious of the relaxed tension of his

strings and be producing discordant notes in an absent-minded mood. He can imperceptibly slide into the conviction that for some of his actions, branded as sinful by his elders and priests, he is sure to receive the just share of punishment. In this manner, while the worshipper apparently takes up an excellent model and "prays" in an orthodox pattern, he may in reality be carrying on a practice of *timidity* or *despair* or paralysing *fear*, and nothing more! Every aspirant should know when and how to eliminate the idea of avoiding punishment from among the motives for spiritual life, and to replace it temporarily, if need be, by a desire for heavenly rewards, but permanently by a consuming passion for Truth, Justice, Righteousness, Realisation of Oneness and the like.

Case of Armed Deities

The danger is especially great in the case of the worshippers of "Hindu" gods. They are all armed gods. All the weapons in use among human beings for the destruction of their enemies have been assigned to the deities, who are conceived of as having numerous hands for wielding them to advantage. As if this is not enough, celestial weapons are thought of, which can penetrate human defences and, after finishing their work, return to the hands of the wielder for a fresh offensive. Worship of grim-faced deities of this type, symbolising the destruction of the wicked-minded,—rather of their wickedness—has undoubtedly played an important part in

rousing the military instincts of our people at various stages of their long history. What greater spur can there be to warlike men than the vivid picture of the celestially armed Deity Himself (or Herself) marching ahead and ordering them, divine children, to advance, sack, crush and conquer? With the Lord as the driver of our war-chariot, pointing out to us severally the heroes arrayed against us, and reducing the span of their lives by His very glance, परसैनिकायुरक्षणा हतवति, what timid one amongst us would not muster courage, be a mere instrument for His divine purposes and achieve undying renown in the field of battle? What Perseus felt within him when he donned on Athene's sword and winged sandals, or King Arthur of Round Table fame his Excalibur, or the mighty Ravana of the Ramayana his irresistible Chandrahasta, warlike votaries of these deities armed to the teeth ought naturally to have felt; and ought still to feel if the mental response at the time of worship is correct. But though the temples are there, the rituals performed, the stories read, expounded and seen "expressed" upon the stage, these votaries have lost their efficiency, turned slavish and come to be looked down upon as "non-martial"! The followers of those hosts of gods who have promised to "come down" among men and uphold the cause of virtue by exterminating the wicked, have miserably lost the use of their arms. And yet the worship goes on as tradition has laid it down!

Sense of Responsibility

Let us venture an explanation,—out of many that might be forthcoming—from the standpoint of psychology. It is possible that while meditating upon those deities we got into the wrong attitude that *our function was over with it*, and that there was no need for us to lift a little finger ourselves in our own defence and interests, since the deities were omniscient and had the responsibility to do all that was required by the situation. We perhaps unwittingly persisted in the wrong response, regarding the deities as convenient pegs to hang all our armour on, not for sanctifying it and taking it back with redoubled enthusiasm and martial spirit, but to deposit it there for ever, and to be merely admiring spectators gazing from a distance! At a stage, then, our fancied meditations must have strayed into the direction of shrinking and shirking. We became timid *in spite of* the grandeur of our divine models.

Conclusions like this are risky; yet let us venture a little further. Jesus came to preach a gospel of love; and although he once took up a whip and chastised the money-changers and others who defiled the atmosphere of the place of worship, his main teachings were to forgive the enemies, show the other cheek when one was struck upon, and to “put up” the sword at all costs. He himself set the model for all time by “suffering” his enemies to capture him, torture him and finally hang him up on the cross, challenging

him to save himself if, as he used to tell, he was really divine. This seems to be just the opposite of what any ‘Hindu’ God would have done or taught or tolerated. Yet mark what the followers of this unarmed and disarming Lord have, as nations, come to possess. There is no Christian nation which is not organised on a military basis or would at present care to reduce its fighting equipments, however much it may have begun to feel the difficulties and dangers of continuing this race for armaments! The Buddha too preached Ahimsa. Yet it is interesting how Buddhist Japan has become efficient in the methods of modern warfare, and by sheer merit emerged as a Power to be reckoned with in World Politics.

Possible Explanations

We may find answers by telling that those who are engaged in the work of governing in any country are not the people who follow strictly the letter and spirit of the gospels. Sainly Christians, Buddhists and other religionists have ever responded, and do yet respond to their spiritual models in a manner which their respective Masters themselves would approve of. Policies are on the other hand shaped by those who are not so advanced, and this accounts for the wide gulf between the theories of the gospels and the results of their practice in daily life. Applying the same reasoning, it may also be pointed out that many a devotee of the armed deities has achieved military glories, or succeeded in

imbibing universal love after uprooting his aggressiveness by symbolical meditations,—both being legitimate fruits of such Upasana.

We are, however, not concerned with the best specimens of each sect. They know the principles of religious life, whatever models are taken up and whatever method is adopted. They have in fact transcended both models and methods. But we ~~are~~ concerned with the vast majority of those who attempt spiritual life, get into wrong responses and as a result lose all faith

after a time, developing into non-believers or weaklings, or who sometimes, by the principle of opposite responses, evolve into bold, efficient and even *over-military types*. A passive God *can* evoke a reaction of aggressiveness, while conversely an armed God *can* foster timidity and the habit of shirking. It is thus the actual response that counts more, not so much the qualities of the models selected nor the gospel accepted, not the exercises performed nor the traditions respected.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

By A Disciple

IT had been raining very hard in the evening. I began to hesitate about my coming to the Holy Mother's place. It was getting dark as well. However I wrapped myself in a water-proof. The rain drops began to splash my face; but the attraction of the Holy Mother and the thrill one feels at her presence made me forget all about the inclemency of the weather. I entered the house through the back-door. I hesitated to enter by the front door as I felt ashamed to meet the monks with a water-proof over my body. The Mother laughed aloud to see me dressed in that way. My veil was soaked with rain water. It touched her foot as I bowed down to her. The Mother said in an anxious tone, “Ah my child, you are drenched through and through.

Leave off your cloth and put on Radhu's dry one.”

Devotee: Only the veil is soaked. Other parts of the cloth are dry. Please feel it.

Mother: Yes, you are right.

The Mother had asked for a piece of flannel cloth. I brought it with me. I also sewed two tapes on two of its sides so that the piece of flannel might be used as a bandage. She was very glad to see it.

Agonies of the Famine-Struck

The talk turned to Jayrambati. The Mother said: “At one time a terrible famine devastated Jayrambati. People without number would come to our house for food. We had a store of rice from the previous year. My father made *Khi-churi*, cooking that rice and Dal

together. The Khichuri was kept in a number of pots. He ordered, 'All the members of the family will partake of this Khichuri alone. The starving people will also eat the same. A little plain rice shall be cooked for my daughter, Sarada. She will eat that.' Sometimes starving people would come in such a great number that the food would not be sufficient for them. Then new Khichuri was cooked. The hot stuff was placed on the plates. I would fan the Khichuri to make it cool. People with hungry stomachs would wait for food. One day a woman came there. She had dishevelled hair and eyes that were bloodshot, like those of a lunatic. She saw the fodder soaking in a tub for the cattle and at once started eating it. We said to her that there was Khichuri inside the house. But she was too impatient to wait for that. Is it a joke to bear the agony of an empty stomach? Hunger, thirst, etc., are inevitable for all embodied beings.

The Force of Hunger

"The other day only, when I was sick, I felt very hungry at midnight. Sarala and others were asleep. They were tired of the day's hard work. I hesitated to wake them up. I was looking here and there for food when I saw a few grains of fried rice in a cup. I also found a couple of biscuits near my pillow. I felt very happy. I ate the rice and the biscuits and then drank some water which was kept in a pot near me. I felt so hungry that I did not know that I had been

eating mere fried rice." The Mother laughed as she narrated the story.

Continuing she said, "Just at that time a devotee of Ranchi brought a big Papya for me. I am very fond of that fruit. I looked at it very wistfully. I wished they would give me just a slice of it. But I did not get it as I had then high fever. Oh, how dangerously ill I was at Koalpara! I was unconscious and could not leave my bed. Sarala and other girls attended on me. (In a piteous tone) I am afraid I shall have to suffer again like that. Dr. Kanjilal cured me at that time. Oh! What a burning sensation I would feel in my palms and toes! I always kept my hands on the cool and big belly of Kanjilal. Sarat (Swami Saradananda) also came to see me."

Ever Mindful of Devotees' Interests

After a little while I asked her, "Well, Mother, why did you ask me not to mix with that woman devotee, in your letter from Jayram-bati?"

Mother: Oh, she belongs to a quite different school of thought. She does not accept Sri Rama-krishna as the ideal.

I was simply surprised to hear this. Though worried by a thousand troubles and bed-ridden with illness, yet she never for a moment ceased to think about our welfare.

Next day I brought ripe Papya fruit and mango with me. How happy the mother was to see the

fruits. She always would express such joy to make us happy. "Well," the Mother said, "Only yesterday we talked about the Papya fruit. It was just like this. Very nice mango too." Then she kept aside a few mangoes for Swami Saradananda, Gonen and Radhu's husband.

It was a very hot day. The Mother was covered with pimples all over her body.

Mother: Sandal-paste may cure the pimples; but I shall catch cold.

Devotee: Shall I bring some powder tomorrow? That will cure this trouble.

Mother: All right. Let me try your powder.

Referring to a certain girl, the Mother said, "What a terrible attachment she feels for her husband! She is never at ease by herself. Even while eating, she would leave her plate and go and have a peep at her husband. Day and night he is imprisoned in the room. He cannot go anywhere on account of her. Shame on her! And look at her health! She is becoming like a skeleton. She may be quieted after the birth of a child."

Feeling for the Poor

The next day I went to see the Holy Mother and found her counting her beads on the porch. She welcomed me with a sweet smile. She kept the beads in a pouch and touched her head with it. There was a lawn in front of the house. On the western side of

the lawn a few poor people used to live in rented huts. Pointing to them she said, "Look at them. They worked hard during the day. Now they have returned home and seem to be free from all worries. Blessed are the poor!" I was at once reminded of the identical words uttered by Christ, recorded in the Bible. The Mother also repeated the same sentiment.

A few moments later, she asked me to come to the room. A bed was spread on the floor. She lay down upon it. I had sent the powder in the morning. The Mother said, "My child, I used the powder you sent. The rash is disappearing, but there is still a good deal here. Please rub the powder in this place. I feel less itching now. Sarat (Swami Saradananda) also has been suffering terribly from it. It would be so nice if someone could rub his body with this powder." "Goodness gracious!" I exclaimed, "Who would dare to do that to Swami Saradananda? This powder is used only by fashionable people." The Mother began to laugh.

The rheumatic pain in her knee-joint had aggravated a great deal. The two sons of a devotee, on the previous day, had applied an electric battery to the affected part. That relieved the pain to some extent. They also came that day. Chhotamami (sister-in-law of the Mother) said, "My rheumatic pain has also been aggravated since yesterday. I shall also apply the battery." The Mother laughed and said, "All right! Apply the battery to her

pain." No sooner had the battery touched her body than she cried out, "Alas! I am going to die! My whole body is getting numbed. Take away your machine!" We all began to laugh. She had not the patience of the Holy Mother. The sister-in-law said to the Mother, "You never said to me that I would have such a funny sensation." The Mother said, "Don't cry! Have patience. The pain will be relieved." After a while she said, "True, I feel that the pain is much less now."

Fun about Names

Vilas Maharaj performed the evening service in the chapel. A lady asked, "Has he no 'Ananda' attached* to his name?" "Oh yes," said the Mother, "His real name is Visweswarananda." Continuing she said, "One monk is called Kapila. Has he any 'Ananda' joined to his name? Is it Kapilananda? (Just then Sarala, a woman devotee, entered the room) Well, what is the meaning of Kapila?"

Sarala: I do not know. May be, 'monkey.'

"How is that, sister?" said I, "Kapi means a monkey. That is

* The name which a monk assumes after renouncing the world generally ends with 'Ananda.'

not the meaning of *Kapila*." All laughed.

Mother: Another monk is known as Bhumananda. What is the meaning of that name?

Devotee: You know it very well, Mother.

Mother: No, let me hear it from you.

Devotee: I heard that the word 'Bhuma' signifies the eternal and omnipresent Brahman.

The Mother was evidently pleased and began to smile. Really sometimes she would behave just like a child, as if she did not know anything. Again she would most easily explain difficult spiritual truths. The book-learning of ordinary scholars could not fathom its depth. The Mother again insisted on knowing the meaning of the word 'Kapila.' She must hear it. "I don't know, Mother," said I. "There was a great sage named Kapila who was the author of the Samkhya philosophy. Again, Kapila signifies a colour. I do not know exactly in what sense the word 'Kapila' is used in connection with the name of that monk. Perhaps the word may signify other things. I do not quite recollect them now. I shall look in the dictionary tomorrow."

THE GOAL IN EARLY BUDDHISM

By Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, D. Litt., M. A.

WE are singularly poor in fit terms for the end or object of the religious quest. In Christianity there is the vague term, the necessarily vague term 'heaven', or the vague and negative term 'immortality', in which we come near to the vague and negative term of ancient India: *amṛta*. Or there is the word 'God' for the idea which man has worded differently everywhere in every age, the idea namely of man conceived as perfected, as consummate, as all-this all-that, as Highest, Best, Most. Or, in terms of what man may win, there is the Latin *summum bonum*, highest good. Or, in terms of what man may become, *e. g.*, *nirvana*. In the Gita this is a waning into, the quest here being Brahman, *i. e.*, God. In Buddhism it came to be held as a waning out, for the Man Consummate had, in the growing divorce from Brahman teaching, been let drop, and the man seeking consummation as God was being bidden to wane out, and that with-out delay.

Now this was monastic Buddhism; it was not early, I mean, original Buddhism taught by the missionaries known as Sākyans. If we weigh carefully the terms, the values in the older, the Pali scriptures, we find that the original term chosen to word the religious goal of man's choice was *attha*, in Sanskrit *artha*.

Both of these forms have undergone much change in Indian history. But in them the basic idea is *r, arta*, the reaching out for something needed, something to be sought, something to be won, attained. This is the term for the goal taught in Vinaya and in Suttas, that is, where nothing in the shape of the gloss of later editing can be discerned. Thus we read in the Vinaya of a King of Magadha saying: I have instructed you in the *attha* that is of the present things (*ditthadhamme*); now learn of the *attha* of worlds beyond (*samparayika*); the Bhagavā, he will teach you of that." (*Mahavagga* v, i.) And in the Sutta-nipāta: "With effort stirred up to win *attha* supreme (*paramatthappattiya*)." And in the utterance alleged to have been the initial chart, as it were, of the Sākyan mission, the middle way is said to be other than the two side-issues (*anta*: 'extremes' is not a good fit) neither of which "belongs to *attha*" (*anattasamhita*). Clearly the middle way *does* "belong to, conduce to" *attha*. That this is not explicitly stated belongs to the history of the term, whereof more presently.

Significance of Attha

Now about *attha* I would point to three things not yet brought out. *Attha* is essentially a standpoint of the man, a valuation made by him.

It becomes meaningless if in winning it he 'wane out'. It is he who, as the Suttas say, is *atthiko*, as is the man in the forest "seeking timber (*sar'atthiko*)."¹ Secondly, the word is positive, not a negation. It is explicitly that which is needed, is sought, is to be won. It conveys no stress laid on what must not be needed, sought or won. It is a definite conception. Herein it is unlike *amṛta* or *nirvana*. Lastly, it is as a positive conception, not final, not ultimate. Man had, man has, as yet, no means of conceiving, much less imagining or wording the ultimate. Every so-called conception of 'Deity,' or of final consummation of life is frustrated and falls short, because for him this conceiving is as yet not possible.

Hence the choice of *attha* as the religious quest was eminently suitable. *Attha* included anything and everything that was held to be needed, to be sought, because it was something or other which for the needer, the seeker, constituted a More, a Better, a Higher in some way. Translators of Pali often render it by profit, gain, advantage, (equating it with *anisamsa*), or again by any aim or purpose or intent. They cannot be called wrong. Nothing that we seek in religion can rightly be more for us, as yet, than just a Better. I have used the old word 'goal', a word derived from the round pole (*gaule*, *waule*, *walus*) set up at the terminus of a race, but the terminus may be only a 'lap', a stage in a bigger competition. And it is noteworthy

that the older Suttas refer to *attha* only twice—so I find—as *paramattha*. So wise were the really great Helpers of men:

In my Father's house are many mansions. . . .

Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise. . . .

Here was no finality taught. As with the wine at the Cana feast, "the best was yet to come." The Best was, the Best is and will be; for all Betters, Mores, Higherers have their logically ideal point in consummation. Man can never rest in a Better with any sense of finality, of real uttermost achievement. But this is matter of faith. In our religion the basis of faith is knowledge, and we *know* that we seek to be, to become, to hold a Better.

The fact remains, that for us, if not for India, good words are lacking. The word I find most fit for *attha* is 'well', for when we pronounce a patient, a convalescent, 'well', we really mean 'better.' Still is the healed body soon to perish, the mind-ways too by which we wield just this particular body. Our 'well' is as relative a value as is *attha*. But alas! we need strong wills among us to feel the need of 'well' serving as a noun, as it does in neighbouring countries. Even among the Greeks the noun: *to eu*, 'the well', was forced. Their 'the Good', which we have followed, is a comparatively plodding stodgy term. The strong wills might bring about the change. 'Urge', once a verb

only, is, *as needed*, gaining acceptance as noun.

But if *attha* meant 'good', 'gain' of any kind, let it not for a moment be supposed, that for the Sākyans the *attha* of the Middle Way was just that. The distinction ascribed to the king above, worded as it will have been by Sākyan compilers, clearly shows that, in their teaching, life as a whole was meant, when they taught 'attha', and that this life *ditthadhamme*, being relatively but a moment, the *attha* of the worlds, *samparayika*, was an infinitely greater matter. The Middle way itself, the way of becoming in the more, the better, is also called *samparayiko*. (*Anguttara*, iv, 285, 322; iii, 49, 364).

I return in conclusion to that First Mantra of the Way. Instead of the Way being said to lead positively to *attha*, we find four terms substituted for it:—two belong to things of the mind: *sambodhi*, *abhinna*; two to monastic ideals: *upasama*, *nibbana*.¹ This seems strange till, with much reading in Pali, we note what a new, what a literary value came into the word *attha*, namely, that of 'meaning' in a thing said, or, later, written. The *vyanjana* or 'form', 'letter', 'word', is one, the *attha* another.

¹ The term *anuttara-yogakkhema* (ennobling the mere 'getting and keeping' of the old Upanishadic term) is comparatively rare in the Suttas.

² We note the later meaning thrust by editing into the missionaries' charter bidding them teach *dhamma Satham Savyanjanam*. The meaning of *dharma*, once man's "inner controller," had become a literary matter of fixed forms of doctrine.

The business of collating and standardizing the bulk, grown unwieldy, of the remembered teachings had become very absorbing. Mission-work was coming to an end. The stationary work of cloistered editing was filling the field. The vogue of the study of mind—the young psychology of India—was very attractive, and only in the 'mind', or four phases of mind, could the man, it was thought, be discerned. And monk in monastery had become of great importance. For him the catch-words were *upasama*, quietude, *nibbana*, waning out, far more than was *attha*. Mind and the ending of the man of body and mind came to be summed up in the term *anna*: the having-come-to-know.¹

A term become ambiguous seemed undesirable for the venerated First Mantra. At some time and place, probably Patna, the Mantra underwent editing into the form in which it has survived, with the monkish outlook in the first words, the substitution of four mental and monkish terms for the one *attha*, and the mnemonic refrains of the long appendix, to say nothing of the substitution of the eight qualities of the Way for some term, probably *bhava*,—then fallen into disrepute. With this I have dealt elsewhere. But perhaps nothing has done more to tie down the outlook for modern Buddhists, in the Way, to *ditthadhamme*, and banish the *samparayika*, than has that last change.

¹ In the Vinaya we find *anna* actually a declaration of *attha* with the man eliminated. Could decadence further go?

SHANKARA—A PHILOSOPHER

By C. Mahadeviah

Apparently a Theologian

There are many scholars both in India and Europe who regard Shankara as a scholastic and theologian. A scholastic is one who tries to establish religious dogma with the help of logic. It is well known that theology assumes the existence of God, generally on the authority of scripture, and then begins to expound His relations to man and the universe; whereas the philosopher starts with experience and, with the help of reason, arrives at Truth—truth about the universe and man's relation to it. The works of Shankara, those which are accepted on all hands as his, are his commentaries on the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, and the Gita. It is no wonder therefore, that to a superficial observer Shankara is a mere commentator, a scholastic defending by means of logic the dogma of the Upanishads, a theologian basing his ideas of God and His relation to man and the universe on the authority of scripture.

But this notion is erroneous. It is true that Shankara has not left any work—accepted as his by scholars—in which he has built up his system on the basis of experience and independently of scripture. This is mere accident and the result of the exigencies of the situation in which he was placed. A careful study of his commentaries will how-

ever, show beyond doubt that, far from being a scholastic and theologian, Shankara is pre-eminently a philosopher.

Rock-bed of Experience and Reasoning

The first point that has to be made clear is his attitude towards the authority of scripture. In his commentary on the Second Sutra he remarks :

“Whereas in matters of Vedic Karma (like the Yajna whose fruit is said to be the attainment of heaven after death) scripture is the only authority, in matters concerning Brahman not only scripture but experience also is authority; since the knowledge of Brahman can be actually experienced and Brahman is a thing already existing.”¹ It must be noted that here Shankara places the authority of experience on a par with that of scripture. In fact the implication is that scripture derives its authority only by conforming itself to experience. For in the beginning of his commentary on II, 1, 4, in answer to the question why scriptural testimony should not be sufficient in matters relating to Brahman, just as in matters relat-

1. “न धर्मजिज्ञासायामिव श्रुत्यादय एव प्रमाणं ब्रह्मजिज्ञासायाम्, किंतु श्रुत्यादयोऽनुभवादयश्च यथासंभवमिह प्रमाणं अनुभाववसानत्वाद्भूतवस्तुविषयत्वाच्च ब्रह्मज्ञानस्य.”

ing to Vedic Karma, Shankara replies : “It would have been sufficient if, like Karma, Brahman had to be known only by means of scripture, not being knowable by any other means of knowledge. But unlike Karma whose fruit comes into existence only after its performance, Brahman is a thing which is already existing. And with regard to existent things there is room for other means of knowledge (than scripture) just as in the case of prithivi, etc.” And then follows the significant remark : “Just as when Srutis differ from one another, they are all made to conform to one of them, so when the Sruti is in conflict with (what is ascertained from) another means of knowledge, it must be made to conform to the latter.”² And again in his introduction to the Advaita Prakarana of Gaudapada's Karikas he says : “If it is asked, ‘Is Advaita to be known only from scripture or from reasoning also?’—the reply is that it can be known *even from reasoning*. To show how it is possible, the Advaita Prakarana is commenced.”³ It must now be clear that Shankara builds up his system not on the foundations of scripture but on the rock-bed of experience and with the only reliable instrument reasoning.

2. “यथा च श्रुतीनां परस्परविरोधे सत्येक-वशेनेतरा नीयन्ते एवं प्रमाणान्तरविरोधेऽपि तद्वशेनैव श्रुतिर्नीयते.”

3. “अद्वैतं किमागममात्रेण प्रतिपत्तव्यं आहो-स्त्विहैकैवापीत्यत आह शक्यते तर्कैणापि ज्ञातुम्, तत्कथमित्यद्वैतप्रकरणमारभ्यते.”

But if we wish to see Shankara the philosopher at his best, we have only to turn to his famous introduction to the commentary on the Brahma Sutras. Here we find a most startling yet true analysis of human experience, and the Truth is deduced by sheer reasoning. No authority of any kind is quoted nor referred to. Starting from the analysis of the totality of experience into the now well-known divisions of subject and object, Shankara shows, by referring to universal experience, how the object is mistaken for the subject and *vice versa*, and how this mistaking is at the root of all the ills of life, and how when it disappears at the dawn of knowledge, a man will realise the oneness of the Atman and attain to the consequent bliss. Having thus put the whole system in a nutshell, Shankara remarks, “How such is the meaning of all the Vedanta texts we shall presently show in these Shariraka Mimamsa Sutras.”

Love of Truth above everything else

We have referred only to the most obvious passages to show that Shankara is nothing if not a philosopher. But a close study of his commentaries will reveal, almost at every step, his extraordinary metaphysical acumen, his wonderful power of reasoning and above all, his genuine thirst for Truth. If love of Truth, irrespective of all other considera-

4. यथा च अयमर्थः सर्वेषां वेदान्तानाम् वयमस्याम् शारीरकमीमांसायाम् प्रदर्शयिष्यामः ।

tions, be the mark of a philosopher, then Shankara is a philosopher par excellence. In commenting on the first Sutra, to the question why, if Brahman be known as one's own self, there should be any enquiry at all about it, he replies, "But no one is agreed as to which is this self in man." Then after enumerating the various differing schools of thought including his own, he remarks, "Such being the case, if one were to believe in any one of

5. तत्राविचार्य यत्किञ्चित्प्रतिपद्यमानो निःश्रेय-
सात्प्रतिहन्येतानर्थं चेयात् ।

these doctrines *without enquiry*, he would miss his salvation and come to ruin." Thus quite unlike the scholastic whose business is merely to prop up religious dogma on logical support, and unlike the theologian who starts with assuming his God and propounds His relations to man and the universe as satisfactorily as he can, Shankara, with a burning love for Truth, tries to solve the mystery of life by starting with human experience and, by a rigorously logical enquiry, arrives at conclusions which are even today the admiration of the world.

THE MENACE OF FORMALISM

By R. Ramakrishnan, M.A., L.T.

Why Conflicts Arise

RELIGION has two aspects, the individual and the social, or the personal and the public. On the one hand it signifies the relation between the human soul and the Supreme Being. It embraces within its purview the entire field of man's search after the ultimate reality, covering the whole region of his attempts to probe into the mystery and discover the meaning of things. It comprises within itself all the several stages of the evolution of the human mind, starting from the conception of God as a Being to be afraid of to the realisation of God as one's own inner soul. On the other hand it has reference to the arrangements that an organised human group or society makes for the moral conduct of its mem-

bers and their ethical well-being. Those arrangements include the priests and churches, the rites and observances, the faiths and beliefs, and the laws relating to marriage, etc. Both these aspects are vital to religion, and they are complementary aspects. But religion in the sense of being the relation between the individual soul and God has an eternity and perpetual youth and freshness in it, while in the sense of being a social institution it is subject to the ravages of old age and frequently stands in need of re-adjustment and change if it should function efficiently. However, that re-adjustment is not always effected in proper time. The result is that there are conflicts between the two aspects, and occasions occur when the organised arrangements for

social welfare very severely attempt to check the progress of the individual towards the final goal of life, in his or her own distinctive path.

In Christendom

Examples will make this clear. The basic principle of Christianity, for instance, in the light of the life and teachings of Jesus, is the living of a righteous and godly life which will eventually lead to the realisation of the Kingdom of God. That principle is the undying message of the Son of Man to every human being, and the message has an immortal significance. With the very laudable object of popularising this message and helping men to live up to its demands the great institution of the Church was organised and developed. But the tragedy with all human institutions is that, as time passes, the grand original idea with which they were started is forgotten and they pass into new and narrow channels, drifting farther and farther away from the principle of their birth and secret of prosperity. The Church in Europe in the course of centuries became a powerful worldly organisation and often battled with the State for status and supremacy. Nay, when discerning men in the Middle Ages foresaw the drifting away of the Church from the true ideals of Christianity and began to protest against the manifold abuses prevalent within its body, the Church, instead of welcoming such honest criticisms and reforming itself, tried to condemn the critics. Wycliffe, the morning star of the

English Reformation, created for himself a huge opposition among the powerful clergy by daring to point out the abuses in the English Church and demanding a return to the original purity and simplicity. And the Church did not hesitate to call in the aid of the State to burn all the heretics, who dared to question the practices of the men belonging to 'holy orders.' It could not but be so, because the Church had become an organisation with vested interests. And just as a capitalistic State naturally tries to suppress the dissemination of ideas likely to undermine its own authority, so too does a Church strive to perpetuate its power by relentlessly nipping in the bud all questionings of its authority. The example of the Inquisition clearly shows the extent to which even an organised religious institution will, in its degenerate days, go to protect itself from attacks on its special privileges. There are times therefore when religion in the sense of being a social arrangement becomes a serious menace to the progress of an enlightened individual or group of individuals.

Many Observing Fully Still

The same has been the case with Hinduism. Hinduism realises the need for each individual of a separate and congenial path to divine beatitude. It allows its votaries to follow their chosen ideal and assures that all roads lead to the same goal. This is the 'individualistic' side of Hinduism. There is then a 'social'

phase to Hinduism. The ancient wise men who organised Hindu society have left elaborate instructions regarding the religious life of its members. And since religion is the very breath of the Indian, even the minutest details of daily living have been endowed by the leaders of Hindu society with a spiritual and higher significance. Even the barely physical aspect of life has been given a religious colouring. The law-givers of Hindu society have said in what manner the teeth should be cleaned, baths performed, meals taken, and sleep done. In addition to these of course are the very elaborate injunctions regarding the performance of *Sandhya* or morning, noon and evening worship, the adoration of fire, the oblations to the manes, sages and gods, etc. They have also decided how the hair should be dressed, how the cloth should be worn, and how the caste-mark should be exhibited. These refer to the day-to-day life. Then there are the endless instructions regarding the celebration of marriages, the performance of funeral obsequies, the observance of pollution consequent on the death of a relation, etc., etc. We must admit that the minds which conceived all these practices in such minuteness and vastness must have been gifted with a highly constructive and analytical power. Not merely that. The fact that after centuries of vicissitudes of fortune, after political upheavals of unprecedented magnitudes, after deadly attacks of foreign cultures and violent impacts

of alien civilisations, the Hindu society must still respect the ancient injunctions and follow them minutely, speaks volumes as much to the solidarity of Hindu society, its healthy conservative spirit and the great tenacity with which it holds on to national ideas, as to the remarkable foresight and power of organisation of the great framers of Hindu laws. Even now, when we fancy we have turned round the corner and shaken off from our body politic meaningless customs and outworn observances and are living very rationally, there are persons who follow the ancient customs to the very letter and would not depart from the old practices for all the treasures of the sea. All honour to them really, for they at least are not hypocritical. They have the courage to stick to what, according to their own light, is healthy and righteous.

Failure to mark Non-essentials

But yet this rigid adherence of theirs to the ancient injunctions sometimes assumes the form of a serious menace to the progress of earnest individuals. The reason is simple. Religion in the sense of the relation between the human soul and God is unchanging and is called *Sanatana Dharma*. All the truths pertaining to that aspect of religion will stand for all time undiminished in truthfulness. But the social aspect of religion comprising the numerous details pertaining to the ethical life of a human group will have to change as times march on,

and circumstances and ideas and political conditions evolve. This is the *Yuga Dharma*. A simple illustration will explain this further. That the soul in man is a spark of the All-pervading is a truth that no one can gainsay at any time. But, that girls should be married when they are young might have been good in the conditions of society centuries ago, but may be harmful to society in its present environment. Yet because the great seers have enveloped every little detail of a Hindu's life with a religious significance and have left behind them writings to guide the higher spiritual life of aspirants as well as the lower home and community life of citizens, the orthodox among us are unable to distinguish between the essential and the non-essential, between the permanently significant and the temporarily meaningful. The result is a ceaseless clash between the progressive section of society and the conservative one. The incapacity of the latter to adjust things in accordance with the needs and requirements of the times often results in anomalies and ugly situations.

Single Tests and Crude Verdicts

Let us take for example the very simple, and what to modern mentality might seem very silly, question of the *Sikha* or tuft of hair. The old law-givers have said that every true Hindu must have a tuft of hair. This injunction is in no way strange. We see Muhammadans laying as much stress on the growing of a beard. And the *Sikh gurus* have

ordained that every *Sikh* must adorn himself with the five k's, viz: long hair, dagger, comb, bangle and short drawers (*kes*, *khanda*, *khanga*, *kara*, and *kach*). Then there is the tonsure ceremony among Christians. It is natural and even good for members pertaining to a particular group and showing allegiance to a particular faith to have certain uniform symbols and certain distinctive marks. Such symbols and marks are the sign, and may at times be the promoter, of group solidarity. But yet the essence of fidelity to the Hindu faith does not lie in the *Sikha*. Externals have their values, but are externals after all. What really matters is the inner significance. It is far better to be true to a really vital principle of Hinduism and be without the *Sikha* than to have a predominating tuft and possess no other qualities of that great faith. Some of our young men who are really thirsting after some spiritual illumination and strive after plain living and high thinking in their own humble way are looked at askance by the 'orthodox' group, just because they happen to dress their hair in 'unshastraic' way. Many youths who sacrifice all personal comforts and court hardships in the name of the country's cause do not win recognition at the hands of the conservative folk, because they happen to break certain customs regarding caste exclusiveness. Any young man who resolves to live the life of a *Brahmachari* meets

with serious opposition from among his relatives. This spirit of rigid adhesion to old scriptural injunctions has even taken away from certain persons the capacity to adjudge real worth.

I was once painfully surprised to be told by a learned and holy person of the orthodox style that I should not refer to Vivekananda as a *Swami*, or to Ramakrishna as a *Paramahansa*, or to Gandhiji as a *Mahatma*, because none of the three possessed in his opinion the technical qualifications requisite for the possession of the titles. In the case of Vivekananda, I think it was his birth that made the gentleman deny him the title of *Swami*, while in the case of Ramakrishna I remember him quoting a *sloka* saying that a *Paramahansa* must live in the forest, etc. (and Ramakrishna lived in Calcutta). As regards Gandhiji he took his stand on some technical definition of the term *Mahatma*, which Gandhiji with his immersion in the country's cause may not *literally* satisfy.

Well indeed may one despair of those who deny on such grounds the suffix of *Paramahansa* to Ramakrishna. As regards Vivekananda he himself has answered in a most eloquent and moving manner the criticism that because he was a Sudra he had no right to become a Sannyasin. (Vide Swami Vivekananda's lectures at Madras. Regarding Gandhiji one can only say that the Indian genius has conferred on him the grand title of *Mahatma* in a moment of supreme intuition, for

Swami Vivekananda has said 'Him I call a Mahatma whose heart bleeds for the poor. Others are but Duratmas,' and it is common knowledge that every misery of the poor finds an echo in Gandhiji's heart.

Examples of similar crude notions on the part of orthodox persons can easily be multiplied. We realise now that the greatest service of Vivekananda to modern and future India was his harnessing the vast resources of the monks and turning them into socially beneficial channels. In thus combining the spirit of renunciation with that of service he really made history, and in making the monks come away from the caves and cloisters into the midst of the common multitude he immensely enlarged the boundaries of what people had come to understand by spiritual life. But yet even today,—to mention another small fact—we find men who will not readily accept that the members of the order of Ramakrishna, and of similar other groups are monks at all, because they happen to travel in buses and trams and live in huge buildings and carry umbrellas! So strong is the hold of a rigid formalism on human minds that in them externals assume a vital importance while the inner significance is scarce cared for.

The orthodox thus do not tolerate any deviation from the "prescribed" path. The prescribed path is intended for the common multitude, for the generality of mankind.

But exceptional souls must be given freedom to march along their own ways. There is even a tendency among the votaries of the formalist school to look with suspicion on all worships of images not carried on in the old customary way. An excess of devotion to a particular deity or a whole-day absorption in a particular *sadhana* is not appreciated if it involves the renunciation of one of the hoary injunctions.

Naturally there is a spirit of resistance among minds steeped in modern culture to the demands of orthodoxy, because such demands involve loyalty to superfluities and attacks on healthy individual progress. Forms and symbols have their proper place in the scheme of things, but they must never be allowed to retard the evolution of human beings. A rigid formalism is a serious menace to individual uplift, because the letter killeth, while the spirit giveth life.

Take the question of the admission into our temples of the so-called untouchables. Custom has so much hardened now that all members of a particular community, no matter what their spiritual attainments are, no matter what their earnestness is regarding the higher life, are flatly denied admission into temples. The same is the case with regard to the ineligibility of a certain class of persons to read the scriptures. Eligibility to study the subtle reasonings of the scriptures was quite reasonably confined to the few who were fit for the task by reason of a sharp intellect, a pure

mind etc. But now the original line of division has been obliterated, and the criterion of birth, according to the orthodox, has become the sole test of eligibility.

Need for Wholesome Changes

If any society must live efficiently it is necessary that periodically it searches itself and effects a pruning and a cleansing. The overgrowth of weeds must be cleared, and a readjustment of parts, a reorientation of paths, brought about. If a society is unable to do so it means its last days are come, for in the absence of recognised leaders who could with authority order the necessary changes, society will come to ruin as a ship without the pilot. We must have new Manus amongst us now. If the old forms and usages of Hinduism are overhauled and re-set in accordance with the demands of the modern age, then will formalism cease to be a menace to society, as it has become now, and prove to be a real blessing instead. If on the other hand we spend all our energies only in the discussion of questions like the number of times we must wash our hands after meals, the number of days of pollution we must observe on the death of a distant, unseen and uncared-for relation or the distance there must be between an untouchable and ourselves, our religion will fast sink into a 'kitchen-religion.' The greatest need of the social aspect of Hinduism today is its being brought up-to-date; it must be bathed anew in the waters of evolution and be made to

discard worn-out rags and don fresh clothes. Such a process will not only give Hinduism a greater appropriateness and an added glory, but will also reveal its inner soul in a better light.

FROM VILLAGE WINDOWS

By Swami Nirlepananda

THERE is very often seen a tendency among us to belittle the value of *education*. Many among us say that receiving education is the same as courting economic ruin. But if as a result of being literate we catch the contagion of becoming averse to physical labour, or if a tendency is detected in some of us to dislike or hate active work, the fault is decidedly *ours*. All such derogatory feeling is due to mental disease, or a very regrettable mental maladjustment. No literature worth its name teaches us such a mean lesson. On the other hand we have noticed in villages that the little sign of light, a proneness to adjust oneself and move with the times—in one word, all our future potentiality and hope of regeneration—are seen in the rational and broad attitude of life taken up by none other than the small sprinkling of young *educated* villagers. The leaven of progress and leading cannot but come from that quarter.

Ways of the Uneducated

The older generation of people who are mostly unlettered and the illiterate womenfolk as a whole, are the stoutest enemies, rank oppositionists of all healthy improvements in the tone, mode and manner of mutual behaviour among themselves

—high-castes and lower grades. I am speaking from my first-hand and sometimes pathetic experiences of the Bankura District, in Bengal, ranging for years. The class called Utkal Brahmins (who have come from the contiguous Orissa district) are most rigid and unbending and cruel, in their 'touch-me-nots.' They would gladly smoke the indented Muslim-made *Bidis*, which are very often finished with the saliva from the mouth of city Muslim makers. Or they would relish the sweet *Gur*-cakes called locally *labats* exclusively prepared by Muslims. But suddenly all their sense of Brahminic aristocracy, tyranny and superiority complex, handed down from generation to generation is at full play when a non-Brahmin, of their own Hindu fold, touches their rice-dish or drinking water-glass! Fancy the utter ludicrous situation created by these people. These wiseacres repeating high-sounding classical Sanskrit Slokas, epitomising the philosophy of unity and side by side with it spurning their low-caste neighbours from off their courtyard as worse than plague or cholera bacilli!

I visited this class of people in their own huts and homes and lived with them for days. Most of them

are extremely dirty and unfit for civil, sanitary society, although financially far better situated than their neighbours. Yet they all claim the highest honour as a matter of birthright.

Of course, there are honourable exceptions and no generalisation is ever fully true. The bright, strong side of their lives must be alluded to unequivocally and we are heart and soul ready to heap praises upon their heads on this score. They are very plain and simple in their dress and diet and they seldom take the bazaar-made adulterated sweets and other edibles. And they have the excellent, admirable, socially and physiologically sound practice of not allowing newly wedded couples to live together before both attain their age of puberty. For this very reason they are a fine type of healthy men and women to be highly spoken of for their strong-built frames, in spite of their untidy, slovenly habits. Conservatism in its redeeming feature has saved them from all manner of unbecoming foppishness and unnecessary luxury.

Interests are, however, sometimes at loggerheads. The superstitious, selfish, old set of men are nervous about educating the female members of their family, lest in the same process and a final sequel thereof, these become enlightened and *reasonable* enough in their attitude of lives and try to quickly shake off and eschew the cruel, long-standing and un-moral despotisms of their menfolk.

The Educated to the Fore

In the village of Khatra where I lived long, the low-caste people, the Bauris specially, on one occasion demanded an exorbitant and deterrent rate of remuneration to carry the Durga-image from the celebration-hall and get it immersed in the village-pond. Perhaps they had an idea of making some bargain out of the helpless condition of the upper class people, in this their monopoly-labour. They knew not that a new India had already come at their doors and begun walking with the strong legs of its handful of really brave and cultured youths. The spirited young men, mostly literate, belonging to high castes, themselves rushed to volunteer their service. They performed the tough task quite smoothly, without the least compunction of heart, the least hesitation, the least blushing. They all came out of it more powerful, more glorious than ever. It was such a novel, a rather thrilling experience for them—a sight to see, really speaking. The mirth, merriment and all were a symbol of the New Age we are already in.

Plain Living and High Doing

On occasions it was a privilege to see additional examples of this new ferment, the baptism of renunciation and service given by the great Āchārya Vivekananda. I distinctly remember a veritable village Hampden, Govinda Mallick by name, fired by the ideal of Rejuvenated India, carrying to the cremation-ground the dead bodies of those

unfortunate folk whose kith and kin had left them off,—they who died of tuberculosis, cholera or small-pox. Mallick with his youth league of social servants was doing the last rites,—the right of relations. He is still a worthy representative of the Ramakrishna - Vivekananda - Seva-Ideal, practising and working it out in his smooth, unpretentious, everyday life of a householder. With scant vernacular education, he is veritably—a miracle. He and his associates are undoubtedly the hope of the future as admirable types of plain-living, high-thinking and *high-doing*. In the present sad state of our villages, noble actions, magnanimous, charitable, sympathetic dealings in the handling of untold problems—are all that is expected and wanted of village workers. The charge of being merely *bookish* and over-educated cannot be laid at the doors of these young men we are speaking about. I have had occasions quite unintentionally to examine Mallick. The very mention of his name represents generosity in that quarter. And I found him to my utter joy perfectly unattached,—something of the expected but rare stuff of a real Karma-yogin. That discovery is infinitely more valuable, more gratifying than an *El Dorado*, a land of gold in a new continent. The crying need is for *men* of this true mettle,—men who are the glory of their mothers, men who never fail their brothers, men who are always *true*, however *false* are others. All praises are too in-

sufficient to characterise Mallick's sterling merit and his rare strength of character. His very breath is courage and withal he is so very unostentatious, without the least flourish of show or self-assertion or the sort of urban self-aggrandisement and self-advertisement with which we are all familiar. He is a force of Divine Mother—simple, silent. I have not the least hesitation to call him a creator of New Bengal—an exemplar of the Ideal Youth which is a dream of ours and which we so much read about and talk about. To meet him and live with him is just to be in the midst of a holy pilgrimage with all its edifying, sacred associations. All appreciative references are felt to be quite inadequate to give expression to what one has in his heart after he comes to know of the man—the man who always thinks of *others first* and *himself last*. He works as a patient tiller with his group of paid wage-earners. The rocky soil and hard environ has produced in him a hard, strong, painstaking man, with muscles of steel.

Sad Failure of the Orthodox

When fire broke out on one occasion, the High School Boarding boys at Khatra, automatically at once jumped off in the right laudable, manly spirit, to put it out first and foremost. While the old orthodox lot began at that tragic hour to cogitate, vegetate, discuss and *debate* about the origin, the history, the manner of its spread and further, how the supposed culprits

are to be booked to justice! When a contagious disease breaks out they are prone to spend enough money over all-day Harinama (*astamprahara*) Kirtanam for five consecutive days and nights (which is not bad in itself); but are not willing to get vaccinated in order to immune themselves from attack. Neither are they least willing to purge off their insanitary habits, or to spend

anything on these scores. They have very advantageously managed to forget the immortal and salutary lesson of the Gita where it inculcates the absolute importance of the right type of effort for the fruition of particular actions, the Divine will or grace being the ever present common factor behind everything—*विविधाश्च पृथक् चेष्टा* etc. The message is missing in actual life.

MANDUKYOPANISHAD

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

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rao

Gaudapada's Karika

Substance may be the cause of substance. Things other than substance may be the cause of things other than substance. The Atmans (Jivas) are not either substance or something other than substance. (53)

Sankara's Commentary

It has been said that the essence of Atman is unborn and one. When the relation of effect and cause is superimposed on anything, there must be a substance giving rise to substance, or something other than substance giving rise to something other than substance. A thing cannot rise of itself. In our experience, we never see unsubstantiality being the independent cause of anything. Atmans are neither substance nor something other than substance; and therefore cannot be the effect or cause of anything. Thus being neither substance nor other than substance, Atman is not the effect or cause of anything.

Gaudapada's Karika

Thus objects (and Jivas) are not born of the mind and the mind is not born of the objects (or Jivas). Therefore, wise people adopt the principle of the non-production of cause and effect. (54)

Sankara's Commentary

From the reasons stated (above), we conclude that mind is of the same nature as the essence of Consciousness, that external objects are not born of mind, that mind is not born of external objects and that all objects (and Jivas) are mere appearances superimposed on Consciousness. Thus no effect comes from a cause nor a cause from the effect, there being thus non-production of causes and effects. Knowers of Brahman hold to the principle of non-existence of cause and effect in Atman.

Gaudapada's Karika

As long as one is possessed with the idea of cause and effect, cause

and effect will continue to operate. When the idea declines cause and effect cease to operate. (55)

Sankara's Commentary

If you ask, 'What about those who believe in cause and effect,' we reply (as follows): As long as one believes, "By reason of my merit and demerit, I am the actor and the enjoyer of the results of merit and demerit, in another birth (incarnation) among other living beings," that as long as one is possessed with the spirit of 'cause and effect' or has superimposed on one's Atman, this idea; so long, will the cause and effect operate. That is to say, merit and demerit and their results must continue to act on that individual. Under the influence of incantations and medicines, one can be dispossessed of the spirits; so by the realisation of Advaita (non-duality), one is dispossessed of the spirit of cause and effect due to Avidya. The idea declines and there is cessation of the operation of cause and effect.

Gaudapada's Karika

As long as one is possessed of the idea of cause and effect, so long will the world of Samsara be present. When this idea declines Samsaric world ceases to be. (56)

Sankara's Commentary

We reply to the question as to what harm there is in the operation of cause and effect. As long as the idea is not destroyed by proper discrimination, the world of Samsara continues to grow larger. When the idea of cause and effect ceases to exist, the world of Samsara is not manifested, in the absence of a cause.

Gaudapada's Karika

Everything is derived from the (veiling) power of Avidya and

nothing is therefore eternal. Everything is unborn and of the nature of Be-ness and consequently destruction cannot be predicated of it. (57)

Sankara's Commentary

(It is objected :) Atman is unborn and there is nothing beside it. If so, how can you speak of birth and destruction of the world of Samsara due to the operation of cause and effect? (We reply :) Listen; Avidya is the power (by which Atman is veiled) and by which the illusion of the worldly experience is spread out. All this arises from Avidya and therefore what is due to Avidya can never be eternal. The world of Samsara characterised by birth and death is said to be present. From the point of view of ultimate Reality, all this is unborn Atman. As it is unborn, it can never have any destruction as a result of the relation of cause and effect.

Gaudapada's Karika

Those things said to be born are not born in reality. Their birth is like Maya which is what is not known. (58)

Sankara's Commentary

(It may be asked :) 'How is the production of things other than Atman, brought about?' These things arise as said already, from Avidya alone. From the point of view of Reality, they are not born at all. As their birth is but the result of Maya, it is said to be like Maya. If you ask, 'Is Maya a substance?' we say, not at all, as Maya is that which is not known and is but a name given to that which is not known.

Gaudapada's Karika

Only Maya sprouts can come out of Maya seeds. They are neither

eternal nor transitory (subject to destruction). The same applies to all beings (Jivas). (59)

Sankara's Commentary

We go on to show how the birth of these beings is like Maya. The magical mango sprouts (produced by a magician) from magical seeds, are subject neither to permanent birth nor to death. The idea of birth and death is suitable only for those which have no substantiality. But from the point of view of Reality, the terms birth and death are not applicable in the case of Jivas.

Gaudapada's Karika

You cannot speak of permanence or impermanence in the case of all

those that have no birth. When words cannot be used for description, any detailed consideration of them is not possible. (60)

Sankara's Commentary

In the case of the Atmans of the essence of Reality, Consciousness and Be-ness, unborn, eternal and non-dual, no statements can be made of permanence or the opposite. Words are used for describing things. But when they cannot be used for description and explanation, their exact nature as this or that, cannot be determined, as they cannot be said to be either permanent or its opposite: as the Sruti says "when words turn back &c."

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Function of Universities

The Convocation address of Sir S. Radhakrishnan delivered under the auspices of the Allahabad University will ever be remembered as one of the finest utterances not only embodying the highest educational ideals but also placing before the youth and the country, in an unmistakably bold language, a social, philosophical and cultural outlook which we are apt to forget in the general unrest of the times. He has deviated from the general way these addresses are delivered, and spoken in a candid and courageous manner which very few, holding the high position he occupies, have dared to adopt. At the very outset he says, "There is something wrong about a system which turns out men who are not wanted by the society which has paid

for their training.....It is not the function of universities to produce an academic proletariat which is fed on idleness and so develops mental flabbiness and neurasthenia." And he points out that the system of education requires 'drastic revision from the foundation to the flag-pole.' It is out of date and unsuited to modern conditions and involves a colossal waste of intellect and energy. The main defect of the secondary and primary education in India is that they are 'dominated exclusively by the University requirements.' He pleads for a general cultural standard to enable them to meet the varied needs of practical life. "The value of University education is considerably impaired by the presence in the University of men who are unfit for higher literary or scientific education."

Wanted Leaders of the Right Type

Sir Radhakrishnan deplores the lack of efficient leaders in society. Universities are being affected "by the great moral issues about the first principles of social organisation." It is the function of the Universities to produce men of light and learning who can take up the role of leadership. But at present our leaders with University degrees are "without any clear vision of humanity's goal. Our leaders set forth programmes which they value more than the lives of their fellow-men. They will not hesitate to send millions to death to prove themselves in the right. Their own particular purposes should be achieved by any means, however barbarous or inhuman."

Decline of True Democracy

Democracy is abandoned by most of the Western nations; Dictatorship has become the general form of government among them. "The ordinary decencies of public life, the conventions which raise human society above a pack of animals, the bonds of personal loyalty and friendship, are being swept away by groups who neither respect laws nor recognise the common obligations of humanity. The zeal of the Dictator shrinks at nothing, not even carefully planned cold blooded murders of political opponents." All this discontent and disorder, the lecturer traces to economic causes. Governments are unable to deal with economic depression and the

problem of unemployment. With the rise of the Dictator all economic efforts come under political direction and "peaceful evolution which is the method of democracy yielded to forcible revolution." He then goes on describing how militarism is in the ascendant. "Might is today more right than ever" and nations are heading towards another world cataclysm. They are fed on a fodder of blood and iron. "When the next war breaks out, we will have a relapse into barbarism, if not the collapse of civilisation."

A Ray of Light

From this gloomy picture of world conditions he hearkens us to the message of Mahatma Gandhi. "Compared with the war cries and emotional outbursts of political Dictators today, the parting message of Gandhi to the last session of the Indian National Congress is like a ray of heavenly light let into a world of deep darkness." "A society does not grow out of its own motions. It is carried forwards by the efforts of a minority, a remnant in the words of Matthew Arnold, and that minority owes its inspiration to individuals, the wisest and the best, of insight and wisdom, of courage and power. It is individuals who rise above the national surroundings, who are in common with the good, seen and unseen, who have the energy to graft their vision on to the existing social substance—it is they who will carry civilisation forward." Mahatma Gandhi "commands his country-

men to transcend finitude and relativity which belong to politics as a national phenomenon and develop the capacity to apprehend absolute truth and recognise absolute obligation, all that we include under the names of reason and conscience, truth and love. As we contemplate the stupendous movement across the pages of history, we witness the power of ideas." Mahatmaji appeals to us "to build a new India on moral and spiritual foundations." His historic utterance, "*I shall never accept a self-government brought about by violence*," according to Sir Radhakrishnan, will be written "not only by the side of the utterances of great national leaders like Pericles and Cicero, or Washington or Lincoln, but also of great religious reformers, as that of the immortal voices of the human race in all that relates to the highest efforts of men and nations." Speaking about Great Britain and India, he says, "For the sake of world peace and British prestige, it is to be hoped that the peace-loving liberal-minded section of Great Britain will realise that the days of paternalism are over and an empire is justified only because it is a partnership held together by the free consent of self-governing peoples."

An Appeal to the Youth

The Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University then proceeds to make a spirited appeal to the youth of the country to arouse in them and their neighbours the proper social conscience which alone can

build up an honest and healthy social organisation. Says he:

"There is an organic connection between the social conscience and the political arrangement. A more stable and representative government demands a juster social order. A society that tolerates the scourge of untouchability has no right to be called civilised.....The pernicious influences at home and schools, which inculcate wrong notions about caste superiority and communal contempt, require to be removed with a drastic hand. It is no answer to say that each one is at liberty to follow his own customs and creeds but the decencies of social life require not passive non-interference but active sympathy and understanding. It is true we do not shoot or guillotine people and yet we do things pretty thoroughly in our own way by means of ostracism and social boycottHindus and Muslims have lived together for centuries and yet we cherish the most amazing illusions about each other's character.....Our education, if it is successful, should protect us against passion and prejudice and develop in us a resistance to the power of the press and propaganda to ply on our weakness."

The Work Before Universities

In conclusion he says that "the growth of national consciousness is retarded by communal separation."

"Many of us have an emotional apprehension of the vastness and complexity of the situation, but what is required is a scientific view. Here is work for a number of University men and women to disentangle the conflicting aims, to melt the various influences for good into one supreme social effort which is essential to make men less selfish, less

aggressive, less given to frivolity. It is for the Universities to produce men who are able to stand out of the welter of commonplace egoism to seek public good, who have intellectual conscience to see the truth and the moral courage to pursue it."

Let us hope that the initiative taken by Sir Radhakrishnan will find constructive application in all our educational institutions and help them to turn out men with true enlightened civic and national ideals to fill up the ranks of true citizenship, the lack of which we so sadly deplore.

Basic Principles not Much Discussed

The Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute for April-May 1934 contains, among many others, a very instructive article on the "Ideals, Merits and Defects of Ancient Indian Educational System," by Dr. A. S. Altekar, M. A., LL. B., D. Litt. An important feature of the article is that the learned writer has, wherever possible, made references to relevant facts in the history of the West and enabled the reader to judge better the worth or worthlessness of Indian methods. For example, he begins by telling that "to persons interested in theories and ideals of education, the history of ancient Indian education may appear rather disappointing," since our people were more concerned with "describing the main features" than with "discussing its basic principles." The system also "became stereotyped at a fairly

early stage; a few changes did take place, but the writers of later times are more anxious to conceal than expound the changed methods and ideals." Side by side we are shown that "in Europe too there was hardly any systematic discussion of the theories of education till recent times. Says the Dr.,—

"Theories about the importance of the child and its inclinations in outlining an educational system were unknown before the time of Rousseau. Whether memory should be trained more than the reasoning faculty, whether reading should be encouraged more than reflection, whether education is expanse of natural powers or an accretion to them from without, what is the relative importance of and proper time for physical, æsthetic, moral and intellectual training, are problems that have begun to be systematically discussed even in the West only in the last hundred years or so."

India's Peculiar Circumstances

Why is it that in ancient India, we sometimes come across stray reflections about these problems, but we never see any regular and systematic discussion? We read:

"This was perhaps to some extent a natural consequence of the absence of any social or state control over the educational system. Both the state and society gave full liberty to teachers. As they were not subjected to any appreciable external criticism or control, they went on their traditional grooves without giving much thought to the fundamental problems. We have further to note that the peculiar constitution of Hindu society rendered a discussion of some of these problems out of question. For instance, the

controversy about literary *versus* useful education was inconceivable in ancient Indian society. Professions came to be assigned hereditarily to different groups; if anybody had started the discussion of this controversy, he would have been told that for certain classes liberal education was more important than useful education and for certain others the case was just the reverse."

Character and Personality

The writer then passes on to an elaborate account of how the "formation of character, building up of personality, preservation of ancient culture and the training of the rising generation in the performance of the social and religious duties" were the main aims of the teachers of the olden days. Says he:

"We come across several masterful personalities in different walks of life in ancient India, but how far they were typical of their age we do not know. Hindu achievements, however, in different walks of life and branches of knowledge were of a fairly high order in ancient India, and this would hardly have been possible if the products of the Hindu educational system were not masterful personalities. This changed for the worse in mediæval times; *Brahmacharya* discipline became nominal when a vast majority of students began to marry at a very early age; growth of independent judgment became stunted with the growing veneration for the past and its time-hallowed tradition. Self-confidence began to suffer from the convulsions of sudden foreign invasions and long alien rule, imposing a hated religion and strange culture with the aid of the sword. We must not judge the success of the ancient Indian educational system

in building personalities of students by conclusions based upon its products at the advent of the British rule."

Preservation and Transmission of Culture

If we travel over the length and breadth of the country we shall be surprised to find an extraordinary amount of cultural uniformity. And the credit for all these common features contributing to Hindu unity has to be largely given to that aspect of the ancient educational system which made arrangements to preserve and transmit the culture of the past. We read:

"Members of the professions were to train their children in their own lines, rendering available to the rising generation at the outset of its career all the skill and processes that were acquired after painful efforts of the bygone generations. The services of the whole Aryan community were conscripted for the purpose of the preservation of the Vedic literature. Every *Dvija* must learn at least a portion of his sacred literary heritage. . . A section of the Brahmana community however was always available to sacrifice its life and talents in order to ensure the preservation of the sacred texts. Theirs was a life-long and almost tragic devotion to the cause of learning. For, they consented to spend their life in committing to memory what others and not they could interpret. . . Here the goal was avowedly cultural and not utilitarian."

Efficient Citizenship Aimed At

Before proceeding to consider the defects of the ancient system, the writer winds up the merits by refuting the charge that the hold of religion over the Hindu mind made

their teaching 'other-worldly.' The system, says he, aimed at producing "youths eminently fit to perform their civic and social duties; if any spiritual merit for the life to come were to be achieved through the Brahmacharya, it was to be through the proper performance of its duties which however were principally determined with a view to make the student an efficient and god-fearing citizen."

OBITUARY NOTES

Nirbhayananda and Madhusudananda

We record with grief the passing away of two aged Swamis of the Order, Nirbhayananda and Madhusudananda. The former had been ailing for some time and he passed away at Benares. He was known among the devotees as Kanai Maharaj (senior). He was one of the earliest few who joined the Baranagore Math. Seeing that Swami Vivekananda was not keeping good health after his return from the West, Kanai devotedly attended to his personal comforts. Swamiji was pleased with his service and blessed him. For some time Nirbhayananda was also at Madras with Swami Ramakrishnanandaji. In his later years Nirbhayananda used to charm people by narrating incidents in the life of Swami Vivekananda in such a manner as to enable his hearers to understand better the many-sidedness of the Swamiji's personality.

Madhusudananda was a reputed Kaviraj and he took holy Orders in his old age. Many of his disciples in the medical line are well known physicians now. He was a good Sanskrit scholar and could fluently talk and write in that language. Though advanced in

years, he was very active and was always cheerful and buoyant.

May their souls rest in Peace!

Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao

With deep sorrow we also record the passing away of Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao on 1st December at Bangalore at the ripe old age of 85 years. He worked successively as the Dewan of Travancore, Mysore and Baroda and made a name for himself as a far-seeing and courageous statesman. In 1892 he first met Swami Vivekananda. Mr. Madhava Rao was one of those who took a prominent part in congratulating the Swami on his epoch-making achievement in the West. He always evinced a deep interest in our cause and helped in the building up of our Math at Bangalore. As recently as last October, he presided over the lecture of Swami Gnaneshwarananda who had come from Chicago on a short visit to India. He was greatly delighted to know from the Swami that Vedantic ideals and the culture of India were slowly making their influence felt in the West. He was very much interested in cultural exchange between the East and the West. In Mr. Madhava Rao the Mission has lost a sincere friend and admirer. May his soul attain Peace!

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE RIDDLE OF THIS WORLD: By Sri Aurobindo: The Arya Publishing House, 63, College Street, Calcutta. Pages 236.

The letters of Sri Aurobindo, collected in the volume before us, were originally issued by him in answer to questions raised by his disciples or others interested in Yoga and spiritual life. As they are of general interest and touch problems often raised in relation to spiritual truth and experience, they have been brought together and published under the above title, which is the subject of the last of the letters.

As a Yogi who has attained spiritual heights, Sri Aurobindo is well known. The book under notice, together with his other works, viz., 'Yogic Sadhana,' 'Yoga and Its Objects,' 'Isha Upanishad' and 'Essays on the Gita' sums up the essence of his Yoga and spiritual experience. Stated briefly, its aim is to bring the supermind, which is the vast truth-consciousness of which the ancient seers spoke, "into the consciousness of the earth and fix it there." His Yoga is a double movement of ascent and descent. "One rises to higher and higher levels of consciousness, but at the same time one brings down their power not only into mind and life, but in the end into the body." The highest of these levels, the one at which it aims, is the supermind. Only when that can be brought down is a divine transformation possible in the earth consciousness. The author points out that there is no real contradiction between the two movements.

In the essay entitled "Western Metaphysics and Yoga" the distinction between European metaphysical thought and the Indian system of Yoga, the aim of which is to attain the highest truth through intuition and illumination and spiritual experience, is stressed. European metaphysical thought does not go beyond the intellect and any seeking of the Supreme Truth through

intellect alone must end in agnosticism, while the Supreme and all that is beyond the mind must remain for ever unknowable. The Unknowable of the European agnostic must not be confounded with the Unknowable of the Vedantin. They are poles asunder.

Perhaps the most important essay in the volume is that entitled "The Intermediate Zone", which refers to trials on the path of the Sadhaka, who is in the stage of transition between the ordinary consciousness in mind and the true Yoga knowledge. In this stage one may easily go astray, following false voices and mendacious guidance, which means spiritual death and disaster. This is a zone which many Sadhakas have to cross, in which many wander for a long time and out of which many never emerge. In this excursion in unknown entangled regions the Sadhaka needs the aid of a true Teacher.

We have perused with great interest the essays collected in this volume. They depict the author's own spiritual experiences, presented in brilliant and telling words and should prove highly useful to Sadhakas on the path.

A. S.

THE YOGA DARSHANA: Comprising the Sutras of Patanjali, with the Bhasya of Vyasa translated into English with notes by Dr. Ganganath Jha. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.

Yoga Sutra is the celebrated work of Maharshi Patanjali, dealing with 'Raja Yoga' or the path leading to the communion of the spirit, freed from the shackles of matter. His aphorisms contain India's higher psychology. The conclusions are based on deep enquiry and investigation. Like all scientific truths they are amenable to experimentation and verification. The adherents need not pin their faith on any scripture or authority of persons, ancient or modern. The most essential qualification is to have a free, open and unbiassed mind,

divested of all preconceived notions and prejudices. Even a sceptic is not debarred from entering its holy precincts. Believe not anything unless you feel it or have experience of it in your life. This is its creed. The philosophy is the same as that of the Sankhya system. The only difference is that, unlike the latter, it postulates the existence of God, as the Teacher of all teachers and possessor of all excellences and noble qualities in the highest degree.

Dr. Jha has done a signal service by his masterly translation of the book with the commentary of Vyasa without which the abstruse aphorisms would have been incomprehensible. In the introduction he has given a lucid summary of the main topics that have been dealt with in the body of the book. The notes are exhaustive and the explanations are simple and faithful. The learned scholar has spared no pains to make the translation easy and the style attractive. The get-up and the printing are also excellent. The book will be immensely helpful to those who are interested in the practical aspect of the Yoga philosophy. The English-reading public will be highly indebted to Dr. Jha and the Theosophical Society

for this valuable service (coming after the publication of the Upanishad Series with Sankara's commentary) and we earnestly recommend the book to all lovers of knowledge who have a sincere interest in the practical philosophy of the Hindus. S. A.

THE DIVINE LIFE: By Ramdas. Published by Anandashram, Ramnagar, Kanhangad P. O., S. India. Pages 108. Price Rs. 10.

This booklet is No. 6 of the series published by the Anandashram. "If life is allowed to express itself compatible with the inspiration handed down from the ancient Rishis and the Teachers of the world, it will be fully informed with a creative genius for producing works of enduring value and surpassing beauty and excellence in the fields of art, sculpture, poetry, heroism literature and industry." This is the keynote of this lucidly written volume.

U. L. T. PAMPHLET SERIES: Nos. 29 & 30: Published by the Theosophy Company (India), Ltd., 51, Esplanade Road, Bombay. Price each 1 anna.

These pamphlets are entitled "A Master's Letter" and "Karma the Compensator."

NEWS AND REPORTS

R. K. Sevashrama, Shyamala Tal

The Sevashram has been giving medical relief to the residents of the deep Himalayan jungles around, for the past nineteen years. There is no other means of medical relief within 30 miles and patients often come for treatment, making a full day's journey. Many are mostly extreme and long-suffering cases, but not being habituated to drugs, they recover with astonishing quickness. The Sevashrama also attends to sick animals such as cows and buffaloes which generally suffer from wounds, worms and foot-and-mouth-diseases. In 1933, 1405 human patients and 493 animals were treated. 5 were admitted in the indoor section. The

management has been able to pay off the debt of Rs. 179-10-3 incurred for the completion of its building last year. But owing to the prevailing economic depression and fall in subscriptions, the work is badly hampered. In addition to the Almora Dt. Board's annual grant of Rs. 100 and a generous monthly subscription of Rs. 25 and an annual donation of Rs. 32 worth of medicines from two staunch supporters, the Sevashram has to purchase nearly Rs. 200 worth of articles yearly, to carry on the work. It is hoped that funds will be forthcoming from the generous public to meet these demands as well as to place the institution on a secure footing.

R. K. Mission, Ceylon

The Ramakrishna Ashrama, Colombo, is the headquarters of the Mission in Ceylon. Its activities are various. In addition to daily worship and the celebration of important religious festivals and the Birthdays of saints and incarnations, it holds regular classes on Bhagavad Gita and other scriptures. It also maintains a free reading room and library, and a bookstall in the Ashrama premises for the benefit of the people. The Swamis occasionally go on tours to different places in Ceylon and deliver lectures on topics cultural and religious. There was a sumptuous feeding of Daridra Narayanas in connection with the Birthday celebration of Sri Ramakrishna, and the inmates of Batticaloa Jail and Mantivu Leper Asylum had their usual New Year treat. Eminent persons from different parts of the world visited the Ashrama and were greatly impressed by its activities carried on in a spirit of dedication and service.

The Mission manages 12 schools and an orphanage. The orphanage provides food, clothing and education for 38 children of whom three passed successfully the Junior Certificate examination. The total number of pupils attending the schools is 2,234 and that of teachers 74. The standard of work has greatly improved as is evident from the reports made by the inspecting officers. The Batticaloa centre conducts 8 schools, Jaffna 2, and Trincomalie 2, one Vernacular and the other English. A class for the study of advanced Tamil literature has been started at Kalmunai. In Trincomalie school the "Rural Scheme" has been adopted and the officers of the Education Department are keen on developing it.

The Ashrama is now located in a rented building. So the pressing need is for a plot of ground and a house of its own with a permanent fund for it as well as for the maintenance of its diverse works. It is hoped the generous public will come forward with liberal contributions and enable the Mission to place all its activities on a solid basis financially.

R. K. M. Sisumangal Pratishtan, Calcutta

This institution was started about two years ago by Swami Dayananda who had the opportunity of studying first-hand the problem of maternity and child welfare in the United States of America. This is the first of its kind in Bengal where the death rate among mothers and infants is appallingly high. The institution has amply justified its existence by the amount and quality of the service rendered and the popularity gained in such a short time. The Pratishtan is located in a two-storeyed rented building in the suburb of Calcutta inhabited by various communities. It is equipped with up-to-date appliances for hospital and clinical work. In the Indoor hospital there are 7 beds for mothers and 9 for babies. It can accommodate 28 labour cases per month, allowing every mother to stay there for a week. Besides, external maternity service was also rendered by propaganda work through the medium of the press and posters and house-to-house canvass by honorary and paid women workers. Group instruction was given once a week by qualified doctors to all expectant mothers assembled in the lecture room, informing them all about the hygiene of pregnancy, the danger signals, the precautions to be taken, the preparation for the lying-in period and other kindred subjects.

Prenatal care from the earliest stage of pregnancy up to the time of confinement was regularly undertaken and Mothers' Clinics were held every Sunday through the able guidance and supervision of two gynaecologists, a pathologist, a lady doctor, a matron and several staff nurses. In the first year 210 mothers received care and 542 in the second year.

CHILDREN'S CLINIC AND "FOLLOW-UP" OF BABIES: This is an entirely separate and independent unit but works collaborately with the Maternity section. This is under the supervision of a pediatrician trained in Calcutta, Vienna, Tubingen and Baltimore, assisted by several competent nurses. Baby Clinics were held regularly twice a week. This

section is equipped with all modern appliances for systematic medical examination, including blood and urine tests. Lastly, proper facilities and training were given to midwives and nurses to carry on the work ably and scientifically. The first batch consisted of six young women of respectable families who were provided with free boarding and lodging and given a normal stipend.

FINANCE: During the years under review the total receipts amounted to Rs. 31,203-14-6, and the total expenditure under different heads to Rs. 25,602-0-8, thus leaving a closing balance of Rs. 5,601-13-10 in hand at the end of June 1934.

With the expansion of activities, the expenses are increasing year after year. Although the work is being appreciated, the income has not proportionately increased. The management hopes that the generous public will come forward liberally to support this new and useful institution.

R. K. Mission, Dacca

The activities of the Mission during the year were under the following heads :

MISSIONARY: It organised weekly sittings in different parts of the city, where scriptures were read, explained and personal doubts removed by free discussion, etc. Public lectures were given by Swamis of the Mission which were largely attended and appreciated. The Birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and different world prophets were celebra-

ted, feeding of the Daridra Narayanas forming one of the main items in these functions.

EDUCATIONAL: A free Boys' school up to the Middle English standard of Class V, consisting of 133 students is being run. The students hail mostly from very poor families. So medical and pecuniary help was rendered to them in cases of emergency. A Girls' school was also managed in a nearby village, where free education was given to 25 girls of different castes and creeds.

There is a library and reading room open to the public. This was most profitably utilised by a large number of readers, mostly students of the different schools and colleges.

CHARITABLE: An outdoor dispensary is run where medicine was given to 6,023 patients during the year under review. The workers of the Mission nursed 5 patients at their houses and cremated 4 dead bodies. Rice was distributed to different needy persons, and pecuniary help amounting to Rs. 87-9-0 was given to poor students towards the cost of school fees and purchase of books while Rs. 74-14-0 was spent for the maintenance of deserving families.

NEEDS: For proper accommodation of the boys of the school, it has become necessary to erect a building with a wall fencing, the probable cost being estimated at Rs. 6,500. The management fervently hopes that the sympathetic public would co-operate to remove this handicap and also to place the institution on a firm footing.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The 73rd Birthday of Swami Vivekananda will be celebrated on Sunday the 3rd February 1935. The Tithi-Puja falls on 27th January 1935.

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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

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXI]

FEBRUARY, 1935

[No. 10

HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

चतुराश्रम्यधर्माश्च यतिधर्माश्च पाण्डव ।

लोकवेदोत्तराश्चैव चात्रधर्मे समाहिताः ॥

प्रत्येकं सुखभूयिष्ठमात्मसाच्चिकमच्छलम् ।

सर्वलोकहितं धर्मं च त्रियेषु प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

शेषाः स्रष्टा ह्यन्तवन्तो ह्यनन्ता सप्रस्थानाः क्षत्रधर्माः विशिष्टाः ।

अस्मिन् धर्मे सर्वधर्माः प्रविष्टास्तस्माद्धर्मे श्रेष्ठमिमं वदन्ति ॥

The duties in respect of all the four modes of life (Brahmacharyam, etc.), those of Yatis, O son of Pandu, and the customs relating to the conduct of men in general, are all included in kingly duties.

The duties imposed upon the warrior class are plain, productive of great happiness, evident in respect of their results, free from deceit, and beneficial to the whole world.

Infinite were the other duties, with those of the Vanaprastha mode of life, that were created after (kingly duties flowed from the body of the Original God). The fruits of all those are exhaustible. Kingly duties, however, are distinguished above them, since they include them all. For this reason Kshatriya duties are declared to be the foremost of all.

SHANTI PARVA (lxiv, 1,5 & 22)

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

The Master punishes Rani Rasmani in his Mood of the Teacher and the consequence that follows.

TODAY Rani Rasmani herself has come to the temple. Therefore the employees are one and all extremely busy. Even the most confirmed shirker is doing his duties with great care. After bath in the Ganges the Rani comes to visit the Kali temple. The daily worship and the decorations of the image are over by this time. Having paid her homage to the Divine Mother, the Rani sits inside the shrine by the sacred image, to say her usual prayers, and finding the junior Bhattacharya near by, requests him to sing the glory of the Mother. The Master too, sits there and filled with inspiration goes on singing songs composed by great devotees like Ramprasad and Kamalakanta. The Rani says her prayers and at the same time enjoys the devotional songs. Some time is spent in this way when, all of a sudden, the Master stops abruptly and with great annoyance bursts out harshly in a mood of anger, "The same thought, all along? And that, here too?" With this he gives a slap on the Rani's back. The Master is now in the same mood as one finds in a father when he angrily punishes his child for some mischief done by him. But who is there to understand him then!

The temple employees and the maid servants of the Rani, all in a body raise a great hue and cry. The porter runs in high haste to capture the Master. Those servants too that are outside proceed with curiosity towards the temple, being drawn by the loud noise. But the Master and the Rani, the main causes of this disturbance, are both calm and quiet. Wholly indifferent to the noise and bustle of the servants, the Master sits absorbed in himself with a faint smile on his lips; and the Rani is slightly ashamed and gloomy with repentance, inasmuch as, instead of meditating on the Divine Mother, she has been all along thinking to-day of the probable consequences of a particular lawsuit. She is somewhat surprised too, to think how the Master is aware of her mental states. After a while the noise of the servants brings the Rani to her senses and presuming that the innocent Master is likely to be assaulted by the thoughtless people, gives her solemn order, "The Bhattacharya has done nothing wrong. None of you should harass him in any way." Later, when Mathur Babu hears the whole story from his mother-in-law, he too keeps the same order in force. Some of the employees become a little offended at this. But what can they do? Therefore thinking that they have

little concern with the big affairs of big men, they simply keep quiet.

Similar Incidents in the lives of Lord Chaitanya and Jesus Christ.

After going through this story our reader may wonder what kind of teachership this is. What is this blessed manifestation of the preceptorhood by striking others! We can only say: Read the spiritual history of the world and you will find similar incidents mentioned in the lives of great prophets. Remember the punishment of the Kaji, the beating of Sri Advaita with a view to favouring him with devotion, and similar incidents in Sri Chaitanya's life. Remember again that there is no dearth of like instances in the life of the great Jesus.

Once Lord Jesus along with his disciples came to visit the temple of Yahveh at Jerusalem. The sight of this temple rouses such holy thoughts in Jewish minds as are experienced by Hindus when they visit their sacred places like Benares or Brindavan. Moreover Jesus' mind was always established in the subtler world of thoughts. Even from a distance, at the very first sight of the temple, Jesus was filled with religious emotions and he hurried on to see the Deity. Outside the temple, at the gate and within the courtyard there were many people variously engaged in earning money and in other worldly pursuits. The priests and the guides were more interested in cheating the pilgrims of their purse rather than in helping them in

visiting the Lord; and the shopkeepers were engrossed only in thoughts of making more and more profit, by selling the articles of offering such as the animals, flowers, etc. Who troubled his mind with such thoughts as, 'We are in the temple of the Lord, and near His presence'? Completely absorbed in spiritual thoughts, Jesus could not notice any of these things. He went straight into the temple and was delighted beyond measure by the sight of the Lord. He was quite beside himself with joy to find the same Deity within himself, as the Life of his life and the Soul of his soul. The temple as well as the persons and the objects therein appeared to be the dearest to him in this mood. For it was by coming here that he felt the Divine Presence.

But later, when his mind descended again to the lower plane, when he proceeded to compare the world of his ideas with the external world of facts, he found them to be just poles asunder. No one was engaged in the service of the Lord, the joy of his soul. Everyone on the other hand was mad after lust and gold. Sorrow and despair filled his heart. "What is this?" he thought. "Do whatever you like, outside; but why here too? In the temple itself where God is specially manifested, even here you have brought in the world?" Filled with righteous indignation, in an angry mood, with a cane in hand, he forcibly drove away all the traders

from inside the temple. Brought to their senses, even though only for a moment, they too thought that they had been actually doing a sinful act, and quietly went out. Those souls that were too deeply engrossed in bondage and could not be rectified by mere words, were brought round by the use of the cane; and then they too left the place. But none took offence or ventured to do him any violence.

Persons getting illumination after receiving blows from the hands of the Lord Krishna and then coming to realise Him as God Himself and praising Him as such; or, persons deeply engrossed in bondage, approaching the Lord Krishna with the motive of injuring Him but later being nonplussed simply by His smile or words, and similar facts are in abundance in Sri Krishna's life. Let us however leave aside those Puranic stories.

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Perhaps a temple has been started, where all castes can assemble and worship in a spirit of perfect equality and brotherhood, unhappily

missing in the existing temples. And these cheerful-faced volunteers in the religious line want that we should visit the place and benefit the institution by our suggestions, patronage and support. Or they have commenced evening sittings, where learned people are regularly giving free discourses on useful topics and where the functions are wound up with moving songs praising the Lord and telling us what service would be most acceptable to Him at the present day. Would we not step in, deliver a discourse ourselves, if we can, or attend with our friends? There is probably a free library attached, and those who have a desire can read about the ways in which our ancient culture succeeded in adequately meeting the needs of *those days* and kept society materially and spiritually healthy and vigorous. Would we help the spread of ideas by donating a few select books?

Constructive Works

The services of these devoted men are not restricted to cities alone. Numbers of them have penetrated into remote villages and are silently engaged in combating indebtedness and other evils affecting the inhabitants, by starting Co-operative Societies and Savings Banks in their midst. Through free schools, gramophone entertainments, magic lantern lectures, and more than anything else, by personal example, they teach the villagers in a variety of ways, especially to ward off diseases by observing the laws of hygiene and sanitation. They also give instruction regarding the care of infants and, where circumstances happen to be favourable, open dispensaries for the free treatment of the needy. They set up Homes for orphans as well as invalids, and do everything else in their power for making life less troublesome and more profitable. Having assimilated what is best in the modern system of studies, these enterprising men have here and there built up workshops and factories and are endeavouring to utilise capital and raw products, wherever available, for manufacturing the important articles of daily use among us.

Complete Dedication

Their life, however, is to be seen at its best in times of acute distress like those occasioned by floods, famines or contagious diseases. We see them mobilising all their resources at a moment's notice and marching, like true soldiers, into

the affected areas, cheerfully dedicating their life for the protection of the afflicted. Unable to risk so much, those with thinner blood in their veins are sometimes tempted to dissuade them, parodying the words of the illusory lion to King Dilipa, "You do not seem to be wise in your resolution, dear friends, in thus venturing to throw away your glorious prospects in life, your tender youth and comely persons for trifles like this." ¹ But they seem to be arguing within themselves in an altogether different strain. "We have evolved to this state of culture," they seem to say, "through many a life, and what harm is there in spending this *one* for the safety of *others*? After all, death is certain at one time or another. Then why not meet it *now* in a noble cause, instead of allowing it to overtake us at an unguarded moment in an uncertain future? If we die in this attempt, we die like heroes and go to the feet of the Lord in whose name we strive; but if we succeed, thousands in whom the Lord abides will feel relieved. And that is an end worth accomplishing at any cost."

Benefits in the Future

Time, probably, will not be far distant when the purity, selflessness, heroism and guileless tact of these men of trained minds will bring about a healthy change in

1. एकातपत्रं जगतः प्रभुत्वं
नवं वयः कान्तमिदं वपुश्च ।
अल्पस्य हेतोर्वेदु हातुमिच्छ-
न्विचारमूढः प्रतिभासि मे त्वम् ॥

Raghuvamsam, II, 47.

the habits and outlook of our people in general. The country may then hope to straighten its hitherto folded limbs and march forward steadily along all the avenues of progress opening up ahead under the pressure of modern circumstances. Perhaps we shall be justified in making a forecast based upon the ground already covered and saying that the effects are bound in due course to transcend the barriers of our own land and spread into those of our neighbours. Any signal success in any corner of the world cannot fail, under modern conditions, to attract the attention of all; and sooner or later, institutions which offer solutions for difficult problems affecting the welfare of all humanity are sure to be welcomed and copied with a sense of relief. Do we not, besides, see everywhere at the present day the evils of unchecked selfishness in the industrial, economic and political fields, on an individual, social, national and racial scale? In such a background of suspicion, strife and misery, the brilliant example of unselfish creative efforts of these educated and renouncing enthusiasts must shine by contrast, and tend to create a new culture in which competition would be withdrawn from the fields of conquest and annexation, but gladly directed and vigorously kept up in the fields of production and distribution.

Methods of Work and Training

Leaving aside prophecies and guesses, let us more profitably find out further particulars about this

bubbling manifestation of creative energy. The representatives whom we meet, carry with them printed reports of the work they are annually turning out from their respective institutions. The thoroughness of modern methods is fully evident on every page we read. These workers are not dreamers in the least, for their schemes bear marks of deep thinking and have evolved according to needs. They are also not monopoly-holders in any sense, for everywhere they have sought co-operation, discussed their plans with sympathisers and shared their knowledge and experience with all those who cared to go to them and take interest in their activities. The scope and extent of the work can be gauged not merely from the tabulated sheets and audited accounts but also from the remarks made by prominent visitors and from the photos of the various departments owned by the institution. Here and there we also get glimpses of the training which has made such business habits and efficiency possible in a land where foreign eyes are able to see only dirt, squalor, disunion, superstition and dreamy drifting.

The Ashrama is in fact the very centre of their life, and that this is so, will be revealed by a study of it at close quarters. According to its type, an Ashrama has permanent members who always stay together, as also temporary inmates, guests and visitors who fit in with the policy laid down by the inaugurators. It has its own rules for

admission and expulsion, the best guarantee for their observance, however, being the fact that each member lives all the time under the full critical gaze of the rest as well as of the public. In all cases of Sat-sangam or association of and with the virtuous, this deterrent force of other people's opinions has really been as constant and important a factor as the facilities for copying the good qualities of advanced souls. The inmates of the Ashrama have their common meetings too, in which the discussions centre not merely upon their plans of work but also upon the best ways of disciplining the mind and fashioning it into a powerful tool,—a tool that will without murmur consent to be used at all times, to be broken in the use itself or, what is equally important, to be kept back from work, if so decided upon by the community. The work itself is so adjusted that each will get a chance to develop his special aptitudes without detriment to his general adaptability and at the same time escape from the too common evil of regarding some items as more dignified than others.

Adaptability

Closer acquaintance with the inner life of each member will show how behind all the external business aspects there remain under control for future discharge, equally valuable gifts relating to art, philosophy or even the prosaic adjustments of domestic life. It is a defect of our present way of imbibing lessons that we can at most work with fair

success in a particular field of activity alone,—perhaps the one connected with the subject we were compelled to study for a certificate at school or college. And if we are thrown out of that line into any other, we often find ourselves helpless and desperate. But it does not seem to have been so in olden days, though we are led, by the decadent state of our society now, to imagine that things were more rigid and miserable then.

To mention just one Puranic example, it is remarkable how the Pandava princes adapted themselves to all the adverse circumstances that befell them at various periods of their life. Although accustomed only to the splendours of royalty, the princes, their aged mother and newly acquired bride spent a happy night in the humble and incommensurable dwelling of the potter. Yudhishtira and the brothers, after their frugal meal got by begging, lay down on Kusa grass with their heads to the south. Kunti laid herself down along the line of their heads while Draupadi, like a pillow for the legs, slept along the line of their feet without grieving in her heart or thinking disrespectfully of those heroic warriors.² Later still,

2. अगस्त्यशास्तामभितो

दिशन्तु शिरांसि तेषां कुरुसत्तमानाम् ।

कुन्ती पुरस्तात्तु बभूव तेषां

पादान्तरे चाय बभूव कृष्ण ॥

अशेत भूमौ सह पाण्डुपुत्रैः

पादोपधानीव कृता कुशेषु ।

न तत्र दुःखं मनसाऽपि तस्या

न चावमेने कुरुपुङ्गवास्तान् ॥

; vāyamvara Parva, Ch. 194, verses 9 & 10.

with perfect versatility, they spent their last year of exile by getting employed in various capacities at the court of King Virata. How many of our modern educated youths—what to speak of princes?—would undertake vows first of all, and then faithfully adhere to them if such adherence is possible only through accepting the post of menial servants, of cowherds, of cooks or of dancing masters? And how many, even if they could somehow force themselves into such humble situations, would succeed in performing the appointed duties satisfactorily for a year? To be a cook in a palace, to teach music and dancing, to be a handmaiden to royal masters,—these are not quite easy in actual practice. The wonder is that the military heroes described in our books could adapt themselves with ease in such circumstances and discharge their duties creditably as long as they chose to remain in such low stations.

The inmates of modern Ashramas are evidently on the same track as the heroes of old. Mark what a modern Acharya told his followers about the implications of the life of renunciation.³ "To go ahead of others in salvation, is wrong," said he, "One must learn sooner or later that one cannot get salvation if one does not try to seek the salvation of one's brothers." "You must try," he began to exhort them, "to combine in your life immense idealism with immense practicality.

3. Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, III: "Saunyasa: Its Ideal and Practice."

You must be prepared to go into deep meditation now, and the next moment you must be ready to cultivate these fields (Swamiji said pointing to the meadows of the Math). You must be prepared to explain the difficult intricacies of the Shastras now, and the next moment to go and sell the produce of the fields in the market. You must be prepared for all menial services, not only here, but elsewhere also."

Influence of Mature Souls

Apart from the original desire to lead a life of renunciation, what other factors are there to sustain these devoted men in their self-imposed vows and their consequent life-long struggles? It is natural for the youthful mind to picture the disciplining of the mind also as a pleasing adventure and to paint all possible relationships of Ashrama life in glowing colours. But it does not take long to sense the reality, the very prosaic reality that one's progress depends upon one's own painful struggles with the lower self, and not upon the simple fact of eating and sleeping in the company of certain people living in particular groups. When some initial shocks are over and the chief human idols of the heart broken, all endearing but weakening relationships get snapped and the aspirant arrives at an important turning point in his spiritual pilgrimage. A constant pressure on his mind then reminds him that he has to fight with the whole troop of his tendencies, virtuous as well as sinful, and at the same time organise his entire being

to eliminate all *hatred and shrinking* with regard to the "external" world. But sincere aspirants get over this stage without dangerous set-backs. Experienced men, men who have weathered many a storm in their own earlier days, easily divine these undercurrents in the novice's mind and with a little delicate handling lighten his burdens. And he, in his turn, would ever afterwards cherish,—and transmit to others as tradition—his memories of the days in which the overflowing love of holy men filtered into his life and dissolved his pains. Every Ashrama will prove on inquiry to have had a good many of these saintly men; and it is the presence of this mature type in each generation that makes Ashrama life smooth in the beginning and profitable and sweet afterwards. It is their suggestions and daily life that show the full implications of Sadhana and imperceptibly form the mould into which the novice's personality finds entrance before it assumes its final shape and symmetry.

Ashrama life with its advanced souls and facilities for fruitful Sadhana forms thus the mainspring of all the constructive works undertaken by different groups. So far as the individual is concerned, the Ashrama disciplines him in a two-fold manner: It teaches him to overcome his undesirable tendencies and to manipulate his virtuous ones *at will*. In fact much of the training consists in his being given as many opportunities as possible to exercise his strong points, so that

relatively the vices dwindle into insignificance and finally become powerless to goad him into action.

Worship through Virtues

The question then arises as to the direction in which the result of his virtuous labours should be made to flow and whether such a course of conduct can be adopted agreeably to the spiritual goal originally kept in view. The answer is supplied by the statement of the Gita that man attains the Highest by directing the flow of his special virtues towards the feet of the Lord.⁴ The mind with its natural endowments in the shape of the taste for fine arts, scholarship, philosophy, military manœuvres and the like is "the one lotus"⁵ which each man can directly offer to the Lord to obtain His Grace. It is only the thoughtless man who dives into deep lakes, penetrates into jungles or ascends steep hills in search of uncommon flowers, as if the troubles undergone for procuring them entitle him to greater grace. The Lord, after all, is not a remote Entity totally unconnected with the world around us. He is also the Indwelling Lord of all,—of the image or idol, of the elements with which formal worship is performed, of the teacher whose instructions are accepted, of the co-disciples

4. स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ।

5. गर्भीरे कासारे विशति विजने चोरविपिने
विशाले शैले च भ्रमति कुसुमार्ये जडमतिः ।
समर्थैकं चेतःसरसिजमुमानाय भवते
सुखेनावस्थातुं जन इह न जानाति किमहो॥

Sivanandalahari

whose company helps to preserve the correct attitude, of the society which supplies the sustenance, of one's own mind which goes through the Sadhana, and so on. In serving what are normally considered "others", it is therefore the Lord that is really worshipped, and all virtues can be confidently dedicated for the welfare of the "external" world. It helps in achieving the goal and never pulls down a soul from the heights once reached. Even the man of realisation, says the Gita in another place, acts in conformity with his (virtuous) natural impulses. Thus Vyasa codified the Vedas and wrote the Vedanta Sutras and other works, the Buddha taught and organised his disciples, Sankara and other Acharyas preached, Tyagaraja sang, —all even after realising the Highest.

Country's Gain

In this way, from the standpoint of society as a whole, the benefit is the greater in proportion to the number and variety of the Ashramas that spring into existence. Of each Ashrama itself, the value for society changes in accordance with the

special qualifications of the aspirants who get into it for moulding their spiritual life. Thus while we may expect an artist to develop into a saintly artist in any genuine Ashrama that he may accept as his own, no Ashrama can organise society in the field of art unless some aspirant with such predilections chooses to take up Ashrama life and success fully trains himself to dedicate his capacity for the service of the Indwelling Lord.

This leads us to another important point. With the existing types of aspirants,—and their sympathisers, admirers and friends—Ashramas as a class have been able to infuse a certain amount of life and energy into our land and rouse her up from her long sleep. A greater and more all-round revival will be possible if people with much greater capacities can understand the full potentialities of Ashrama life and regulate themselves,—directly through formal entry into an Ashrama or privately in their own manner—in accordance with its twofold motto, "Renunciation and Service."

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

By A Disciple

Practise and Wait

ANOTHER day I had been to the Holy Mother's place when a monk came and prostrated before her. He said, "Mother, why does the mind become so restless every now and then? Why is it that I cannot constantly meditate about You? Many worthless thoughts disturb my mind. Useless things we can easily obtain if we simply want them. Shall I never realise You? Mother, please tell me how I shall obtain peace. Nowadays I seldom have visions. What is the use of this life if I cannot realise Thee? It is rather better to die than to lead such a worthless life."

Mother: What are you talking of, my child? Do not even think of such things. Can one have vision of God every day? Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'Does an angler catch a big carp every day, the moment he sits with his rod? Arranging everything about him, he sits with his rod and concentrates. Once in a while a big carp swallows the hook. Many a time he is disappointed.' Do not for that reason relax the practice. Increase the Japam (repetition of the name of God).

Yogin-Ma: Yes, that is true. The name is identical with Brahman. Even if the mind be not concentrated at the outset, you will succeed ultimately.

Consideration for All

I was in indifferent health for a few days. When I felt better I went to see the Holy Mother. The evening service was over. She was in her bed. Immediately on seeing me she said, "Hallo, my child, how are you now? Are you quite well? "Yes, Mother," said I. She asked me about the welfare of the other members of my family. One of the lady-devotees from Dacca had been staying with her for about a month. She asked, "Mother, shall I rub the oil on your body? (Pointing to me) She is not quite well." The Mother said, "That does not matter. She can do it to-day." When she requested again, the Mother said, "No, She will do it. You may fan me." After a while the Mother said, "That's all right. I am feeling chilly. Go and rest for a while. Have you eaten anything? Take some sweets." In this way, the Holy Mother used to please everybody. The devotee did what she was asked to do.

The Master and His Ways

Mother: (To me) What a nice time we had yesterday. Sarala read about Sri Ramakrishna. How nice those words were! How could we know then that things would take this turn! What a great soul was born! How many people are illuminated by his words! He was the

embodiment of Bliss itself. All the twenty-four hours of the day were devoted to devotional music, merriment, laughter, teachings and storytelling. So far as I remember, I never saw him worried by anything. Often he would tell me nice words of advice. If I had known how to write, I would have noted them down. Well, Sarala, please read something to-day."

Sarala began to read from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna. "Do you notice those words," said the Mother, "which he addressed to Rakhal's father. 'A good apple tree begets only good apples'? In this way he would satisfy Rakhal's father. When Rakhal's father would come to Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna would carefully feed him with delicious things. He was afraid lest he would take the boy away. Rakhal had a step-mother. When the father came there, Sri Ramakrishna would say to Rakhal, 'Show him everything. Take good care of him.' Thus the father would be made to feel that Rakhal loved him."

Sarala was now reading about Brinde, the maid servant and the story of *luchi*. The Mother said, "She was by no means an easy woman. A fixed quantity of *luchi* was set aside for her tiffin. She would be extremely abusive if that was found wanting. She would say, 'Look at these sons of gentlemen! They have eaten my share also. I do not get even a little sweet.' Sri Ramakrishna was afraid lest those words would reach the ears of the

young devotees. One day, early in the morning, he came to the Naha-bat and said, 'Well, I have given to others Brinde's *luchi*. Please prepare some for her. Otherwise she will indulge in abusiveness. One must avoid wicked persons.' As soon as Brinde came, I said to her, 'Well, Brinde, there is no tiffin for you to-day. I am just preparing them.' She said, 'That's all right. Please do not take the trouble. Please give me raw food-stuffs.' I gave her flour, butter, potato and other vegetables."

Value of Self-Control

After finishing one chapter, Sarala went away to attend on Golap-Ma, who was ill.

The Holy Mother began in a low voice, "Do you notice this human body? Today it is and to-morrow it is not. And this world is full of misery and pain. Why should one worry about taking another birth? The body is never free from its accompanying troubles! The other day Vilas said to me, 'Mother, we are to be always very alert. We always tremble with fear lest even in mind we think of any unholy thought.' That is very true. A monk is like a bleached cloth, and the householder is like a black one. One does not notice the spots in a black cloth so much, but even a drop of ink looks so prominent on white linen. This life is always beset with dangers. The whole world is engrossed in lust and gold. The monk must always practise renunciation and dispassion. Therefore

Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'A monk must be always alert and careful.'"

Control for Realisation of God

Devotee: Well, Mother, according to our Hindu conception, the husband is the most adorable teacher. The scriptures say that through serving him one can go to heaven, and even be united with God. Now, if a wife, somewhat against the will of the husband, tries to practise self-control through supplication and spiritual talk, is it sinful for her?

Mother: Certainly not. Whatever you do for the realisation of God cannot have any sinful effect. Self-control is absolutely necessary. All the hard disciplines enjoined upon Hindu widows are meant to help them practise self-control.

All the acts of Sri Ramakrishna were directed to God alone. He

once performed Shodasi Puja*, making me the object of worship. I asked him what I should do with the bangles, the clothes and the other articles of worship. After a little thought he said that I could give them away to my mother. My father was then alive. Sri Ramakrishna said to me, 'Don't think, when you present your mother with these things, that she is an ordinary human being. Think of her as the direct embodiment of the Divine Mother of the Universe.' I acted accordingly. That was the nature of his teaching.

It was late at night, about half-past ten. The evening worship was over. After the Holy Mother had finished her meal, we all accepted Prasad and took leave of her.

* Shodasi, which literally means a woman sixteen years old, is one of the aspects of the Divine Mother.

ANANDA—RELATIVE AND ABSOLUTE.

By Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee, M.A.

Ananda-Brahman of Taittiriya Upanishad

IN my article on the "Ananda-Brahma-Vada"* of the Taittiriya Upanishad, I have briefly indicated, according to my lights, the line of thinking and the mode of self-discipline, by which Bhṛigu, son of Varuna, rose step by step from the sensuous plane of experience and outlook to the higher and higher planes and formed higher and higher conceptions of the nature of

the Supreme Reality, Brahman, till at the highest stage of his spiritual self-discipline and intellectual development he realised Brahman as *Ananda* or Bliss (आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात्). The final conclusion of this Upanishad is that Absolute *Ananda* is the Supreme Reality, which is the ultimate ground of the existence of all the diverse orders of phenomenal realities of this universe. All these

* Vide, Vedanta Kesari—May, June and July, 1934.

realities have only derivative, relative and contingent existence, and they all have their being from, by and for *Ananda-Brahman*. It is *Ananda* that gives birth to them, determines their particular forms and characters, regulates their movements and inter-actions, and sustains their temporary existence. It is *Ananda* again that exists eternally as the *Supreme Ideal*, towards the progressive realisation of which all these finite realities move and transform themselves in course of their evolution and by realising which they lose their individuated existence and become one with it. The whole universe is thus shown to be the self-expression of *Ananda*. *Ananda* is its *Substance*, *Ground* as well as its *Ideal*. It is its material cause, efficient cause, formal cause and final cause. The world-process means the mode of diversified and systematic self-manifestation of *Ananda*. *Ananda* constitutes the essence of everything, though its manifestation in diverse phenomenal realities is partial and in varying degrees of quality and quantity.

What is the meaning of *Ananda*?

Now, what is the true meaning of *Ananda*, which the Upanishad proclaims, on the strength of the deepest spiritual experience of the Rishi, to be the Ultimate Substance, Ground and Ideal of the Universe? The difficulty of finding out a true answer to this question is greatly enhanced by the fact that *Ananda*, as we ordinarily understand it, is an elementary state of our conscious-

ness, which everybody feels within himself even in the lowest planes of his experience. Being an ultimate fact of experience, it cannot, however, be interpreted and made more intelligible in terms of any other concept or concepts. But it is evident that the *Ananda* or pleasure which we all enjoy at one time or another can in no sense be accepted as the Ultimate Ground and Substance of the Universe.

Does the Upanishad use the term in a technical sense altogether unconnected with the fact of our experience? Or does this familiar fact of our everyday experience possess a deeper significance, which is progressively revealed in the higher and higher planes and which in the highest plane of spiritual experience exhibits its absolute identity with Brahman? Is it possible that in experiencing *Ananda* we really experience Brahman, though under various orders of limitations and conditions and in consequently diverse particularised forms and relative appearances? Is there any reasonable ground for believing that Brahman's self-revelation to our consciousness is imperfect and distorted just in proportion to the imperfection and distortion of the nature of *Ananda* within ourselves? Is it conceivable that when our whole self becomes perfectly blissful,—when the *Ananda* that we now enjoy bit by bit rises to its highest ideal state of perfection with no kind of quantitative, qualitative or temporal limitation,—when it becomes absolutely unconditional

pure, perfect, infinite and eternal and constitutes the entire nature of the self,—this *Ananda* would reveal itself as the one Absolute Reality without a second, it would cease to appear as one of the states or properties of individual consciousness, and would appear as the one absolute universal blissful consciousness itself and the Substance and Ground of the whole Universe?

Ananda and Our Pleasure

The Upanishad encourages us to believe that the *Ananda*, which is recognised in the highest plane of spiritual experience to be the ultimate Substance, Ground and Ideal of the Universe, is not absolutely different from and unconnected with the feeling of *Ananda* or happiness that we experience in the lower planes as a particular state of our consciousness. In the case of all living beings it is an acknowledged truth that it is the *Ananda*, which they experience and hope for in their life, that sustains their existence that makes life worth living and prompts them to exert themselves in the midst of various favourable and unfavourable circumstances for preserving and developing their own life and the life of their race by proper adjustment of their internal and external relations. It is also a plain truth that in the higher and higher stages of development they become fit for enjoying higher and higher forms of *Ananda*. The type of *Ananda* that an individual or a species is capable of enjoying and actually enjoys is not unoften re-

garded as an index of the development of its life. The longing for emancipation from sorrow and attainment of greater and greater happiness is inherent in the innermost nature of every living creature and supplies practically the whole motive power which drives it to different forms of activity. The enjoyment of the happiness attained—the sense of fulness experienced within—becomes the source of various forms of activity. Thus it would be no exaggeration to say that it is the enjoyment of, aspiration after and hope for *Ananda* that constitutes the very essence of life. *Ananda*, ideal or actual,—pursued or attained—appears to be the principal creative force and ruling power in the world of living beings.

The Upanishad says that none could have lived, none could have moved, if the *Ananda* which is the ground of the Universe, had not pervaded the whole *Akasa*. (को खेवायत् कः प्रान्यात् यद्येष आकाश आनन्दो न स्यात्) The *Akasa* used here may mean either the entire Space or Ether or the innermost recess of the heart of every living being or preferably both. Thus, the life of every being is sustained and moulded by *Ananda*, in the Upanishadic as well as in our ordinary sense of the term. This implies that the different forms of *Ananda*, with which we are familiar, are the phenomenal manifestations of the same Absolute Noumenal *Ananda* of which the Upanishad speaks. These various forms of *Ananda*, on which the lives of the diverse living creatures depend, are,

in the words of the *Brihadaranyaka* Upanishad, matra or small finite particles (self-manifestations) of the Ananda of Brahman or Absolute Ananda. (एतस्यैवानन्दस्यान्यानि भूतानि मात्रा-मुपजीवन्ति)

Thus, according to the teachings, of the *Taittiriya* and the *Brihadaranyaka* Upanishads, we are entitled to form a conception, however vague and obscure, of the essential character of the supreme ground and substance of the Universe by the idealisation of the Ananda, which is a familiar phenomenon to us and which plays the most important role in sustaining, moulding and developing our life. It is the same Ananda, free from all possible kinds of limitation and imperfection, that may be conceived as constituting the true nature of Brahman, the absolute ground of all that exists. It is by pursuing the path of the higher and higher forms of Ananda—of the more and more perfect and permanent and unconditional self-manifestations of Ananda,—that we can expect ultimately to experience ourselves as Ananda incarnate and at that stage attain direct experience of the Absolute Reality within ourselves and in the entire objective world.

Calculus of Brahmananda

In order that we may not fall into the opposite error of conceiving the best possible enjoyment of the sensuous plane as the highest *Brahmananda* and regarding it as the highest goal of life and the ultimate Reality of the world, both the Upanishads have put forward what may

be called a *calculus* of Ananda. Suppose a man is in his full bloom of youth, with excellent health, with 'muscles of iron and nerves of steel,' with extraordinary distinction, eminent position and extensive erudition. Suppose also that his life is surrounded by all the desirable objects of enjoyment, he is 'the monarch of all he surveys' and is free from all worldly troubles and anxieties. In short, he is in enjoyment of the greatest possible happiness of the sensuous plane of experience. His Ananda is called *Manusha* or human Ananda. In the formation of the idea of *Brahmananda*, this may be accepted as the unit of measurement. The enjoyment, which a *Man-Gandharva* is capable of, is a hundred times superior to this *Manusha-Ananda*. The Upanishads go on describing the higher and higher forms of Ananda capable of being enjoyed by the best, the wisest and most virtuous among the *Deva-Gandharvas*, the *Pitris* having permanent abodes, the *Ajanaja-Devas*, the *Karma-Devas*, and the *Devas* worshipped by men. The enjoyment of each succeeding class is reckoned as a hundred times superior to that of each preceding one. *Indra's* Ananda is a hundred times superior to that of the *Devas*, *Brihaspati's* Ananda is a hundred times superior to *Indra's* and *Prajapati's* Ananda is a hundred times superior to *Brihaspati's*. The Ananda which is eternally present in and constitutes the nature of Brahman, the ultimate Substance, Ground and Ideal of all

existences, is a hundred times superior even to that of *Prajapati*, who experiences the world-organism as His body, and lords it over the innumerable species of creatures in the universe.

In mathematical terms this *Brahmananda* is thus reckoned as qualitatively and quantitatively *one-hundred-trillion times* superior to the greatest happiness that a great man in the sensuous plane can aspire after. It is obvious that no undue emphasis need be laid on the number of classes mentioned as intermediate between Man and Brahman, and in this respect the description of the two Upanishads is not exactly the same. What it is of the greatest importance to note is that the Ananda, which constitutes the essential character of Brahman and which a man in the highest spiritual plane can experience in his own self, is infinitely superior to the particularised, conditioned and transitory forms of it, which a man, even in the highest stage of progress in the sensuous plane, can possibly enjoy.

In the case of *Brahmananda* there is absolutely no distinction between the Ideal and the actual, no effort or process or change involved in the enjoyment, no room for any higher stage of enjoyment. Here the subject and the object, the Enjoyer and the Enjoyed, the Anandin and the Ananda, are absolutely identical, and the infinite nature of this Absolute one is perfectly unveiled to and enjoyed by Himself. There is no element or

attribute in Brahman other than perfect Ananda. Cognition, Emotion and Volition,—Wisdom, Love and Power,—Reality, Beauty and Goodness,—all these are dissolved in, or rather perfectly realised and unified in Absolute Ananda. The presence in any person of any power or attribute or function by the side of and having distinction from Ananda implies that it is not perfected in his character, that it is not unified with the other elements of his character and consequently his character has not yet found rest in its true self, free from all conflict within itself. In perfection Ananda comprehends all and shines alone in all its glory.

Ananda as the Consciousness of Self-fulfilment or Self-realisation

It is apparent that, according to the Upanishads, the Ananda, which we as conscious finite spirits experience in imperfect, relative, conditional and transitory forms, is not absolutely different from the perfect, unconditional, infinite and eternal Ananda which constitutes the nature of Brahman. The former is the partial manifestation of the latter, and this Ananda is proclaimed to be the essence of our individual self. From the experience of Ananda in its particular forms we may then claim to form a vague and indefinite idea of the Absolute Ananda.

Now, in its particular manifestations, Ananda is the experience of a partial and relative, conditional and temporary, self-fulfilment of the conscious subject. The consciousness of self-fulfilment is the essential

factor in Ananda, and its different gradations are determined by the degrees of relativity and partiality, by the nature of the conditions and limitations, by the depth of intensity and the extent of duration, of this experience.

The conscious subject in the lower planes of existence has a sense of imperfection and a consequent feeling of disagreeableness, which it has a natural hankering to get rid of. This is the moving force that governs all its activities and self-transformations. With the growth of experience it learns to associate this imperfection and disagreeableness with certain conditions of the body and the mind and certain kinds of external objects and circumstances, and also to think that the attainment of certain other conditions of the body and the mind and the acquisition of certain other kinds of objects and circumstances would remove this feeling of imperfection and disagreeableness and lead to a state of relative self-fulfilment and happiness. Accordingly, it imbibes an aversion to those objects and conditions which lead to and intensify the sense of imperfection and suffering, and a longing for those which remove it and produce a consciousness of self-fulfilment and happiness. Sorrow, though appearing in various forms and relations, is essentially nothing but the absence of Ananda or the self's sense of fulness in itself. Ananda always appears to consist in the consciousness of a state of relative self-fulfilment, ordinarily arising out

of emancipation of the subject from objects of its aversion and its union with objects of its desire. The state of imperfection implies that the conscious subject does not appear to itself to be *truly itself*, that it is not actually what it feels it ought to be. The removal of certain conditions and the attainment of certain objects raise the subject to the consciousness of itself as *truly itself*—to a state of apparent reunion with itself for the time being. This is Ananda.

In the lower planes of experience the conscious self identifies itself sometimes with the sensuous body, sometimes with the life-power pervading and governing the body, sometimes with the thinking, feeling and willing mind and sometimes with the ideal-pursuing reason. Accordingly, its feeling of imperfection and pain is principally associated either with the unsatisfied demands of the body and the senses or with the absence of adequate development of life and strength, or with the want of political supremacy and economic grandeur, or with the consciousness of some good unrealised, some truth unattained, some beauty unenjoyed, and so on. These appear to constitute the limitations from which the conscious spirit suffers and which make it unhappy. The satisfaction of the demands of the body, the senses, the life, the mind and the reason, as the case may be, appears in these planes to place the subject in a state of relative self-fulfilment, to give it temporarily a sense of being what it

feels it ought to be, to make the ideal state of its self real for the time being.

Whatever may be the conditions under which Ananda manifests itself, it involves the idea of an actual state of imperfection and unrest of the self, which has to be transcended, and an ideal state of perfection and rest which has to be realised. It consists in the emancipation of the self from the former state and its union with the latter ideal state. The union with the ideal appears to make it truly itself,—to restore to it its apparently lost self. Thus Ananda turns out to be identical with what may be called self-realisation, or the self's attainment of itself.

The Essential Demand of the Self

A systematic investigation into the apparently divergent departments of the nature of all conscious beings has convinced the scientists and philosophers that this nature is essentially one, though there may appear bewildering diversities in its unity. One self, one spirit, one central power, one purpose and design, pervades and governs all the faculties and functions of the body, the senses, the life and the mind. The apparently diverse and conflicting demands of the different departments of nature or the particularised manifestations, under special physical and psychical conditions and limitations, of the fundamental demand of the one self, which seeks to fulfil itself and realise its perfection in and through this world-process.

The self experiences itself, vaguely and indefinitely in the lowest planes, and more and more distinctly and definitely in the higher and higher stages of development, as a finite, limited and conditioned being, and feels instinctively impelled to make efforts for transcending its finitude and attaining greater and greater freedom from the external and internal limitations. It is inconsistent with the inherent character of the spirit to rest contented with its present imperfection and slavery to circumstances. It is driven by its essential nature to make use of all the resources at its command, in the different stages of its journey in the world, for attaining complete freedom and perfection. It is this supreme central effort of the spiritual self to realise perfection in itself, that finds expression in the exertions to lengthen and broaden the life, in the endeavours to unite the particular senses with the objects they long for, in the attempts for emancipation from political, social and economic bondage, in the perseverance to penetrate into the secrets of nature and to bring the force of nature under control. It is this supreme essential demand of the self that prompts thought to develop itself for union with Truth, Emotion to develop itself for union with Beauty, and Will to develop itself for union with God.

Partial Self-realisation in Relative Ananda

Ananda manifests itself in partial, relative and phenomenal forms along with the satisfaction of each

particular demand of the senses, the mind and the reason,—along with the removal of each particular consciousness of imperfection—along with each union of the subject, suffering from the feeling of some particular want, with some particular object that removes this feeling and sets the subject at rest. To view more closely, the object is complementary to the subject. The eye and the *rupa* (form), the ear and the sound, the knower and the knowable, the doer and the deed—all these are complementary realities. Each can be conceived only in relation to and in terms of the other. The two together constitute the true reality. The eye finds itself in its union with *rupa*, the knower finds itself in its union with truth, the feeling subject finds itself in its union with beauty, and so on. Thus, when there is union between the eye and the *rupa* which is its counterpart, the seeing self regains itself and enjoys itself as Ananda, so when there is union between the cognitive subject and the object of cognition, the self finds itself and enjoys its essential character as Ananda, and so on. This viewpoint leads to the inevitable conclusion that in all the planes of experience, the Ananda that is enjoyed essentially consists in the enjoyment by the subject of itself through its union with the object,—in the inner consciousness of the restoration of itself to itself,—in what may in one word be called self-realisation. In the lower planes, this self-realisation is necessarily partial, relative,

conditional and momentary, and Ananda also must be manifested in partial, relative, conditional and transitory forms.

Absolute Ananda as perfect self-realisation

Ananda reveals itself in its absolute character in the highest stage of the spiritual advancement of the subject. At this stage all the variety of demands disappears, all the variety of objects disappears, all the various forms of attempt and attainment disappear. All these varieties unveil their true characters as the partial manifestations of one subject, one object, and one relation between them. Ultimately the subject and the object also reveal themselves as one Absolute Spiritual Entity. Thus the Supreme Reality is one Absolute Spiritual Entity above all time, space, difference and activity, eternally self-realised and self-complete, eternally enjoying Its own infinite, unconditioned and perfect nature. This is Absolute Ananda,—the only category which can, with any degree of adequacy, give a conception of the character of the Supreme Reality. This is the conclusion of the Taittiriya Upanishad, as discussed in the article on Ananda Brahmanavada.

The conception of Absolute Ananda necessarily involves the notion of absolute existence (सत्यम्), absolute consciousness (ज्ञानम्), absolute freedom from all kinds of limitation (अनन्तम्) and absolute bliss (सः). It involves the notion of the absolute unity of Knowledge with Truth, Will with Goodness, Love with

Beauty, 'What is' with 'What ought to be.' From the standpoint of the lower planes of existence, knowledge, desire and emotion, this is the highest Ideal to be realised, and from the standpoint of the highest spiritual plane of experience, this is the eternally real character of the self and the absolute ground and substance of the Universe.

The Taittiriya Upanishad clearly states that this Absolute Ananda, which is one hundred times superior to the Ananda of *Prajapati*, the Lord of all creatures, and is the ultimate Ideal of perfection to all spiritual beings, constitutes the

essential character of the innermost soul of every individual living being, as well as the soul, the ground and the substance of the universe. (सद्यश्चायं पुरुषे यश्चायं आदित्ये स एकः) It has also shown the world process to be a harmoniously developed system, in which the apparently different orders of realities evolve out of or are the self-manifestations of this Absolute *Ananda-Brahman* and represent the different stages of Its self-realisation from the absolutely unmanifested (असत्) or potential state to the state of perfect self-revelation. The discussion of this process of evolution is reserved for a future occasion.

ARE OUR PUBLIC LIBRARIES 'PUBLIC' ?

By K. S. Srikantan, M.A., F.R.E.S. (Lond.), Certi. Libr. (Madras Univ.)

NOW that India is on the threshold of a democracy the importance of a movement like this for the liquidation of illiteracy cannot easily be exaggerated. Democracy, it is well known, does not mean merely the elementary education of the child; it means the continually increasing intelligence of the mass of mankind—the continued growth in character and power of all our people. Since democracy means the ruling power of all, it must likewise mean the growing intelligence and the enlarging life of all the people and in this respect a well-established public library is a more significant institution than even a public school. Verily, it is a university of the com-

mon people. A true public library is at once the private consultation room and the sacred confessional to every hungering soul in the social world. The opening of a public library is perhaps the most significant event in the history of a nation; for it brings to the people the inheritance of all the ages and gives them access to that universal life without which nobody can be said to be educated. The school serves us through childhood and youth. But it is the library that serves us through life.*

Thanks to the laudable efforts of the Punjab, Bengal and Madras Library Associations, the movement

* W. E. Henry: Libraries and Librarianship.

in India is fast ceasing to be an infant. And yet the message of 'library science' that "Books are for use," and "Books are for all" still remains theoretical maxims. Our public libraries have not been affected by any of these. In fact many of these so-called public libraries have little or no claim to be considered so.

The word 'public' is derived from the Latin word 'Publicus' meaning 'people'—irrespective of sex and age. A true public library therefore is an institution belonging to all the people dwelling in a particular city or a village. It should at once be accessible to *All*, provide accommodation for *All* and cater to the needs of *All*. Tested in the light of these canons, very few libraries answer our definition. If by 'All' we mean (as we ought to) both the literate and the illiterate, then our public libraries cease to be public, for no facilities are provided to satisfy the intellectual needs of those large masses of illiterates, who are yet culturally thirsty. In spite of all efforts, the illiterates form still 90 per cent. of the population. It is indeed unfortunate that directors of our libraries have not yet realised the claim of the illiterates for culture. In the Western Countries, particularly in Russia, the extension activities of the libraries have become more important than even the reading and reference sections. It is quite easy to make a public library useful to the illiterates by organising demonstration lectures, exhibitions and magic

lantern shows. Thanks to the extraordinary enthusiasm of the Gaikwar of Baroda, the libraries in that State are earnestly trying to become 'public' in the true sense of the term. All the other public libraries in India exist only for the sake of the literate section of the population. When these public libraries are maintained by the hard-earned money of the illiterates it passes one's understanding how the illiterate mass can so indifferently be treated; and how a library absolutely useless to 90 per cent. of the population can yet be called 'public.'

Granting that as matters stand at present, extension activities are not possible, it is reasonable to ask whether these public libraries are at least useful to all the literates for whom they are intended. It is indeed strange that even among the literates, only a very small percentage is able to use the library. Educated women have no place in many of these libraries, for neither is there suitable accommodation for them nor literature appropriate to their taste. Unless a woman is determined to trespass on the guarded enclosures of mankind, she cannot find a place in many of our libraries. In spite of the advance in the education of children in the West, India still remains in a pre-historic stage. Neglected by the father, beaten by the mother, and abused by the old teacher with antiquated ideas, the children can almost always be seen in the streets helpless. The public libraries have nothing to give them.

Leaving aside women and children we have the other literates who can take advantage of the library. On account of several defects in the present library organisation, even these are not able to make use of it. The motive behind most of our libraries seems to be that they should be used by as few people as possible. A public library, if it is started with the object of answering to the needs of the literate public, should be located in the very heart of the town like a music emporium or a coffee hotel.* In my survey of the location of public libraries in several places, I find that most of them are situated in out-of-the-way places. The situation of the Connemara Library in Madras is a case in point. In spite of its magnificent building and size, it is one of the least used libraries. A person who walks all the way from Mylapore or Triplicane to the Connemara Library is often tempted to sleep after reaching the Library. The public library in Mysore again is far away from the business centres of the city, while to go to the Seshadri Memorial Library in Bangalore, is itself a great problem to every scholar. In the city of Madura, the Victoria Memorial Public Library is at the westernmost and while the Sangham Library is at the northern end of the town. Besides being far-away the library buildings are so mixed up with other buildings that unless a reader is obstinate, he has very little chance of getting to

* S. R. Ranganathan: Five Laws of Library Science.

the front gateways of the libraries. The Imperial Library at Calcutta—the India's Premier Library—has no building of its own. Several offices are located in a huge building, a portion of which is occupied by the Imperial Library. In fact books are almost hidden. It might be of interest to know that the Calcutta University—the foremost University of India—has no separate library building of its own. A library building as such does not exist in India. Generally, most of the local libraries are located either in the front room of a lawyer's or a municipal councillor's house which cannot hold more than half a dozen weighty people with a furniture competing in its clumsiness with the room. The library building itself is not properly advertised. In the case of the Connemara Library, the advertisement of the Museum authorities is so aggressive that unless a reader is of a persistent type, there is every chance of his returning home murmuring within himself that the library has been shifted. In the city of Madura, the main hall of the public library is leased out to a cinema. Experts as they are, the cinema authorities have taken meticulous care to see that nobody notices the placard announcing that it is a public library. The wall-notices and the huge boards with the pictures of star-actors are so aggressively prominent that people generally say that a small library is located in the cinema hall. It is clear therefore that many of the literates do not know even the

existence of many of these so-called public libraries.

The utility of the library is still further reduced by its peculiar and inconvenient hours of working. If the object is to enable the people to use the library, it should be open at those hours when they are free. On the other hand, most of these public libraries are available for transactions during the very hours when people are expected to be busy with their work. There are certain libraries which open half an hour after the offices are opened and closed half-an-hour earlier than the offices. The Government holidays are also holidays for the library, so much so, it is only the idlers and never-do-wells that can make use of the library. In short, by its inconvenient hours of work, the privilege of using the library is denied to those who have a yearning for knowledge.

Even granting that on some days it might be possible for the people to make use of the library, the question is whether there are the necessary books. A public library has to serve the needs of both a hotel-keeper and a research scholar. It should therefore have a representative collection of books. I have not been able to find out any difference between a school library and a public library. Undue emphasis is laid on English literature even in public libraries. Good vernacular books are non-existent. To technical men, the library is of no use. Except the novel-reading enthusiasts, others are forced to avoid the

public library. In India, we have still to realise that the message of a true public library should be "Come, inherit the kingdom prepared for you. Enter into the joys of this kingdom where the land is flowing with milk and honey. Drink and ye shall live."

A collection of books is however not a library, but only one of those conditions under which a library becomes a possibility. Only books classified, catalogued and shelved make a library. Few of our libraries have a scientific classification. The catalogues of most of these libraries are often out of date and very difficult to get at. Thus unless the reader is able to approach the librarian direct, he has no chance of getting the book he wants.

The librarian himself is a peculiar creature. In several municipalities, a municipal clerk who also now and then serves as a cook to the municipal chairman is entrusted with this responsible work. Naturally the reader is utterly disappointed with the behaviour of the librarian. This is not the time for me to speak about the qualifications of a public librarian whose responsibilities are infinitely more than those of his brethren in other libraries. I might however point out that he should be the sum-total of the culture of the entire community and by nature but little lower than the angels. He must be patient, but just, generous, gentle, mild, positive and firm.* It is

*W. E. Henry : Libraries and Librarianship.

wrongly thought by many that as our libraries are small, men of high scholarship are not necessary. In fact, this, I think, is responsible for throwing open the Madras University Library Course to candidates who have no educational attainments. In my opinion, if there is a place that these people are not fitted to fill, it is just that position. In a small library where this one person must be all things to all people—one who has not only to diagnose the disease, but also to prescribe the remedy—general scholarship is a necessity for efficient work. The fact that the small library has scant resources doubly emphasises the need for a scholarly librarian, for he alone can put the library to its maximum

use. To us in India, large libraries are not indispensable; but we do require efficient librarians.

In the foregoing paragraphs, we have pointed out how many of our public libraries have little claim to be so called. Mention may here be made also of several public libraries which have members paying monthly subscriptions. These look upon the library as their own and often the librarian has to wait upon them. They are retaining the epithet 'public' because, I am told, it helps them to get a government grant. It is time that the associations like the Madras and Bengal Library Associations prevent such questionable methods and make our public libraries really public.

SRI KRISHNA IN THE GITA

By Swami Ranganathananda

IT is a fact of great significance that if there is any scripture in the world which has not lost its appeal to modern minds, it is the Bhagavad Gita. The modern mind, let us note, distrusts all scriptures and has lost that abiding faith in the values which traditional religion offers. The full fire of modern scientific criticism has been directed to all the scriptures of all the religions of the world, and the results have been disastrous to both of them. It is becoming increasingly difficult to live on mere faith especially when such faith does not accord with verified truth. There is doubt and questioning prevalent everywhere.

Those minds that have been drawn into the vortex of the conflicts of thought and opinions have lost all faith in doctrines and creeds which could satisfy minds of more placid ages, and are searching for the rock of truth where to rest their minds. There is an insistent demand for a "Philosophy of Life" which requires no submission of the hard-earned critical faculty in man. To such minds, the Bhagavad Gita brings a message of hope and assurance. In fact, its message is fully significant precisely because it offers such a philosophy of life.

In considering the message of the Gita our attention is drawn to the

personality of Sri Krishna, its teacher and inspirer. Among the galaxy of thinkers and leaders which India has produced in the past, to whose invaluable contributions Indian culture owes its distinctive character and uniqueness, the personality of Sri Krishna stands supreme. Hence it is that we look upon him as a full incarnation of the supreme Godhead. This is the greatest honour that we can do to any individual who stands head and shoulders above common humanity. Indian genius understood it and so exalted its spiritual and cultural leaders to the position of Incarnations of God. This phenomenon is happening even in our own times and before our very eyes. Our honouring such eminent personages takes the form of worshipping them as gods, often even in their lifetimes. They are our leaders—these thinkers who stand at the vanguard of our national progress. Such a one was Sri Krishna.

Two Aspects of Sri Krishna

There are, broadly speaking, two aspects to the personality of Sri Krishna. There is Krishna, the supreme Lord of the faithful and the adored of the Gopis as depicted in the Bhagavata, and Krishna, the teacher and philosopher, who comes to us in times of doubt, conflict and despair, in the role of friend, philosopher and guide, as depicted in the Mahabharata. The Krishna as the lover of the Gopis is so sublime and elevated an idea that it has been more misunderstood than comprehended in its true significance both in the

past as well as in the present. It requires, says Swami Vivekananda, the mind of a Suka to comprehend it truly. We are not competent enough to give a fitting description of that Krishna, neither is that Krishna going to appeal to us of the present day, with troubled hearts and harassed minds. The evil of undeveloped minds in India of the past few centuries trying to grasp and follow this ideal has been tremendous. It is too high for human minds as at present constituted. The Krishna of the Gita is the explanation of the Krishna of the Gopis. Perfection in ethical life as taught in the Gita is the sine qua non for attempting to grasp the first. Let us, therefore, give our patient hearing to his teaching in the Gita.

The Setting

In the great drama of the Mahabharata the figure of Sri Krishna appears so often on the stage. Various are the parts that he plays, but none so much arrests and holds our attention as that of Parthasarathi. This is because as Parthasarathi he appears most human and acts as friend, philosopher and guide to grief-stricken Arjuna, and we have already seen that this is his individuality as revealed in the Mahabharata. The teachings of the Gita get an air of reality from the tragic setting in which it occurs. Just before the battle begins, Arjuna asks Krishna to place his chariot in the midst of the two contending armies and from that eminent position Arjuna surveys the field and ascertains with whom all he has to fight

Seeing his own teachers and elders like revered Drona and noble Bhishma arrayed against him, Arjuna's strength fails him and he becomes despondent. The first chapter of the Gita portrays this scene in all its vividness. An excessive emotionalism, visible in all its colours, overpowers Arjuna's judgment and he informs Krishna about his resolution not to fight against and kill his own relations and teachers for the sake of mere worldly glory. He would prefer the life of a mendicant and fakir to the enjoyments resulting from such a victory. Other arguments also he advances which appear so convincing to his abnormal mind and shattered judgment that with a shivering body and stricken heart he sinks down in the chariot, giving the ultimatum of withdrawal to Krishna. At this psychological moment comes the vigorous message of Sri Krishna spoken in a few telling words:—

"In such a crisis, whence comes upon thee, O Arjuna, this dejection, un-Arya-like, disgraceful and contrary to the attainment of heaven?"

"Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pritha, ill doth it become thee. Cast off this mean faint-heartedness and arise, O scorcher of thine enemies!"¹

Accurate Diagnosis

We can imagine that these words of Sri Krishna must have acted like

1. कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ २ ॥
कलैव्यं मास्म गमः पार्य नैतत्स्वयुपपद्यते ।
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥ ३ ॥

Gita Chapter II, 2, 3.

an invigorating tonic to the despondent mind of Arjuna. Contrary to all expectations of Arjuna himself, Krishna never sympathises with Arjuna's explanation though he is in full sympathy with him for the sorrowful plight in which he is placed. Arjuna seems, at least to himself, to be moved by such high virtues like love, kindness, charity and mercy to his enemies. Incidentally, he advances the arguments of non-violence and non-resistance also. All these seem to fall flat on Krishna's mind. Here Sri Krishna displays an amazing depth of psychological insight and applies, what in modern times is called, the psycho-analytic method to bring calmness into the troubled waters of Arjuna's mind. An initial weakness which unbalances the mind, and a train of high-sounding rationalizations which prop up the first mistake, obscuring it to such an extent as to be beyond one's power of detection: this, in short, is Krishna's reading of Arjuna's mind. The latter's arguments of love, pity, kindness and charity to his enemies betrayed only his sentimental emotionalism, and revealed more the rationalizing process that had set in than these virtues in their true and virile forms. Virtue, with most of us, as it was in the case of Arjuna, is only a deceptive mask which covers from our vision our own weaknesses. When our lives move on evenly and smoothly we cannot realise this. But only when serious conflicts set in, when storms and stresses of life force us to re-evaluate our concep-

tions,—only then do we detect the shaky bases of most of our virtues. It is only when we unmask this virtue that we rise to true ethical life. But this demands the strength and courage of a Dhira or hero. Hence Krishna's exhortation to Arjuna, "Shake off this mean faint-heartedness and arise O hero."

Solution Here and Now

After applying the tonic contained in the two verses quoted, which must have helped to steady Arjuna's mind to a certain extent, Sri Krishna proceeds to remove his doubts and errors by imparting a knowledge of truth which is the greatest saving factor in life. 'न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते' (Gita IV, 38). Knowledge is the only permanent cure for all the ills of life, and it is only when we are torn as it were with doubts and conflicts, that we are fit to enquire into and receive knowledge of truth or philosophy. Since Arjuna is in such a condition and since he craves Krishna to enlighten him with the truth, it is only proper on the part of Krishna to impart to him a philosophy of life which keeps one's mind steady and feet firm in the midst of one's preoccupations with life's ceaseless activities. "Tie the knowledge of Truth in the folds of your cloth and do whatever you please"—Sri Ramakrishna used to say. Sri Krishna does precisely the same. Life at every step raises problems and it is the business of philosophy to find solutions to them. To this end philosophy seeks a knowledge of the highest truth which alone can give lasting solutions to all the pro-

blems of life. Philosophical solutions are not in the nature of promises to be realised when life itself has ebbed away. Truth is of no consequence to us if it cannot be realised in this life. A solution is no solution in the absence of the problem itself. Truth, as the Kenopanishad says, is to be realised *here* and *now*. "इह चेदवेदीतय सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनष्टि" ॥

(If one knows It here, that is Truth; if one knows It not here, then great is his loss). And Truth is simple enough and can enter life silently without elbowing out any of its other contents, and transform it imperceptibly. This, and not a baggage of outworn and meaningless creeds and dogmas, is what Sri Krishna offers us when we are at our wit's end. If he had done otherwise, it would have become in effect a mockery. As Christ well says: "Or, what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?"

Firmness and Confidence Restored

To go through life successfully and surmount all its obstacles, what is required is a certain self-confidence. As Swami Vivekananda used to say, "We must have faith in ourselves first before having faith in God". The knowledge of Atman which is our true nature is the basis of all manly endeavour and achievement. With this end in view, Sri Krishna shows Arjuna the true nature of his self, leaving Arjuna to apply that knowledge and the faith derived from that knowledge to the solution of his many problems. This

is clear from the sixty-third sloka of the eighteenth chapter where Krishna says thus:

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया ।

विमृश्येतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥

"Thus has wisdom, more profound than all profundities, been declared to thee by Me; reflecting over it fully, act as thou likest". That this knowledge had its desired effect on Arjuna's mind is clear

from what Arjuna says in the seventy-third sloka of the same chapter and from his subsequent conduct. Says Arjuna:

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाऽच्युत ।

स्थितोस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥

"Destroyed is my delusion, and I have gained my memory through Thy grace, O Achyuta. I am firm: my doubts are gone. I will do thy word".

FROM VILLAGE WINDOWS

By Svami Nirlepananda

Religion Real Missed

AMONG the villagers there are sub-divisions and subcastes to an extent that surpasses the most minute imagination. All the fund of originality and ingenuity of the race seemed to be exhausted and frittered away over devising these inventions and discoveries, wonderfully and annoyingly detailed and apt to bring about our further downfall, degeneration, disunion and utter ruin. The Bāuris or even the Jal-chal (of sanctioned or approved water) and Moirās (sweet-meat-makers) are both types at the two end, furnishing a variety of branches who have among themselves some of the strongest prohibitive laws (endogamic or exogamic) for conducting marriages. The old folk say that even the best swerving or modifying from ancient, age-old customs would pollute their religion and bring ancestral wrath upon the heads of descend-

ants spelling family-disaster. They have not the heart to understand that *religion real* is not a repulsive, deterrent force. It always cements, heals up, re-strings and links up. Like the Sun's rays it is always free to spread. Of course needless to say that we are here not upholding a doctrine of 'no laws in marriage.' In every Society, in every historical age there were and there must always be certain restrictions. There is a way too of weighing the amount of culture in a social unit through the yard-stick of its marriage laws.

The degenerate orthodox social section mostly are never rigid about keeping intact the good old rules of strict morality and continence—Brahmacharya, which is under all circumstances laudable and beneficial. This zeal might have been most appropriate, admirable and worth the nation's best support if displayed in that quarter.

Conduct When Deaths Occur

In the houses of their relations and neighbours there would be seen no dearth of crowds, merriment, rejoicing and unbounded lip-sympathy in cases of marriage or funeral repasts called *Sraddha*. But these very people would themselves desist from helping their near and dear ones in cases of actual bereavements such as removing dead bodies and doing the last rites. I have seen them on the other hand putting a damper upon, or *judiciously* dissuading from action, young, educated and spirited souls who are laudably ready to trample down unjust, cruel caste-laws,—carrying out the persistent mandates of their conscience to help to get removed at once, epidemic dead bodies or simple dead bodies of those who are labelled *lower* in the Social scale. The inhuman attempt to perpetuate rank coldness and the spirit of non-cooperation, cannot be justified. Actual, practical sympathy with the down-trodden is the only light, the only hope in such a tragic setting. Swami Vivekananda simply panted for this, and stood as a stout champion of India's Untouchables and so-called '*Unwanted*' who are swelling each day the rank of converts. In cases of an epidemic outbreak the picture is extremely heart-rending and utterly cruel.

Apathy and Inhumanity

An old Vaishnava-caste man had died in an atmosphere of small-pox epidemic. The village air was undoubtedly polluted. And one of his two sons got it. That was the sole

ground why the old man's own son-in-law just in the adjacent village refused to help in his funeral. The other son alone had to carry the body over the family bullock-cart driving himself for want of carrier-men of the same caste. It was a very sorry spectacle symbolising our social apathy and inhumanity. Then there was an additional risk. If a non-caste man's service is requisitioned the Raja or Zamindar would levy a high fine for the fault.

Muslims' Splendid Example

Let us side by side here recount the human, sympathetic and hearty warm treatment that is meted out by Muslims of the same place upon their race-men in similar sad situations. The latter are not many in number and not very influential as a class. As in all other places they too have four groups among them—the Sheks, the Saiyads, Mughals and Pathans. But fortunately for the Muslims this class distinction has not divided them nor does it ever stand in the way of their actively helping one another in inevitable dark hours of life, in cases of deaths from infectious diseases, not to speak of other instances. Not that, as a community they have no fear, no heart trembling, no nervousness. But the characteristic Islamic Spirit of Democracy, of partnership or comradeship in moments of danger is happily always there to swamp away all weaknesses. The sense of duty or Dharma and mutual inter-dependence and obligation asserts itself uppermost over all selfish and inhuman

promptings of their heart. Civilised Society was really fashioned or formed for this specific purpose. If contrary feelings reign supreme it is not worth its name. It is a misnomer. Sociological studies, Indian or extra-Indian, will always tell us this. A few specific instances will speak volumes for their brotherly feeling. A Mussalman died from small-pox in the village of Khatra. His sons were all minors. The kindly neighbours at once rushed forth into his house and carried the body for burial in the grave-yard. The boys also followed. The scorching summer sun, mid-night rain and storm cannot thwart them. They say that it is quite a *sacred* task. To defer, delay or shrug it off is an unpardonable sacrilege. Let us also recount here one more remarkable case. In a village twenty-four miles north of Khatra another Muslim died one day. Many accompanied his sons and helped to carry the body back again to Khatra to "let the dead man rest amidst the family elders", who had passed away in the latter place. The whole Muslim part of the village, all the male members, practically attended and assisted in the sad function. It is considered as a compulsory act of piety to accompany and assist in a burial—to be done with one's whole heart. Needless to say that it is a very wholesome phylogenetic conception of religion fraught with great social benefits.

Hindu Contrast

In contrast to this, when a Bengalee Tamli (*Vaisya*, trader class)

died, a worker in the vineyard of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda had to knock his head repeatedly against the doors of many of his co-caste people to have him burnt early, one of his two sons being accidentally absent abroad on that particular day. But when the monthly funeral *feast* came, there was a regular *crowd* of kinsmen to partake of it with special criticisms on the numerous shortcomings in arrangement and cooking. Be it said, that this poor man died of no infectious disease. The object of forming a society or living in it thus becomes almost nullified as a result of such brutal treatment at that inevitable supreme hour which, needless to say, awaits every one of us in the end!

Change among the Young

The young are trying to shake off and discard, for good, all unreasonable and finally untenable prohibitions and social taboos. Young Utkal Brahmins are seen to carry fuel-wood, themselves driving their own bullock-carts to sell them away in the nearest village markets. Brahmin boys are plying sewing machines or sometimes owning mustard-oil mills. In the bus and automobile services, Brahmins, Cobblers, Bauris, Hadis, Doms—are all promiscuously working. Hunger-pinches in the stomach have been the greatest levellers. Rigidity and social fashions are all breaking their heads unsuccessfully against the hard stone of economic pressure. Old customs have to give way.

Difficulties to be Faced

The idyllic picture of villages, that our imagination rears up in towns from the pages of books or newspapers, is all shattered up, when we have to face the uphill task of village reconstruction. The grim reality one has to encounter right and left, inch by inch, moment by moment, day in and day out, is very depressing to start with, if one has a mind to live long among the village folk. But undoubtedly there was some such time when life in villages was something to be desired and enjoyed. We do not mean to uphold the doctrine of deserting villages altogether and trying to flock to the towns *en masse*. Moreover that would of course not be physically and economically possible for the majority of our villagers. We must try to revive, re-create and re-string if we are going to survive as a nation. The shadow is there. The substance has to be instilled. Still the Brahmin boy calls his elder-in-age Bauri neighbour as Manu-ka or Uncle Manu. We must herein remember that at one time the conception of the whole village as a single, compact unit, a sort of a full family—lies behind

all these familiar, endearing forms of addresses. The obvious advantages and benefits accruing from this practical attitude of life cannot be denied. In spite of untouchability, *this* was the only redeeming feature.

But just now, all this has been reduced *merely into words* and nothing more. It does not signify exchange of labours of love and voluntary help in hours of extreme need. One's own blood-related uncle is not attended to, in case of a bad type of illness or death. Litigations and all sorts of party factions are rife—sometimes seething and surging. At Khatra there was a lamentable fracas between two *paras* or quarters of the village which ended in the institution of a criminal suit in the Sadar court and as was inevitable, entailed unnecessary harassment and loss of money to the entire village. It was all due to a vicious rivalry in displaying grandeur during immersion of Durga images. Yet we all know of the ever-recurring complaint of paucity of financial response in life-building constructive village undertakings such as those concerning a well, a tank, a library or a primary school!

MANDUKYOPANISHAD

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

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rau

(After a fresh discussion of dream and waking, it is shown how the Jivas seen in the wakeful state, including the teacher of the scripture, do not exist apart from the mind of the perceiver.)

Gaudapada's Karika

In a dream, there is appearance of duality, when through Maya, the mind is active. Similarly, in waking, there is appearance of duality when through Maya, the mind is active. (61)

There is no doubt that in dream, the non-dual mind has the appearance of duality. Similarly there is no doubt that in waking, the (same) non-dual mind has the appearance of duality. (62)

Sankara's Commentary

These two verses (see III. 29-30) mean that the capability of Reality being described (or grasped) by words, is due solely to the activity of the mind (through Maya), which in reality is non-dual and mere Consciousness.

Gaudapada's Karika

The perceiver in a dream goes about in all ten directions, and always perceives the various Jivas, born of eggs, born of perspiration etc. (63)

Sankara's Commentary

Here is shown, that the capability of being described by words belongs to the unreal duality. The perceiver in a dream wanders about in the dream and perceives therein the variety of living beings, born of eggs, born of sweat &c.

Gaudapada's Karika

These are appearances presented to the mind of the dreamer and are not seen to be apart from that (mind). Likewise, this mind also is existent only to the dreamer. (64)

Sankara's Commentary

If you ask 'what next?' we reply. Apart from the mind of the dreamer, nothing is known (or seen). This mind alone superimposes on itself the great variety of Jivas in different forms. Therefore the mind of the dreamer can only see itself and is existent for itself. Apart from the dreamer, such a thing as mind does not exist.

Gaudapada's Karika

The wakeful perceiver goes about in the waking state in all the ten directions and always perceives the variety of Jivas, born of eggs, born of perspiration &c. (65)

The mind of the wakeful perceiver sees those (the Jivas &c.) which are not apart from it (mind). Also the mind exists only for the perceiver in the wakeful state. (66)

Sankara's Commentary

The Jivas seen in the wakeful state do not exist apart from the mind (of the perceiver), as these appear to the mind in the same way that they appear to the mind of the dreamer. The mind

formed of the Jivas and their perception, does not exist independent of the perceiver: as is also the case in the dream, where the seer and the seen are one. The rest has been explained.

Gaudapada's Karika

Of the two (mind and Jiva) each is an object of perception to the other. This being so, which of these can be said to really exist? Both are devoid of distinguishing marks without which, neither can be understood. (67)

Sankara's Commentary

Of the two, Jiva and mind, each is an object of perception to the other. From the point of view of Jiva and other objects, the mind gets the name (of perceiving). From the point of view of the mind, the Jiva and others are named objects of perception. Therefore, each is percept to the other (each cannot be independent of the other). Therefore it becomes impossible to say, which, the mind or what the mind sees, really exists. What, do men of discrimination say, exists? In dream, neither the elephant that one sees nor the perception of elephant, is real. Similarly, wise people would be of the same opinion in this case also. How? Mind and the objects perceived by the mind, have no distinguishing marks, affording proof of the presence of both. In the absence of proof, both mind and the objects of perception, cannot be grasped as such. The mind perceiving or the objects perceived, can be grasped (if either exists really apart from the other). Apart from a jar, the perception of the jar is not possible. The meaning is, that it is impossible to distinguish the instruments of knowledge from the objects apprehended by means of them.

Gaudapada's Karika

Just as a Jiva seen in a dream is born and dies, so all the Jivas here (in this wakeful state) become (born) and cease to be. (68)

Just as a Jiva imagined to exist through Maya, is born and dies, so all Jivas here (in the wakeful state) become (born) and cease to be. (69)

Just as a Jiva created by a magician, is born and dies, so all the Jivas here (in the wakeful state) become (born) and cease to be. (70)

Sankara's Commentary

"Created," that is, by a magician with the aid of incantations and medicines. Jivas born of eggs &c, and such as those seen in a dream or through Maya or created by a magician, are born and die. Similarly, Jivas having human characteristics are unreal and are mere outward manifestations of the mind.

Gaudapada's Karika

No Jiva is ever born and to him, birth is unknown. That is the highest truth, where nothing is born. (71)

Sankara's Commentary

It is said that as long as the worldly experience lasts, birth and death may accrue to Jivas (in the waking state) as they do to Jivas in dream. The ultimate truth is that no Jiva is born. The rest is plain.

Gaudapada's Karika

The duality consisting of the perceived and the perceiver, is due to the activity of the mind. The mind is said to be (really) devoid of relations with objects, eternal and unattached. (72)

Sankara's Commentary

The whole of duality consists of the perceived and the perceiver due to the activity of the mind. But in reality, the mind is Atman, devoid of relations with objects and is consequently described as eternal and unattached. The scripture says "This Purusha is always unattached." When there are objects external to oneself, there may be attachment to them. The meaning is that when there are no external objects, the mind will be unattached.

Gaudapada's Karika

That which is believed to exist as a result of super-imposition, has no real existence. That which is believed to exist according to other sciences, when considered from the point of view of reality, has also no real existence. (73)

Sankara's Commentary

(It is objected). If as you say, in the absence of external objects, it (the mind) is unattached, we say that the mind cannot remain unattached, when the teacher, the scriptures and the pupil and similar relationships are well known to exist. We reply that this is no fault. The objects such as the scriptures &c., are seen, but only as the result of super-imposition. These are true and exist only so long as they serve as means for the realisation of the reality (Atman). But when realisation occurs, they do not exist and are not seen. As the Sruti says, "On realisation, duality is not perceived." As regards the objects maintained to exist by other sciences, even they, when considered from the point of view of ultimate Reality, cease to be. Therefore (the mind) has been aptly described as unattached.

Gaudapada's Karika

That which is said to be unborn (on the authority of Shastras) is in reality not even 'unborn.' From the point of view of other sciences, a thing may be said to be unborn, because birth is said to accrue to it (later on). (74)

Sankara's Commentary

(It is objected). If the Shastras are fabricated, the statement that a thing is unborn (being based on the Shastras), is also a fabrication. We reply that your statement is true. "Being unborn" is also a fabrication of the Shastras. From the point of view of Reality, there is no such thing as "being unborn." A thing may be said to be "unborn," which from the point of view of other sciences, is said to have a (later) birth. Therefore, so far as Reality is concerned, there is not even the fabrication of anything being "unborn."

Gaudapada's Karika

(People) have a fixed belief in the reality of what is in fact unreal and where duality is not perceived. One who realises the absence of duality, is not born (again) as there is no cause (for his birth).

Sankara's Commentary

There being no external objects, duality is quite unreal: but people have an attachment to the existence of duality. This attachment (lasts) only as long as it is seized. When duality, the attachment to which is purely unreal and which is the cause of birth, is not seen, then one knows the absence of duality and becoming free from attachment to it, is not born at all, as there is no cause (of birth).

NOTES AND COMMENTS

An Example for India

A nation like Japan which has risen within the short space of half a century from insignificance to the status of one of the foremost powers of the world must have had sterling qualities of character which have not been made sufficiently well-known to others. India is more familiar with her cheap industrial products and her trading capacities than anything else. Tourists returning from Japan have acquainted us with the wonderful natural scenery of the country as also her patriotism and unique power of organisation. A very valuable glimpse of some splendid traits of Japanese character which has recently appeared in the *Sunday Chronicle* of Madras from the pen of our countryman Mr. V. S. Chari, Judge of the High Court of Mysore, should serve as an eye-opener and an example to this country which is striving to build up a New India. Mr. Chari says that the Japanese have great regard for India, especially as the birth-place of the Buddha and as the country of Mahatma Gandhi for whom they have unbounded regard, but are pained to see India disunited and factious.

Their Politeness

Mr. Chari speaks very highly of the extreme politeness and sincerity of the Japanese, expressed with due formalities, which is evident in every detail of their dealings with each other as well as with strangers, their highly obliging nature at the cost of much inconvenience to themselves and their unwillingness to receive anything in return for helps rendered. In this connection he

narrates how a farmer returned to Mr. Chari the coins, paid for some peas which he got from him, hidden in the bundle of peas, which were discovered later. Observes Mr. Chari:

"The farmer, apparently, did not want to receive anything from us for the peas which we just wanted to eat in fun. Likewise he did not want to displease us by refusing outright the money we gave him, but with a delicacy, which people in higher position might well follow, he returned to us in this fashion the two coins we had given him. Needless to say, we were deeply touched by his kind act and were only sorry we could not go back to him and thank him."

Japanese Honesty

But what impressed Mr. Chari most is the standard of honesty prevailing among the middle and poorer classes of people in Japan which, he says, "is much higher than in any other countries we visited. Undoubtedly, there are dishonest politicians in Japan, but not more so than in other parts of the world..... We are not however concerned with this class of people but with the middle and poorer classes of people who form the bulk of the population." Mr. Chari goes into the following interesting observations:—

Until one actually visits the country and acquires first-hand experience, it is hard to believe how honest the Japanese are in their ordinary walks of life. It is sometimes argued that poverty is the root cause for dishonesty, and people who are not in want can afford to be honest. So far as Japan is concerned, this argument is fallacious,

for in Japan, beneath all the glitter, there is dire poverty which may be unequalled even in India. Yet the bulk of people, specially the middle and poorer classes, are scrupulously honest, which is all the more creditable and is due to the teachings of their religion and their training from infancy.

Most of the houses in Japan have walls made of paper, glass-panes or thin planks of wood. The windows have no bars, and the doors are sliding doors without any padlock or means of locking them from outside. Day in and day out these houses are left unlocked even when the owners are absent; yet cases of house-breaking or burglary are rare and unusually small for a population of more than one hundred millions.

At Tokyo we had engaged a small Japanese style house for our stay. Making Tokyo our headquarters we used to make excursions into the interior of the country. We did not want to take with us any extra luggage, and, as we could not leave a servant to take care of the house and our belongings during our absence, I suggested to our representative in Tokyo, viz., the Mysore Government Trade Agent, that he might keep our luggage in his office for safety. His reply was characteristic. It was: "This is Japan. You need not be afraid of your luggage even if you leave it in the house unsecured." Acting on his advice we left the bulk of our belongings in the house at Tokyo and went our way. On our return we found everything as we left.

It would surprise many of your readers to learn that there are no ticket examiners on any of the tramways in Japan, neither on the railways except the ticket collectors at the railway stations. I have a shrewd suspicion that these ticket collectors are appointed more to provide employment to the people than anything else. We never came across any instance of a person travelling without a ticket either on the railways or on the tramways.

During rush hours on the tramways in Tokyo, even though two conductors are employed on each car, tickets cannot be issued quick enough. It was a common sight for a person who reached his destination before the ticket was issued to him to stop the car, go to the conductor, pay the fare, see the ticket was properly punched and placed in the allotted receptacle provided for the purpose. On the Japanese tramways you don't take away the ticket after you reach the destination, but return it to the conductor to be put into the special receptacle kept in the car. If the passenger did not see this was done but simply paid the fare to the conductor, the latter, instead of pocketing the money as in some other countries, would scrupulously take out the proper ticket from his bundle, punch and place it in his receptacle.

But for the innate honesty of the people in Japan it would be impossible to successfully run the huge departmental stores, each seven or eight storeys high, which are in vogue in Tokyo and other big cities of Japan, e. g., Mitsukoshi, Matsuya, Daimaru, etc. The articles for sale are strewn about, and during rush hours tens of thousands of people pass through the stores. It would be impossible to keep any watch over the crowd or stop its members from surreptitiously removing the things without payment if they were so minded. I was told that these departmental stores are not locked during nights, and I can well believe it.

Another thing which makes shopping delightful in Japan is the absence of higgledy-piggledy so common in other Oriental countries. Prices are honest and fixed; they are not put up because you happen to be a foreigner or stranger. There is no inflation of price, no opportunity to cheat the foreigner and no bargaining. You know exactly what to buy and what to pay for it. Alas, when we came back to Shanghai and the rest of the places—but that is a different story.

OBITUARY NOTES

Dr. M. Srinivasa Rau, M. D.

With great sorrow, we record the passing away, last month, of Dr. M. Srinivasa Rau, M. D., Retired Sanitary Commissioner, Mysore, at Sankarapuram, Bangalore. He had a very amiable and obliging disposition and had the good fortune to live up to

a very ripe old age. He was a vedantic scholar, and of his translations from original Sanskrit we have had the privilege of publishing his valuable rendering of Mandukyopanishad with Gaudapada's Karika and Sankara's Commentary thereon. May his soul rest in peace!

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

BUILDING CHARACTER: By Sister Devamata, Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, California. Pages 94.

Sister Devamata is well-known to the Indian public through such books of hers as "Days in an Indian Monastery", "Sri Ramakrishna and His Disciples", "Habit of Happiness" and the like. Her latest book on "Character-Building" contains in a nutshell the ripe experience of a life-time. She does not merely theorise in this book but gives intensely practical suggestions to lead us on to a rich field of research—the research of one's own heart. Having herself risen to a high altitude of spiritual awareness, she commands a wide vision and a correct perspective of things and the experiences of life re-interpreted in this light cannot fail to be of great value to those who would climb to higher levels.

As you read through the book, you feel unmistakably at every step that a great and glorious future is waiting for you, and that although long and laborious is the way, ultimately "Man cannot escape perfection." There are great writers who make you feel your littleness and shrink with fear; and there are great writers who make you feel your great destiny and your own potential greatness. Sister Devamata belongs to this latter class. When we think with her, we shake off our fears. "The bondage of our little will breaks; and like an uncaged bird, we mount on high, singing and winging our way through the heavens."

N.S.

MEN BEYOND MANKIND: By Fritz Kunz. Published by Messrs. Rider & Co., Paternoster House, London, E. C. Pages 236.

We know from our study of the laws of evolution, says the author, that "every individual who is born, recapitulates all the life that has ever been, reproducing in his earlier years the primitive childhood of our race." If this applies to the past, argues he, why should it not apply also to the future? Religious Teachers, the wisest and broad-hearted leaders of humanity, have appeared at various periods of the world's history and suggested methods to enable ordinary men to experience the "Oneness" of creation. The heights these Teachers attained in one life, the rest of humanity is also sure to reach in due course; and this is going to be the evolution of the future. To this extent, then, the path traversed by the Teachers is the path chalked out for us in advance, just as the experiences gained by men up to the twentieth century must appear already chalked out for the baby who is born now and is painfully growing into adult age.

In this evolution, again, it is the child who healthily evolves and "enters into" the ways of thinking of the adult, not the adult who takes him into a Procrustes' bed and stretches him to suit the adult pattern. Similarly, it is we who shall adopt the various steps and healthily grow into the stage attained by the Teachers, not they who will force progress upon us

when we choose to remain inactive. "The Masters obey the rules so fully that they would never think of interfering in our lives in order to bring us to them." There is also "no way by which we can sink hooks into them by which to claim them." "Do you remember how Jesus stood above the sacred city and wept that there was nothing that he could teach to it, because there were no people to make the bridge? Yet, knowing that, He was unwilling to come down and disturb the life they were living. Knowing independence, He cherished it for others." He led the life and preached, but he did not force the pace of others.

Religious life thus involves no mystery and promises no short-cut, no process whereby we save trouble and glide cheaply into a heavenly world for "enjoyments." Neither is it ghost phenomena or "possession" by the Masters of the past. It is solid achievement of mind-control, brought about by hard, patient and sincere struggles with our lower mind and undesirable propensities. This has been made clear by the author in many places, although by his view that the Masters will come down on earth and live with us, when we have evolved, he puts us midway between Christ's coming on the last day on one side, and materialisation of disembodied entities, on the other. Eastern philosophy would go a step

further and, if we so need it, help us to transcend the "separateness" of these "Teachers" as well as "deities."

Leaving aside these ideas about the distant future, when we come down to the actual working of the religious principles in daily life, we find the author making very valuable suggestions. Regarding the first steps says Mr. Fritz Kunz, "We shall quicken our evolution so much that we become no longer national, but international, finally leave behind for a while laggard racial humanity. The first stage is to accept all races—to take in every race without exception and to repudiate one's own, because nationalism means to-day that we think our own nation finer than any other, and implies that we must do everything, possible to see that it comes on top. 'My country, right or wrong,' is a terrible phrase. We cannot believe, if we take the path, that our own country is better absolutely than any other. Every race has something to give, and those who would go forward must step backward in order to start in the right direction, toward unity and simplicity, in brotherhood. This is a marvellous doctrine and we wonder why it is not taught everywhere."

This book is thus an attempt to show how genuine religious practice must help us in solving our present world problems.

NEWS AND REPORTS

R. K. M. Branch Centre, Barisal

The R. K. Mission Branch Centre, Barisal, has been conducting a Students' Home ever since 1927. It tries to impart to the local College students in its charge a true cultural, moral and spiritual training in their spare hours, under the direct control and guidance of the monks of the Order. At present there are 15 students in the Home.

The institution is now located in a few thatched sheds which to all intents and purposes are unfit for habitation. To remedy this, it is decided to construct a pucca building at an estimated cost of Rs. 12,000. A generous friend

has contributed Rs. 1,500, which covers the cost of constructing one room. Those who would contribute the amounts for other rooms may, if they so desire, arrange with the management to have a tablet attached in front of the rooms, bearing their own names or other names selected by them.

Ramakrishna Mission Sevasrama, Rangoon

The R. K. Mission Sevasrama, Rangoon, has closed the thirteenth year of its existence through the grace of the Lord and the kind support of the public. From a perusal of its report, it will be seen that it is doing wonderful work in

the service of the poor and the diseased. Irrespective of caste, creed or colour, medical relief was rendered to all people who sought admittance. A new department has been opened for the treatment of ear, nose and throat under a specialist. The total number of patients both male and female, treated in the indoor hospital was 3176 and the aggregate in the out-door dispensary was 1,50,668 of which 66,053 were new cases. These patients did not belong exclusively to the city of Rangoon, a considerable number of them came from the suburbs and some remote districts of Burma. In view of the increasing demand for accommodation and treatment in the above departments the Managing Committee considers that additional accommodation is urgently necessary for which they are sending their fervent appeal to the generous public for liberal contributions.

Ramakrishna Mission, Singapore.

The R. K. Mission, Singapore, has been doing silent work since its inception in the year 1928. It not only holds religious classes and meetings for the benefit of the public and renders intellectual service by having a library of its own but it also maintains one day school with 44 boys and 45 girls and another night school for the spread of education among the depressed classes. The management earnestly appeals for liberal help from the public with a view to assist them in their undertaking to erect another storey for the suitable accommodation of the increasing number of children in the school.

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Working Committee Meeting

The first meeting of the Working Committee was held on the 16th instant last, under the presidency of the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Manmatha Nath Mukherjee. About 50 members were present. A committee consisting of the President, Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, Prof. Mahendra Nath Sarkar, Swami Madhavananda, Swami Atmabodhananda, Swami Nirvedananda, Swami Sambuddhananda and Babu Bejoy Krishna Bose was formed to draw up a detailed scheme and an Appeal and to

report to the Executive Committee by the end of January 1935.

An Executive Committee consisting of twenty-six members, with power to add, was also formed. The Working Committee will lay down broad principles which the Executive Committee will carry out. Several Sub-Committees were also appointed. Mr. Sailapathi Chatterjee and Mr. Surendra Nath Chakravarti were appointed Secretaries of the Finance Committee, Swami Avinashananda of the Publication Sub-Committee, Mr. S. C. Roy, of the Publicity Committee, Swami Dayananda and Swami Vimutkananda of the Foreign and Provincial Celebrations Sub-Committees, Swamis Gangeshananda and Nityaswarupananda of Conferences and Convention at Allahabad Sub-Committees, Swami Virajananda, Secretary of the Permanent Memorial Sub-Committee. A Ladies' Sub-Committee was also formed.

It was announced that in addition to those already elected the following have also agreed to become Vice-Presidents, viz., Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, Sir J. C. Bose, Mr. M. R. Jayakar (Bombay), Sir P. C. Roy, Sir (Dr.) Nilratan Sarkar, Hon'ble Sir Bejoy Prasad Singh Roy, Sir Radhakrishna of Andhra University, Babu Ramanand Chatterjee, Raja Sir M. N. Roy Choudhury of Santosh, Maharaja of Cossimbazar, Hon'ble Mr. Justice Dwaraknath Mitra, Hon'ble Mr. Justice S. N. Guha and Sir Hari Shankar Paul.

The question of reducing the scale of membership fee for college and school students was referred to the Finance Committee.

The office of the Centenary Committee will henceforth be located in a room on the first floor of the Albert Institute, 15, College Square, and all Committee Meetings will be held in the Albert Hall.

It was decided to deposit all cash and cheques received, by opening accounts in the name of the Centenary in the Banks, Bengal Central Bank and Central Bank of India, and the Treasurer, Mr. J. C. Das and either Babu Bejoy K. Bose or Swami Sambuddhananda to jointly sign cheques for making withdrawals.

(7)

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—Swami Vivekananda

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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[No. 11]

HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

सत्यं सत्सु गदा धर्मः सत्यं धर्मः सनातनः ।

सत्यमेव नमस्येत सत्यं हि परमा गतिः ॥

सत्यं धर्मं स्तपो योगः सत्यं ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।

सत्यं यज्ञः परः प्रोक्तः सर्वे सत्ये प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

सत्यञ्च समताचैव दमश्चैव न संशयः ।

अमात्सर्यं क्षमा चैव हीनस्तिचिदानसूयता ॥

त्यागोऽन्योन्यायार्थत्वं धृतिश्च सततं दया ।

अहिंसा चैव राजेन्द्र सत्याकारास्त्रयोदश ॥

Truth is always natural with the Good. Indeed, Truth is an eternal duty. One should reverentially bow unto Truth. Truth is the highest refuge.

Truth is duty ; Truth is penance ; Truth is *yoga* ; Truth is the eternal Brahman. Truth is said to be Sacrifice of a high order. Everything rests upon Truth.

The forms that Truth assumes are impartiality, self-control, non-rivalry, forgiveness, modesty, endurance, absence of jealousy, renunciation, contemplation, nobility, fortitude, compassion and abstention from injury.

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

The Master's unique Method of Teaching under the influence of the Preceptor's Mood, and the great luck of Rani Rasmani.

THE incident of giving a blow to Rani Rasmani in the Kali temple is a living instance of how the Master would completely forget himself in his dealings with others under the influence of the mood of the teacher. If one goes deep into the matter, he will find the event to be not a very small affair. For, where was the Master, an insignificant priest living on an humble salary, and where was Rani Rasmani whose extraordinary wealth, sense of honour, patience, courage and power would astound even the leading men of her time! Naturally a poor Brahmin like him will not have the courage even to approach her. Or if ever by accident, he happens to meet her at close quarters, he will consider himself highly fortunate if he can please her a little by flattery or by any other means, and will seek opportunity for it. But what happened was just the contrary. It was not merely a verbal protest against her improper behaviour, but regular physical punishment! Viewed in relation to the Master's position, it was not a matter of small wonder. Considering the high social status of the Rani too, it was a highly significant fact that an outburst of anger, a sense of

humiliation, a passion for taking vengeance—none of these arose in her mind. But, as we have already stated, when the attitude of the preceptor appears in great men through the Cosmic Ego transcending all selfish limitations, willy nilly, common men must bow down to them. What then to speak of the ready submission of such pure characters as the pious Rani? The reason for this is that the human mind limited within the narrow range of its selfish end, is lifted above on such occasions by their power and grace and is made to understand spontaneously that its true good lies in doing what it is commanded to do. Hence there remains no other alternative but to carry out the orders. There is also another point of importance here. As the Master would say: "None can become great in any way or assimilate extraordinary wealth, honour, power, etc., (*i.e.* maintain his balance even when these are in his possession and therefore do not misuse them through his intense pride) unless there is a special manifestation of Divine powers in him." It was because the pious Rani had in her such divine powers that she could receive the grace of the Master in the mood of the teacher, manifested in such a rude form though it was. The Master used to say, "Rani

Rasmani is one of the eight friends (symbols of power) of the Divine Mother, incarnated on earth for preaching Her worship. The seal she used on her legal documents bore the inscription, 'Sreemati Rasmani Dasi, desirous to attain the feet of Kali (the Divine Mother).' Thus in every action of the Rani, there was the mark of her firm devotion to the Divine Mother."

Descriptions of the persons whose minds have become absorbed in God, as found in the scriptures.

Moreover scriptures mention various kinds of behaviour of those persons whose minds are absorbed in God. Acharya Sankara gives a beautiful description in his *Veveka-chudamani*: "Of those perfected souls that have got their desires fulfilled by attaining the highest knowledge or God-realisation, some go about in the world stark naked, with knowledge as their only covering, while some others put on barks of trees or usual clothes like common men; some behave like lunatics, while some others look like children who are outwardly free from all taints of lust and other passions, or like veritable devils, utterly devoid of all sense of cleanliness.

Why it is so very difficult to understand the conduct of great leaders and specially of Sri Ramakrishna.

Being constantly united with the Cosmic Ego, they are viewed as such by ordinary men. But it is through them alone that the Teacher-aspect of God, that dispels the darkness of ignorance, can find

special manifestation. The reason, as has already been stated, is that the Teacher-aspect of God manifests for the good of the world along with the destruction of the limited selfish ego and the consequent appearance of the Cosmic Ego pervading the whole Universe. Of the illumined souls those specially who are always in the role of the preceptor or the seer, have to keep a show of their firm devotion to the good, and an utter disgust for the evil—a regard for purity, steadiness, self-control, reason, scriptural knowledge or scholarship and all such things, like ordinary men, according as their environments require. They have to keep a *show* of these things, we say, because, although they are in full possession of the knowledge of the absolute unity of right and wrong, virtue and vice, merit and demerit and all existences within the domain of Maya, from the point of view of Brahman, the one without a second, nevertheless they maintain a semblance of variety with the object of showing others the way out of this world of ignorance. If even the ordinary preceptors or seers have to live very often in this way for the good of others, what to say, then, of the incarnations of God or the world teachers! Hence it is so very difficult for ordinary men to understand them. And it is specially so with regard to the conduct of Sri Ramakrishna, the prophet of the modern era. For, the divine powers that are so far mentioned in the scriptures to have had their outward

manifestation in the previous incarnations, were so much hidden in him that unless one had a genuine thirst for the truth, and unless one could be closely related with him through his grace, merely from superficial observation on a few occasions, there was no possibility of their presence being known at all. See, for instance, what external qualification he had in him that might attract you? Learning? He was almost an illiterate? And how can you know that by the virtue of his superhuman memory he had fully mastered the Vedas, the Vedāntas and all the other scriptures? Will you recognise him through his intelligence? What intelligence can you expect in one who always thinks, "I am nothing, I know nothing. My Mother knows everything!" And even if you go to take his counsel in any matter, when he will say, "Ask the Mother; She will tell you," will you be able to keep your faith in such an instruction and act accordingly? You will rather think, "What a nice piece of advice indeed. This simple thing we are hearing from the time we have begun to

read the very first primers which teach us, 'God is of the nature of Consciousness, formless, Omniscient, and All-Powerful. He can make one understand everything if He so pleases.' But can we depend on such instructions in our practical life?" Will you find out his greatness from his wealth or name and fame? The Master himself possessed very little of these things. And moreover it was his very first instruction to renounce them altogether. Similar difficulties are there in all other matters too. The only traits in him that would manifest his greatness and draw people towards him were his purity, his devotion to God and his self-less love. If you feel attracted by these, well and good; if not, he is far beyond the limits of your understanding. Hence we say, it was not a matter of small fortune for Rani Rasmani that she was able to recognize the teacher aspect in the Master, although it was manifested so very rudely, and that she became truly blessed by carrying in her mind the teaching imparted with so much severity, without throwing it overboard from pride and egotism!

A MESSENGER OF LIGHT

The Place of God-men in Life

AMONG the deep mysteries that perplex the mind of man there is perhaps none so elusive as the problem of his very existence in the world. His life is like a patch of light in an all-encompassing expanse of darkness. The source of his being extends to its impenetrable gloom at one end, while the fate that awaits him after the event called death is also buried in the equally dense shroud of darkness at the other end. Between these two expansive masses of darkness is spread out, as it were, the little patch of light called our earthly life to which every one of us clings with passionate attachment in spite of the uncertainties attendant on it and our incapacity to discover its real significance. In the mad rush for the trifling things that sweeten his little day, man ignores the unsubstantial foundations on which the whole enterprise is based. He overlooks the utter meaninglessness of his strivings, the palpable absurdity of his earnestness in matters pertaining to this nine day's wonder called life, about whose origin, end and object he is content to remain in a state of blissful ignorance.

Is the mental gaze of man then strictly debarred from getting an insight into the mysteries of the beyond? Is he bound to live pre-occupied wholly with the fleeting

phantoms of this mundane existence, with no chances of gaining a view of life in its totality and understanding its true significance? While the majority of men are satisfied with the worthless sweets that Dame Nature sets before them and never take a thought of the beyond, a few intrepid souls there are who refuse to be drawn and enslaved by the allurements of life. They battle with the forces that keep their attention rivetted on the charming face of life and succeed eventually in turning it towards the darkness that hides the secrets of existence from their view. Before the light of consciousness thus withdrawn from the trivialities of life and focused on the darkness beyond, that seemingly impenetrable shroud of nescience dissolves, laying bare before the seer's illumined gaze those supreme secrets whose ignorance had rendered life quite devoid of all significance.

Few and far between are such seers, but when they do appear in the world, the trails of glory they light up in their meteoric course illumine the labyrinthine passages of life and bring a new light and guidance unto the weary pilgrims trudging along their winding courses. These harbingers of light, the world calls prophets and incarnations, and to them it turns in worshipful reverence for a solution of the deep moral and spiritual problems

distracting its mind. In the month of March this year falls the birthday anniversary of one such—Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna—whose life of matchless purity and unparalleled spiritual realisations has filled the minds of many of us with a new hope and a new enthusiasm in facing the problems with which life confronts us at every turn. We shall therefore devote ourselves to some reflections on the life of this god-man whom many of us look upon as a veritable embodiment of the Supreme Being, come in a human form to live in our midst, participate in our joys and sorrows and inspire us with the sublimity of his life and teachings.

The Secret of His Greatness

Judging from the external point of view there was perhaps none among the noted personages of the 19th century, who was less qualified than Sri Ramakrishna to draw the worshipful reverence of large numbers of men. Unimposing in appearance, uneducated in the lore of either the East or the West, possessing the favours of neither fortune nor power, he was for all outward appearance nothing more than one among the countless Hindu devotees who spend their quiet and uneventful life in the sacred precincts of a temple of God. Yet there was a fire enshrined in him, a magnetic power encircling his personality, before whose irresistible influence even the greatest men of his times were forced to bend their heads in worshipful reverence. Nay, that power emanating from him was

destined to outlive his mortal frame, and exercise its potent influence on the minds of generations yet unborn. What could possibly be the secret of this power, what the explanation of this ever-widening influence? If intellectual capacity and far-seeing statesmanship were that, there was, among the great men of his times, Ram Mohun, hailed as the morning star of Indian Renaissance, a master of several languages, an heir to the best culture of both the East and the West, a patriot and social reformer whose virile thought could grasp within its sweep every national and social problem confronting his country. If aristocratic dignity and mature wisdom could achieve this, there was the famous Maharshi Devendranath Tagore among the spiritual leaders of the times, beside whom an uneducated, frail plebeian like Ramakrishna must pale like a star before the moon. If soul-stirring eloquence and majestic power of personality could possibly be the secret of this power, then there was Keshub Chunder Sen, the idol of the youth of his day, whose silvery eloquence and transparent sincerity thrilled the West as it did the East.

All these popular leaders of Ramakrishna's age were undoubtedly great men, and in point of learning, culture, eloquence, and worldly wisdom they were his superiors. But there was something which all of them lacked, and that something Ramakrishna had in abundance in spite of his deficiency in many of the other equipments that make for greatness in the world. He possessed a

spiritualised and illumined intelligence which could see through the mask of this world and discover the secret of existence which eludes the comprehension of even the widest range of learning, which no wealth can purchase or any position or power hope to acquire. Our wise men learnedly talk on it and try to entrap it in the meshes of conceptual thinking. But intellectual sallies, however well-planned and well-equipped from our worldly point of view, are too feeble to cross the strongly entrenched lines of nescience, unless they receive the backing of a mental disposition that is freed from every vestige of animality and has come to the conviction that the highest value in life consists not in the petty prizes of its brutal conflicts but in the discovery of life's secret which baffles even the most desperate attempts of worldly wisdom. In this latter equipment Ramakrishna was richer than any of his contemporaries. A mere bread and butter winning education he abhorred from the bottom of his heart, and a cleverness consisting in the capacity to swell the bank account was no cleverness in his eyes. According to him true wisdom consists in the power of discrimination, in the capacity to distinguish the genuine values of the soul from the countless varieties of imitation stuffs and counterfeit commodities that life's thronging fair offers unto the listless mind of man. No man there was in his age who was his compeer in this precious gift, and hence there was none among his

contemporaries whose life was as rich as his in the romance of the soul. While most of them floundered or fell back under the weight of those very gifts that made them great in the popular esteem, he, unencumbered by such superfluities, flew straight up into the empyrean heights of God-realisation on the soul's swift wings of devotion and discrimination. The heart of Reality was revealed to him in so tangible a manner that he is described in popular language as having seen God face to face. Among his great contemporaries he stands as the solitary example of a man who could give an unhesitating and decisive reply to the anxious query whether he had seen God—the reply that he had not only seen Him but was every moment experiencing Him in a sense more real than the face of the questioner himself. In an age when the advancing tide of scientific research was doing havoc with the faith of even the professed leaders of religion, when a master-mind like Tennyson could, by his utmost efforts, have only occasional flashes of faith preceded and followed by the utter darkness of scepticism, when the spiritual convictions of Browning, the most optimistic thinker of his day, could find no more secure basis than the shifting sands of pure intellectualism, when a Spencer after all his intellectual jugglery could arrive at nothing more positive than the shadowy conception of the unknown—this clear and unambiguous answer of the humble priest of

Kali that God is more real than even the most tangible objects of the world, that He can be experienced as the fountain-head of all Reality comes as the most powerful criticism as yet offered of the vanity that man calls learning, of the modern man's exaggerated reliance on science for a solution of life's mystery.

The Concept of God-Realisation

This statement of Sri Ramakrishna that God can be seen, and his claim that he had come face to face with Him are likely to leave many of us rather perplexed than convinced of the existence of a super-sensual Reality. What is meant by seeing God? Is He the prototype of a natural scenery or a human form that one can speak of seeing Him? What guarantee is there that the God one is supposed to have seen is nothing more than the imaginings of a feverish brain? In a sophisticated age like ours such questions are likely to be raised in regard to the concept of God-realisation when it is put in a naive and concrete form as above. We may say with certainty that seeing God is not the same as seeing objects of the world with our fleshy eyes; for in mystic vision the external eyes may remain closed and yet the experience may be more vivid than anything we know of in life. At the same time it is to be distinguished from dream, the reality of whose objects are confined to that state and does not extend beyond it. God-vision leaves its permanent impress on our consciousness, and its vali-

dity is self-evident to the experiencing consciousness in a manner that precludes all possibilities of doubt. In fact the common expression 'seeing God' is applied to it because the most concrete and indubitable forms of reality known to us in ordinary life are experienced through sense contacts, and the sense-bound human mind can therefore offer no better description of an unquestionably real experience than through expressions drawn from sensuous life. It is therefore its reality value, its pressure, as it were, on consciousness, that is signified by the common expression 'seeing God' in relation to this experience.

In other respects it is not 'seeing' or sensing in any form. It is of the nature of an illumination and expansion of consciousness. When an ordinary unenlightened human being thinks of himself or sees the world spread around him, he feels that they are all autonomous entities with no significance transcending them. The human personality appears to be nothing more than a bundle of living matter, and the things around are only inert aggregates of the same stuff which may be viewed as either useful, indifferent or prejudicial to the interests of life. Except for their serviceableness in the matter of ministering to the little loves and hates, the petty desires and aversions engendered by the bitter struggle of life, the world-bound mind finds no ultimate significance in any of the objects that it comes across in life. Life

itself is valued for the thrills it affords the organism, for the prospects it offers of satisfying the appetites of the body and the ambitions of the mind. Thus the life of the world is one of confined vision and distorted outlook, revealing experience only in partiality and valuing things only for their serviceability for the moment. It is a view which would appear extremely grotesque and repulsive, had it not been for the artificial significance with which we colour it owing to our participation in life's bitter struggle.

God-vision is just the reversal of this view of experience. It gives a new orientation to life, a new perspective of Reality, as a result of which the hitherto self-sufficient and manifold is seen in its collectivity as the expression of an Intelligence. The partial, broken bits of experience, limited by their own being, are now seen as self-transcending in their significance, pointing towards that Intelligence from which they derive their being and in whose all-encompassing thought they subsist. The picture of life which appeared so unsymmetrical, ugly and grotesque before, because it was laid bare to the vision only in parts and in patches, is now exposed in its entirety before the enlightened vision of the sage, revealing all its wealth of beauty and meaning, and conferring the highest form of peace and bliss. The previous view of the world as a product of chance, where power, wealth and satisfaction of the senses

are the ends in view, and might, cunning and selfishness the means for the same, is now transformed into a scheme where law and justice predominate under the guidance of a moral purposiveness. The meaningless becomes meaningful, the transient changes into the Eternal, the trivial puts on the glory of Everlasting values. Life which looked valueless before as a line of zeroes without any numerical digit at the head, assumes now a tremendous significance on the discovery of that value-giving entity at the back of it. The inertness, the sinfulness and the ugliness characterising life at the material level are recognised as nothing more than a thin veneer over what is essentially the True, the Good and the Beautiful. The contradictions of logic and the conflicts of ethical life stand resolved in the light of a transcendental illumination. The heart of Nature and the spirit of man, in place of being opposed to each other, are seen to be fused in a Supreme Intelligence which forms the common background of both. The whole of Nature thereby loses its otherness and becomes suffused by the principle of self—self that has lost its sense of separateness owing to the recognition of its essential kinship with the Supreme Intelligence whose expression in space and time constitutes the world we see around us.

Seeing God in Everything

In recent times Sri Ramakrishna's is the most glorious example of a

life in which this transformation of outlook and values called God-realisation was achieved with the most remarkable success. A student of his life is rather puzzled to note how his mind was always oscillating between consciousness at the physical level and the state of Samadhi in which the mind soars into the various super-sensuous planes of existence. But whether in Samadhi or in the normal waking consciousness he always perceived the world of experience as an expression of Divine glory. In his eye there was not even a particle of dust without the sustaining power of the omnipotent, divine Intelligence at its back. As through a sheet of glass, his enlightened vision could pierce through the mask of the world and come into intimate touch with its underlying essence of Bliss and Intelligence. To his transfigured vision every flower plant in bloom was an offering of nosegay unto the Lord, every form of activity a sacrifice unto Him, and every living being an embodiment of Narayana Himself. "Do you know what I see!" he declared, "I see Him as All, Man and other creatures,—they appear as veritable figures skin-bound—with the Lord within,—shaking the head or moving the hand and feet! I had once a like perception—one Substance, I felt, had taken the form of the Cosmos with all living creatures; like a house of wax, with gardens, roads, men, cows and the rest, all made of wax and nothing but wax! I see, I realise, that all the three come

from one Substance—the victim to be sacrificed, the block for sacrifice and he who cuts down the victim for sacrifice." His daily life was thus cast in a plane of thought where the distinction between matter and spirit, between God and man could hardly be felt, even as it is impossible to distinguish between the waters of the ocean and the river at the point where they meet. Literally he saw the Divine Intelligence playing the game of hide and seek with Itself behind the veil of Its material manifestation.

Personal Manifestation of the Divine

His vision of the Divinity was not however confined to the vision of Him as the support and substratum of all that exists. Like an expert musician, who with perfect ease rises up from a lower note to a higher one and comes down from a higher to a lower note, he traversed every plane of spiritual experience centering round this transfigured vision of existence as a whole. Now his mind would soar up in the contemplation of Krishna as the cow-herd boy, as the beloved of the Gopis, as the Gita-Acharya, or as the restorer of Dharma; now his consciousness would be absorbed in the thought of Rama, the Lord incarnate on earth, who exemplified in his life how an ideal son, husband, friend and ruler of men should live; now it might be that his whole being got enthralled by the sublimity and majesty of God as the Divine Mother of the Universe conceived

in diverse forms of sweetness, grandeur and awe-inspiring splendour. In the same way he exhausted every form of personal relationship in pouring out his heart's love for the Supreme Being whom he looked upon, as ideal Bhaktas do, not as a mighty far-off being creating, preserving and destroying the universe, but as one who was his own, bound by a nearer, dearer and purer relationship than any possible in worldly life. The Deity was for him a dutiful Master, an affectionate Father, a loving Mother, an intimate Friend, a darling Child, and a loving Husband and Sweetheart—in fact all the channels through which worldly affection flows met together in him as a mighty current hurling its waters towards the Supreme Being and finding its fulfilment in a Deity who thirsts for and requits the love of the devoted heart. The attachment of a miser for his hoarded wealth, the affection of a mother for her only child, the love of a chaste wife for her husband—when the force of all these forms of love are put together, that, he said, would give one a hazy idea of the mighty power of attraction he felt towards the Lord.

Seeing God in Commonplace things

A still more remarkable feature of his state of God-consciousness was that not only suggestions admittedly holy but even others, either having no such associations or even antagonistic to spiritual upliftment, helped only to drive his mind along one path or other of the spiritual

firmament. His longing for the company of pure and devoted young men like Narendra and Rakhal was excelled only by the attraction he felt for God; and when he was warned that his attachment for these young men might cause his spiritual downfall, a flash of illumination suddenly revealed it to him that it was not their earthly faces but the Narayana in them that attracted him, and that if the lustre of the Divine got contaminated any day by impure living, it would not be possible for him even to look at their faces. The casual sight of a boy standing under a tree with one leg crossed against the other put him into such a vivid consciousness of Sri Krishna that he got at once absorbed in Samadhi. At the sight of the lion in the zoo, he was absorbed in the consciousness of the Divine Mother whose vehicle is the lion. Even suggestions that evoke disgust or evil ideas in ordinary minds had quite the contrary effect on him. A company of drunkards, reeling under the influence of liquor, reminded him only of the state of divine intoxication in which his mind at once got absorbed. Even at the sight of street-walkers and women of ill-fame, his mind would react in a manner quite different from that of ordinary men and be reminded vividly of the Divine Mother whose special manifestation he saw in all members of the opposite sex, irrespective of their character and position in life.

Short-sighted critics have often found fault with this disposition

of Sri Ramakrishna to identify even such worldly objects with the Divinity and pass into the ecstatic state of God-consciousness at the sight of things and persons that either evoke no feeling at all or call up positive disgust and resentment in the minds of the so-called spiritual and moral men of this world. The mistake of such critics consists in overlooking the exalted spiritual condition of Sri Ramakrishna and consequently appraising him by standards formed by the observation of men who are mere babies in spiritual life. In the case of one who could penetrate through the mystery of the world and feel the Divine Principle forming its substratum, with as much vividness as the worldling experiences the objects of sensuous life, what wonder is there if he saw God and God alone even in the trivialities and obscenities of the world? How great is the

gulf of difference between our sense-bound minds capable of thinking only in terms of selfish gains and worldly attainments, and the mind of Sri Ramakrishna which saw the face of God behind every aspect of Nature? Where our superficial insight perceives nothing of spiritual interest or even meanings of a positively unspiritual nature, Sri Ramakrishna who could probe into the deepest layers of experience could feel and sense the Divinity. The explanation of his seeing the glory of God in particulars lies in his comprehension of the spiritual basis of experience as a whole. This capacity of his to see God in all and in each is not only no sign of mental weakness, as ill-informed critics assume, but the sure indication of his spiritual magnitude. It was that which marked him out among the great men of his day and immortalised his name for ages to come.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER*

By A Disciple

ONE day the Mother was seated on her meditation carpet counting the beads. The evening service was over.....I prostrated before her and sat nearby. The mother asked about our welfare.....A woman devotee, a relative of the Mother, came and said to her, "Please set my mind right. I am full of worries. I do not wish even to live for a day. I shall make a will, and leave all my property to

you. After my death, you execute my will." The Mother laughed and said, "When are you going to die?" Suddenly she became grave, and said, "If that be your intention, then please go home quietly. Don't create trouble in a place like this. You have such a nice place to live in, and my company too (suddenly she restrained herself), I mean the company of the monks and devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. If such

* Sri Sri Sarada Devi, the consort of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, was known among his disciples and followers as the 'Holy Mother.' She was the first of Sri Ramakrishna's disciples and the Guru of many monks and householders. These reminiscences were recorded by a lady-disciple of the Holy Mother.

associations do not make you peaceful, I do not know what else will help you. Can you tell me what you want?.....Do you remember your past life, so full of troubles and worries? And now there is no trouble anywhere. You could achieve anything you like, in this life. You cannot understand the value of this place.* You will know it when you will be away from it. It is a pity that you cannot appreciate it now. Your mind is full of evil ideas, therefore you do not get any peace. Your brain has become heated because you are leading an extremely idle life. You have got nothing to do. Can't you even think of a good thought? O, what an impure mind!" Suddenly she smiled and said, looking at me, "Do you notice, my child, the inscrutable Lila of Sri Ramakrishna? Look at my own relatives! See the evil company I am in. One is already mad, and this one also is verging on insanity. And look at the third one! How much care I took to train her up, but all futile! She does not have the slightest trace of wisdom."

The woman relative of the Mother left the place with a sorrowful air, and she lay down on the bed.

Mother: My child, you have been extremely fortunate to get this human birth. Pray intensely to God. One must work hard. How can one achieve anything without effort? You must make some time for prayer, even in the midst of the busiest hours of the day. How shall I describe to you, my child, my own life? At that time, at Dakshineswar, I used to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning and sit for meditation.

*The Holy Mother, out of her spiritual modesty, could hardly speak in the first person; therefore she always referred to herself by speaking in the third person, as 'this place,' or 'these devotees.'

I would be totally lost in meditation. Once, in a moonlit night, I was performing my Japan near the steps of the Nahabat. Everything was quiet. I did not know that Sri Ramakrishna passed that way to answer the call of nature. On other occasions, I would hear the sound of his shoes, but on this I was totally absorbed in meditation. At that time I looked differently. I had ornaments and a cloth with a red border. The wind had made the cloth slip from my body. I was unconscious of it. Young Jogin came there to give the water-jug to Sri Ramakrishna, and saw me in that condition. Ah! The ecstasy of those days! On a moonlit night I would look at the moon and pray with folded hands, 'May my heart be as pure as the rays of yonder moon.' If you are steady in meditation and prayer, you will clearly see Sri Ramakrishna in your heart, and hear his voice. The moment an idea flashes in your mind, it will be fulfilled then and there. You will be bathed in peace. Ah! What a mind I had at that time. Brinde (the maid-servant) one day dropped a metal plate in front of me, with a bang. The sound penetrated into my heart. (The Holy Mother was then meditating in the Nahabat and felt the sound like a clap of thunder, and she burst into tears.) In the course of your spiritual realisation you will find that He who resides in my heart exists in your heart as well. He is in the heart of everyone, the oppressed, the persecuted, the untouchable and the outcast. This realisation makes one truly humble. What shall I say about my sister-in-law? One day some sweepers came to our house at Jayrambati and brought a straw-ring for supporting the water-jar on the ground. I asked the man with the ring to leave it outside. With

great caution he left it there, but my sister-in-law created a fuss and said, 'The sweeper has touched other things. Throw them away!', and she began to abuse him saying, 'You are all outcasts and you have the nerve to touch our things!' The sweeper was almost dead with fright, but I reassured him and said, 'You need not be afraid of anything.' I also gave them some money to get some refreshments. Such is my sister-in-law's mental state. Let her get up from bed at 3 o'clock in the morning and sit in the porch adjoining my room for meditation. Let me see how she can still have any worry of mind. But she will never do that, and always talks about her troubles. What is her suffering? I never knew, my child, what mental worry was. But now I have been suffering day and night for my relatives. It was an unlucky time when this sister-in-law came to our family; all my sufferings are due to my efforts to bring up her daughter Radhu. Let them all go away! I do not want anybody. Just look at these girls! They never listen to me, such arrogant women.

Mother: Ah, how Sri Ramakrishna treated me! Not even one day did he utter one word to wound my feelings! He never struck me even with a flower. One day, at Dakshineswar, I entered his room with his meal. He thought it was Lakshmi (his niece) and said in a peremptory voice, "Shut the door when you leave the room." "Very well", said I. He was startled to hear my voice, and said, "Who is it? You? I did not know that you came here! I thought it was Lakshmi. Please forgive me."* I said, "What difference does it

*The word 'shut,' in the imperative, is always used with 'Tui' (you), which is addressed only to inferior persons.

make?" He never addressed me as 'Tui.' He always looked after my welfare. He would tell me, "One should be always active. When you are idle, all sorts of bad thoughts and ideas crop up in your mind." One day he gave me some hemp and asked me to make a net from it so that he could keep the pots of sweets in it, for his young disciples. I made the net accordingly, and with the combed-out fibres that were left over, I stuffed a pillow. I used to lie down on a hard mat and place that pillow under my head. Now you see all these beds and mattresses, but at that time I used to have the same sleep as I have now. I don't see any difference. He used to say, "Dear Hridu (his nephew), I was extremely concerned about her when she first came here. She came from the country and did not know about the ways of city life. I thought people would criticise her movements and we would all be hurt. But she was so wonderful that she was completely hidden from others. I never saw her outside her room." When I heard about his remarks, I also became anxious about myself. I knew that whatever he wanted was always fulfilled. If I had gone out of the room, I must attract his attention. With great eagerness I used to pray to the Mother of the Universe, "O Mother Divine, please be gracious enough to protect my modesty." And my Mother is so gracious that She always protected me with Her two wings, like the mother hen sheltering the young chicks. I lived for many years at Dakshineswar, but not for one day did anyone see me outside my room. People always addressed me as Bhagavati (an epithet of Durga, the Divine Mother of the Universe). Sometimes I also think that perhaps it is so. Otherwise, I cannot explain all those miraculous incidents of my

life. Golap-Ma and Jogin-Ma know many of these incidents. If I ever think, 'Let such and such a thing happen,' or 'I shall eat such and such a food,' through the grace of God my desires are actually fulfilled. Alas, what wonderful days I experienced at Dakshineswar. Sri Ramakrishna used to sing devotional music, and I would stand for hours behind the screen of my room in the Nahabat. I would salute him with folded hands. What an ecstasy I experienced at that time! People would crowd there day and night, and he would talk about God. There was a boy called Vishnu, who committed suicide for fear of being attached to the world. One of the devotees asked Sri Ramakrishna, 'This boy committed suicide. Is it not sinful?' Sri Ramakrishna said, 'He has given up his body for God. There can be no sin in that.' But don't tell this to others. They will not understand it. But look here, this incident has also been printed in the book.

My child, this mind is just like a wild elephant. It races with the wind. Therefore one should discriminate all the time. One should work hard for the realisation of God. What a wonderful mind I had at that time! Somebody used to play on the flute in the night at Dakshineswar. As I listened to the sound, my mind would be extremely eager for the realisation of God. I thought the sound was coming directly from God, and I would enter into Samadhi. I experienced the same ecstasy at Belur also. The place is very peaceful and I was constantly in a mood of meditation. Therefore Naren (Swami Vivekananda) intended to build there a place for me. The land where this house stands was given by Kedar Das. But now the price of land has soared high, it is impossible to

purchase a place now. All this has been done through the grace of God."

Just at that time, Maku (her niece) entered the room, with her child in her arms, and left the boy there, saying "Mother, what shall I do? He does not sleep at all." The Mother said, "The child has the quality of Sattva, therefore he does not sleep."

The Mother had been suffering terribly from the pain of pimples. She said, "I am wracked, day and night, with this pain from the pimples. They have come out on my face as well. You may feel them with your fingers. Is there no cure for them? Please apply this oil. This medicine is really my life-saver. The moment you apply it, I get relief."

While rubbing that oil, I said to her, "Mother, one day at my home, I finished the worship of Sri Ramakrishna in the chapel, and then engaged myself in my household duties. After a while I returned to the chapel and saw that the picture of Sri Ramakrishna was covered with tiny drops of perspiration. The window was open and the sun came inside the room and touched the picture. But I thought, perhaps these are water-drops which might have struck to the picture at the time of my worship. I wiped the picture, and then again returned to the room after some time, to see if they were real drops of perspiration due to the sun. This time also I saw that the picture was covered with perspiration. Then I shut the windows."

Mother: Yes, child. Phenomena like these are not uncommon. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'The body and its shadow, the jar (used in worship by the Hindus) and the picture are the same; they are all symbols of God.'

The Mother was silent for a while. My servant came there to take me back home. The Mother said, "I shall see you again, my child." I prostrated before her and returned home.

Another day, the Mother was seated in the northern porch of the house. A young man, a devotee, was talking to her. He placed his head on her feet, and said, "Mother, I have suffered a great deal in this world. You are my Guru. You are my Ishtam (chosen Ideal). I do not know anybody else. Truly, Mother,

I have done so many iniquitous things that I am ashamed to relate them to others. But still you are so kind to me. Through your compassion alone I exist to-day."

The Mother, with great affection, placed her hand on his head and gave it gentle strokes. She said, "To the Mother, the child is always a child." The devotee said, "That is true, Mother. I have received your grace in abundance. But that must not make me feel that it is very easy to receive it."

OUR EXPERIMENTS IN MORAL EDUCATION : ITS IDEAL AND PRACTICE*

By Swami Yatiswarananda

Introductory Remarks

LET me first of all offer you most cordial greetings on behalf of my Motherland India, and on behalf of the Holy Order I have the privilege to represent here,—I mean the Order of Ramakrishna—a monastic body that is carrying on, with the help and co-operation of a large body of lay members and workers, its humanitarian, educational, moral and spiritual service from its hundred and more centres working in India, America, and other countries of the world.

I have come to you in this ancient city—the old capital of Poland—not as a stranger amongst strangers, but as one who believes in the exchange and assimilation of the best in the cultures of the East and the West, and also feels a real kinship with all those whose hearts beat to the same moral and spiritual tunes, whose souls yearn for the rea-

lisation of Truth that is neither Eastern nor Western, but is the goal of all.

As a member of an Order founded on universal principles, on international and inter-religious ideals—and as a humble worker attempting to promote cultural relations and friendly understanding between peoples and peoples, I could not, in spite of the difficulties that lay in my way, help responding to the kind invitation extended to me by the noble general secretary of this congress during my stay in Germany. Let me confess here that when I heard of this congress, I was wondering as to what it really was. But I was much impressed when I noticed the ring of sincerity marking the general secretary's letters to me, and also read the prospectus, stating clearly the aims and objects of the congress.

The Menace of Immorality—a World-Phenomenon

The whole world is more or less passing through a great chaos and unsettlement, not merely economic, but also moral and spiritual. The higher ideals of life are fast being thrown to the winds in the most reckless manner. The fundamental principles of civilisation are not only being lowered but are also being denied more and more, and this by an ever increasing number of men and women in all lands. And what is worse, the lower conceptions of life that people rarely dared to express openly are being widely proclaimed without any sense of shame or decency. The whole world is being flooded with most objectionable literature and picture-shows advocating the lowest expressions of life, and unfortunately these are becoming now-a-days as popular as they are dangerous. The result is that, besides other forms of evil, sensuality and violence are vying with each other in undermining individual and collective life in all parts of the world. No nation need sling mud on others and try to prove their supposed superiority. There is so much of depravity and vulgarity growing in every society and country that we should be fully alive to the common danger that threatens all forms of healthy and natural growth both to the individual and the nation more or less all over the world.

Attempts to find out Remedies for our ills

In the midst of the grim realities of life, the only redeeming feature lies in the fact that at least some sincere souls have become anxious about the future of the human race, and are eager to find out ways and means for saving world civilisation from disruption

and ruin. And one having the welfare of mankind at heart heaves a sigh of relief to think that if the forces of evil around us are becoming stronger and stronger, congresses and conferences like the present one are affording opportunities to "discover the moral forces common to every human being," "to show their vivifying and creative strength," "to awaken in humanity the faith in good and unity with a view to prepare the man of the future, the man, who, free from hatred, will know how to work in love and contribute to the common good."

Let me not be misunderstood as being too optimistic. I know fully well that mere deliberations and resolutions will not help us much, unless we try to act up to them, and that no sudden mass-production is possible in the domain of the truly moral and spiritual life. But it is no small gain to consider our common problems all together and have our ideas about the situation clarified and defined through discussions and the comparing of notes. For, then and then alone will it be possible for us to work for our own good as well as for that of our neighbours.

Our Ideal of Education

One of the greatest needs of our age, as for all ages, is education of the right type, and whatever may be its nature, there is no doubt that moral education should form one of its essential branches. Our attitude and sentiments, our thoughts and feelings which are the causes of our actions are to be ennobled through education, and it is then alone that the right course of action would be possible. And this ethical training is necessary both for the man of the world and also for him who would like to follow

*Paper written for the International Moral Educational Congress held at Carcow, Poland, in September 1934.

the spiritual path in a more or less exclusive manner. Now with reference to moral education the question arises: Where to find the teacher and the student of the right sort?

There is a saying in India that "teachers can be had by the hundreds of thousands, but it is difficult to get a single student." Really, very little success can be attained in the field of education without first educating the educator. So it is necessary that first of all the teacher must be properly trained, the inspirer must be made to possess the necessary inspiration, faith and knowledge to be an efficient guide to others. And he should show the path both by his life and thought, practice and precept. I propose to share with you now some of our ideals—which we are trying to follow with an amount of success in the training of our teachers and students.

The object of the ideal system of education should be not merely advancement of theoretical knowledge but also advancement of life, development of the highest powers and capacities, unfoldment of the noblest potentialities of the student. It is not enough if he is furnished with informations. He must be enabled at the same time to apply intelligently to his own life all the ideas and ideals he has learnt and gathered, and thus promote his growth and evolution, physically, intellectually, morally and spiritually.

In a spirit of righteous indignation does Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-saint of modern India,—the founder of our institution—observe, "We want the abolition of that system which aims at educating our boys in the same manner as that of the man who battered his ass being

advised that it could be turned into a horse." The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle of life, which does not bring out strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy and the courage of a lion,—is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on his own legs. And again the Swami says, "We must have life-building, man-making, character-making, assimilation of ideas. We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect expanded, and by which one can stand on his own feet." "I never," says the Swami further, "define anything. Still it (education) may be described as a development of faculty, not an accumulation of words; as a training of individuals to will rightly and efficiently."

Many of the greatest thinkers both in the East and the West have expressed similar ideas. It is being recognised more and more that education "should be the foundation of character, the culture of spirit, the building of the soul." Thus among many of the idealistic educationists there exists a wonderful agreement as to the fundamentals, as regards the place of moral culture in the great scheme of education, although there certainly are and will naturally be, differences in stress with reference to the detailed working out of the system.

The Central Theme of Education

The ordinary means of imparting education is "to drive into the mind" of the student a mass of informations for which he may not possess any real interest. The child is ordinarily considered more or less a receiving machine. But according to the literal meaning of the term education, he is to be

treated in an altogether different way. He is to be regarded as a living entity with innate capacities and potentialities "which are to be drawn out." "Whatever a man knows," observes Swami Vivekananda, "should in strict psychological language be what he discovers or unveils. What a man 'learns' is really what he discovers by taking the cover off his own soul."

We may believe in different theories of knowledge but we all should agree on this point that by means of education we do not create the instruments of sense-perception nor the mental faculties in the child, but we only help him to evolve them out of their rudimentary states. The child is born with certain powers and capacities which are to be brought out and developed through a systematic training and culture. It is not enough if he becomes a passive though self-conscious machine lying at the mercy of the environment. He must be helped to grow into an active and creative being who can intelligently adapt himself to the environments, and rise equal to them, and may even transform and transcend them to some extent. In short, the student is to be treated as an individual whose individuality is to be developed, a person whose personality is to be evolved along right lines through proper instruction and training.

An Ideal of All-round Education

We need not discuss here the superiority or otherwise of the different theories as to the true nature of the human personality. But it is impossible to formulate any system of education without having a definite conception of the nature and the inner potentialities and future possibilities of the being we

want to educate and train. And before I proceed further, I must tell you what we believe to be the nature and the goal of each soul. We hold that each soul is potentially perfect and divine. The goal is to manifest this perfection and divinity that is hidden under accretions and encrustations that we usually take to be our own individuality. But just now, with reference to the education of the child we are concerned, not with his ultimate nature and goal, we are mainly interested at present in the child as a human being, and in the path he is to follow for the growth and evolution of his true personality. It is enough to our purpose if we regard the students under our care as self-conscious soul entities having bodies and organs of sense-perception, and possessing an "inner organ"—the mind with its faculties of intelligence, feeling and will, untutored and undeveloped, but capable of being trained and evolved into efficient instruments of perception and thought leading to the right code of life and conduct according to the very law of its being.

Thus true education of the child means an all-round culture, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual. A complete system of education cannot disregard all these different aspects. It must take into full account the development of a healthy body, a proper control of sense-impulses and instincts, the acquirement of knowledge, sublimation and proper direction of feelings and sentiments, development of the will and the sense of duty, and also soul-culture which removes mental darkness and reveals the glory of the true Self by enabling one to rise above the false personality founded on illusions and nourished by false desires and morbid gratification of the senses.

The Need to Stimulate the very Soul of the Individual

A complete system of education implies a balance and harmony between the properly developed body, mind and soul. Physical culture is comparatively simple and easy affair, but the culture of the mind which includes moral training is a more difficult affair, as it has got its conscious and subconscious, its instinctive and intelligent processes with reference to the working of its different faculties. The most difficult of all, however, is the culture of the soul which implies the awakening of the intuitive faculty or the soul's apperception of itself and direct vision of the Truth, without the help of the complex and tortuous process of thought. But whatever it be, it will not do for us to evade the problems that stare us in the face. In our attempts to form a correct estimate of the human personality, we have to regard its life as a synthetic whole, and as such we have got to consider in the ideal scheme of education what the Upanishad calls the two-fold knowledge. "There are two kinds of knowledge to be known. They are the higher and the lower. Of these the lower knowledge consists of the study of scriptures and all other branches of learning like the epics, grammar, mathematics, logic, ethics, politics, the science of elementals, astronomy, fine arts and the like. And the higher is that by which the Imperishable Truth is known."

With the vision of a seer that he was, Swami Vivekananda included in his scheme of education both Western science and Hindu Vedanta, all forms of healthy and up-to-date secular learning and also moral and spiritual culture. Really the first task of the educator is to help the child to grow into a strong

personality, in his physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual aspects, in short, to stimulate and strengthen his entire life and soul.

Speaking of his ideal of character-building education, the Swami observes: "What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and secrets of the universe, and will accomplish their purpose in every fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face....."

"Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith, faith in God, this is the secret of greatness. Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want. And the first step in getting strength is to believe, "I am the Soul. Me the sword cannot cut; nor weapons pierce; me the fire cannot burn; me the air cannot dry."

The greatest Incentive to Moral Life

I may be accused of entering into the domain of religion and philosophy. But let me assure you that I do so because we have found in our own experiments in moral education that a strong faith in the Self that its ultimate nature is purity, goodness and immortality, acts as a great incentive in moral life—in overcoming immorality and weakness, and in asserting the innate holiness and strength that is the birthright of every one who would like to claim and assert it as his own.

And as we are growing in experience, we are recognising more and more the meaning of what Swami Vivekananda says,—“Let every man and woman and child without respect of birth or caste, weakness or strength, hear and learn that behind the strong and the weak, behind the high and the low, behind every one,

there is that Infinite Soul, assuring the infinite possibility and infinite capacity of all to become great and good."

"Teach yourself, teach every one his real nature. Call upon the sleeping soul to see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come and everything that is excellent will come when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity."

By constantly thinking that we are evil and perverse by nature, we have actually become so. By intensively cherishing opposite currents of thoughts, by thinking of God, by meditating on the Divine and the Holy within ourselves and along with this following the right code of

conduct, we purify our ego, free the mind of its evil propensities, and finally come to build up our moral life on securest foundations. We become naturally moral and pure to the extent we realise this truth in ourselves.

I place before you an experiment that we are making with striking success, and I request those of you who feel so inclined to verify our conclusions by, of course, following the right ways and means. This is not a method or system of auto-suggestions based on airy nothings. It is on the other hand a method of meditation founded on Reality and leading to the Reality that is the Soul of our soul, the Being of our being.

(To be Concluded)

MAHAVIR—AN IDEAL DEVOTEE

By Swami Jagadiswarananda

MAHAVIR is one of the loftiest characters delineated in our great epics. In depth of devotion, purity of purpose, fervency of faith and steadfastness of service, he stands almost unsurpassed as an ideal devotee. He is a rare combination of valour and Bhakti (devotion), Seva (service) and Shraddha (faith). His life is founded on the bed-rock of celibacy and continence, Shakti and Brahmacharya.

Swami Vivekananda was of opinion that the Hindu youth of to-day should emulate the noble life of Mahavir, the great hero. He placed before the young men of our country the ideal examples of Mahavir and Nachiketa for the building up of their life and character. His words are as follows: "You have now to make the cha-

racter of Mahavir your ideal. See how at the command of Ramachandra he crossed the ocean. He had no care for life or death. He was a perfect master of his senses and wonderfully sagacious. You have now to build your life on the great ideal of personal service. Through that all other ideals will manifest in life. Obedience to the Guru without questioning and strict observance of Brahmacharya—this is the secret of success. As on the one hand Mahavir represents the ideal of service, so, on the other he represents leonine courage striking the whole world with awe. He has not the least hesitation in sacrificing his life for the good of Rama. A supreme indifference in everything except the service of Rama; quite indifferent even to the attainment of

the status of Brahma or Siva, the great world-Gods. Only the carrying out of Rama's behest is the one vow of his life." Sri Ramachandra was the lord of his life and the idol of his heart. Whole-hearted devotion and faithful service to Him as well as unwavering faith in Him were the dominant notes of his heroic character. In youth he studied the scriptures with uncommon zeal and wrote a drama portraying the divine life of Rama. As a boy he showed signs of extraordinary strength and prowess resulting in excessive audacity and restlessness. This was due to infinite faith in himself. The boyhood of all great men is marked with such restlessness. The boy Vivekananda was so restless and self-confident that he was wrongly mistaken to be a proud and egoistic person by his companions. From the lap of his mother, Mahavir wanted to catch at one leap the red rising sun in the morning sky and play with it. He was the unfailing friend and adviser of Sugriva, and saved him from many dangers by giving personal help and sound counsels. When Sugriva was driven to the forest by his brother, Vali, he did not desert him like ordinary friends but shared his sorrows. He was a friend in need and was not motivated by any selfish interest. How rare indeed is such a selfless friend in this world!

Mahavir came in contact with Rama while the latter was in exile in the forest and was wandering helpless with Lakshmana in search of Sita. He took up the arduous task of finding out Sita in Lanka (sometimes identified with modern Ceylon) where she was carried away by Ravan. His meeting with Rama changed the course of his life. He became so devoted to Him that he dedicated his whole life to his ser-

vice. He forgot his hearth and home, family and friends, took the vow of Brahmacharya and gave up the idea of leading a wordly life. He played a very important part in the recovery of Sita and plunged himself heart and soul in performing the task allotted to him by his master. He knew no rest till Sita was rescued. No other thought found a place in his mind except the service of Rama. His whole soul was so much absorbed in His contemplation that he never cared to remember even the dates of month. When asked for the reason for this, he used to say, "Rama is my eternal date." His life was an unbroken current of consecration and contemplation. How faith can move mountains and make the impossible possible to a true devotee is beautifully illustrated in the life of Mahavir. He had unflinching, immovable and absolute faith in God and so wrought miracles at every step of his life. Faith means passivity and idleness to most of us but to Mahavir it signified continuous self-surrender to God and total effacement of all individual will. Full faith made him an instrument in the hands of God and so his life shed the lustre of divine light. While in the course of the long search for Sita he was required to leap over the sea separating India from Lanka (Ceylon), he meditated thus:

प्राणप्रयाणसमये यस्य नाम सकृत् स्मरन् ।
नरस्तीर्त्वा भवाम्भोधिमपारं याति तत्पदम् ॥
किं पुनस्तस्य दूतोऽहं तदङ्गाङ्गुलि-मुद्रिकः ।
तमेव हृदये ध्यात्वा लङ्कयाम्यल्प वारिधिम ॥

"I am the messenger of Him by repeating whose name once only, man crosses the shoreless ocean of the world. The ring with a mark of His finger adorns my head. By meditating on Him only I will jump over this small sea."

Mahavir did actually what he thought. By whose grace the dumb become poets and the lame ascend mountains, with His grace he crossed the ocean by a jump and reached Lanka in disguise. Supernormal power came to his limbs by the repetition of God's Name in which really God's infinite power resides. All saints have testified and experienced that God and His name are equally potent. After a prolonged search he found out Sita in Asokavana under the Semsapa tree with dishavelled hairs and worn out clothes. Lest Sita should suspect him as an attendant of Ravan he began singing the praises of Rama which gave life to Sita who was then more dead than alive by the pang of Rama's separation. Sita believed him to be a *bona fide* messenger of Rama when the finger-ring of the latter was produced by Mahavir. Sita was overjoyed at the news of Rama. When his arrival in Lanka was rumoured he was arrested and taken as a captive to Ravan by Indrajit. Mahavir was as bold and fearless as ever in the presence of Ravan even at the risk of his life. Truly the poet has said: "The valiant never taste of death but once." Fear was unknown to him by the power of Shraddha and Viswas (faith). When Ravan scolded and criticised Ramachandra, Mahavir could not bear it. He burst into righteous indignation and thundered fearlessly, "I do not care a straw for a crore of Ravans like you as I am the son and servant of Rama." Ravan flared up and ordered that Mahavir must be killed and cut to pieces. This however did not daunt him at all. With due moral courage he admonished him and gave ethical instructions advising him to give up all enmity to Rama, surrender to Him and send back Sita honorably to Ayodhya. Nothing however was of any avail.

Vibhisan pointed out the principle of political ethics to his brother Ravan and pleaded for the life of the messenger of Rama. So Ravan modified the punishment and commanded that his tail must be tied with rags soaked in oil and be burnt. Material fire could not burn his tail as he was meditating all the while during the ordeal thus:

यन्नाम-संस्मरणधूत-समस्तपापा-स्तापस्त्रयानलम-
पीह तरन्ति सद्यः ।
तस्यैव किं रघुवरस्य विशिष्टदूतः सन्तपते
कथमसौ प्रकृतानलेन ॥

"I am the messenger of Him whose remembrance removes three-fold Tapas and all Papas of man. I am meditating on Him. How can mortal fire burn me."

The fire however could not do any harm to him as he was putting on the armour of faith and devotion. When Mahavir was about to return to India with all available news of Sita, he humbly prayed to her that if she had no objection it would be a privilege to him to carry her to Rama on his shoulders. But Sita refused to escape in that way. Rama was very happy to get Sita's news from Mahavir and embraced him on his arrival. When Rama and Lakshman were caught in the Nagapasa by his foes, Garuda, the king of snakes, was sent for, and he set them free sundering the serpentine snares. Garuda was a great devotee of Rama and prayed to Him to show him his Isha-murti, the form of Vishnu. Rama had to give way to the prayers of his Bhakta and changed Himself into the form of Vishnu. Mahavir's faith was not a bit shaken by this. Though he had singleness of devotion or Ishta-nishta, he had not like many of us that hideous fanaticism which breeds not only indifference to but

even positive hatred of other forms or aspects of God. He said :

श्रीनाथे जानकीनाथे अभेदः परमात्मनि ।
तथापि मम सर्वस्वः रामः कमललोचनः ॥

"Though Srinath or Vishnu and Janakinath or Rama are inseparable and one, yet the lotus-eyed Rama is my all in all." Ishtanishta in its essence does not mean any one-sidedness. The Ishtanishta we practise is a mere caricature of its true form and is a great impediment to the growth of proper devotion. Rightly, one great soul has said that as a real wife is fully devoted to her husband while at the same time she equally respects the brothers of her husband without cherishing any ill-feeling, so man must not only adore his chosen ideal whole-heartedly but he should respect other forms of the Divinity also thinking them to be different forms of his own Ishta-deva.

Nor was Mahavir a bigot of a particular sect of his religion. He was the personification of the true spirit of Hindu catholicism and universality. He believed that various forms of worship or spiritual disciplines advocated by different religions are but various roads to the self-same Goal. The aspirant realises this great truth with the gradual evolution of his spiritual life. We must not lose sight of the important fact that the nature of our spiritual experiences are very greatly determined by the conceptions of God we have. Unless we keep a clear-cut idea of the ultimate Truth ever fresh before our mind's eye, our spiritual illumination will never be final. Once Rama asked Mahavir what he thought of Him. Without hesitation Mahavir said :

देहबुद्ध्या दासोऽस्मि ते जीवबुद्ध्या त्वदंशकः ।
आत्मबुद्ध्या त्वमेवाहं इति मे निश्चितामतिः ॥

"When I think I am the body, I am your servant. When I think I am the Jiva, I am a part and parcel of which you are the whole. But when I think I am the Atman—I and you are one."

This in short is perhaps the essence of Hindu Religion and Philosophy. Mahavir was endowed with all the qualities which an ideal devotee must possess. He was the master of his mind. He was never a slave to it as the majority of us are. Those who lead a spiritual life know how hard it is to control it. Even Arjuna found it next to impossible to subdue it and observed that it was as uncontrollable as the wind. A saint has compared the ever-moving mind with the monkey whose natural restlessness is thousand-fold increased first by drinking wine and then by scorpion bite. But through the grace of God, Mahavir tamed his mind so much that it never hindered but always helped his spiritual endeavours. When he had gone to Lanka to find out the whereabouts of Sita, he witnessed license, luxury and sensuality there on all sides. In that realm where lust and its retinue reigned supreme, he never lost balance of mind and went on calmly doing the work which he was deputed to do. He observed thus:

मनोहि हेतुः सर्वेषामिन्द्रियाणां प्रवर्तने ।

शुभाशुभास्ववस्थासु तच्च मे सुव्यवस्थितम् ॥

"It is the mind which persuades the senses to run after enjoyments. But through Rama's grace my mind is still, either in weal or woe." Verily he whose mind is under control is the object of our adoration."

After conquering and killing Ravan and rescuing Sita, Rama returned to Ayodhya, and was crowned King of Ayodhya. As a recognition of the unremitting service rendered to him by his friends and followers, he gave them many valuable presents.

But in the hurry Mahavir alone was omitted by chance. Mahavir however humbly approached Rama and kneeling before Him prayed why he was not called for His blessings. Sita saw this, and with the permission of Rama took her pet necklace and presented it to Mahavir who prostrated at her feet and accepted the offer. He put it on his neck for sometime and then took it off and began biting and breaking the beads, i. e., the jewels. This astonished the royal assembly very much. He was asked to explain his conduct. He said, "In body, mind and soul, I belong to Rama. Hence I cannot accept anything which does not contain the name of Rama. I am biting the jewels to see whether there is Rama-nama (Rama's name) inside them, and as they do not contain it, I am rejecting them." Enraged at this Lakshman put him the question whether his body which was so dear to him bore the marks of Rama-nama within. Mahavir tore open his breast and showed that every drop of blood, every bit of bone, every fragment of flesh in his body was saturated with Ramanama. It is said that this is the case with all great devotees. When the body of the great Sufi saint Monsoor was sliced, every part of it uttered the absolute spiritual Truth, 'Anal Haq' i. e., I am He. This shows that eventually a real devotee loses his identity in the Lord and sees Him alone everywhere, both inside and outside. Some holy man has rightly said that the heart of the devotee is the parlour of God where He mostly lives.

The crowning point of Mahavir's devotion, was reached towards the end of his life. When Rama was reinstalled on the throne and there was peace in Ayodhya, he made up his mind to retire to the holy Himalayas for exclusive meditation

and penance. Before departure he went to Rama and asked for his final blessing. Rama graciously promised that he was ready to grant any boon that he might ask for. Mahavir said :

त्वन्नाम स्मरतो राम न तृप्यति मनो मम ।

अतस्त्वन्नाम सततं स्मरन् स्यास्यामि भूतले ॥

यावत्स्यास्यति ते नाम लोके तावत् कलेवरम् ।

यावत्तव कथा लोके विचरिष्यति पावनी ।

तावत्स्यास्यामि मेदिन्यां तवाज्ञामनुपालयन् ॥

"My mind is never satisfied by the repetition of your holy and sweet name. The more I take them the more my thirst increases. Bless me, O Lord, that my body may last as long as your name lives so that I may repeat your name for all eternity." "As long as man thinks of and talks of your holy life I may be spared to remain and hear them and be blessed."

It is perhaps impossible to think of a greater ideal of devotion than that of Mahavir. It is said :

यत्र यत्र रघुनाथ कीर्तनं तत्र तत्र कृतमस्त-
काङ्गलिम् ।

वाष्पवारिपरिपूर्णलोचनं सारुति नमत गच्छसा-
न्तकम् ॥

"Wherever the name of Rama is uttered there sits Mahavir with tearful eyes and prayerful mind listening to the Kirtanam, heart and soul. Salutations to this son of Marut, the killer of demon."

Mahavir is one of those seven Chiranjeevis or immortals who got the gift of immortality by the intensity of devotion and faith. Swami Brahmananda, the first President of the Ramakrishna Mission, had seen, we are told, in a Ramnama Kirtan at Benares, Mahavir in the disguise of an old Brahmin. He afterwards introduced the Ramnam Kirtan on Ekadashi days in the centres of Ramakrishna Mission all over India.

THE FOUR GREAT SAYINGS

By Dr. S. Banerjee

THE four Great Sayings (महा-वाक्यानि) from the Upanishads under the four Vedas, viz., अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म, अयमात्मा ब्रह्म, तत्त्वमसि are well known. But I think it would profit us to reflect how in a nutshell they contain the very cream of the Vedanta.

Let us first take—although it would be a departure from the traditional setting by Vidyaranya in his Panchadasi in which he has arranged the sayings according to the Rig, Yaju, Sama and Atharva Vedas,—the saying, अहं ब्रह्मास्मि— a word that at once strikes awe and terror into the hearts of our dualistic friends. “What”, they say, “you, a pigmy, a tiny boat at the mercy of the waves of the ocean of the world (संसार), are the Brahman, the Creator, the Sustainer and the Destroyer of the Universe?” It is quite obvious here that the ‘Brahman’ used by the critic is confounded with the personal God with which we are mostly familiar, and anthropomorphism dies hard in human minds. The critic uses the word of the Vedanta (ब्रह्मन्) but attaches to it his own meaning. All controversy would be set at rest if it is explained to him what is meant by ‘Brahman’ to the Vedantin. The answer is furnished in the Great saying, प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म or Brahman is Consciousness. When the Vedantin says अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, he does not mean that his particular physical frame with its muscles and bones and nerves is his real self; not even his mind is his real self, for that is also nourished by food as the Scripture says,¹ and it is ob-

served that there are states, such as deep sleep, in which one lives even though the wide-awake mind ceases entirely to function,—but it is his Consciousness, the ubiquity of which in all states is beyond question and affirmed by the Scriptures,² that is his real self.³

“Brahman is Consciousness” may seem to be vague generalising. To counteract this, as it were, and to be more precise, particular and definite, we have the Great Saying, अयमात्मा ब्रह्म or the soul is Brahman. We may recall that this word comes in immediately after the words सर्वं ह्येतद् ब्रह्म of the Mandukya Upanishad, and Sankara, in his commentary, has explained that it is placed definitely in order to relieve the generalising tone of the previous words⁴. By identifying it with the Atman the concept of the Brahman is placed on a tangible matter-of-fact plane, which not only absolves the system of the Vedanta from any charge, however remote, of agnosticism, but by identifying the Atman again with our consciousness, our psychical being, “something that is in essence akin to that which we know immediately in our own breasts,⁵”—lends it a most practical significance.

¹ अन्नमयं हि सोम्य मनः Chandogya 6-7-6.

² Kathopanishad 5-8, Brihadaranyaka 6-7-6.

³ The Chapter, “Brahman as consciousness” in Deussen’s “Philosophy of the Upanishads” is very illuminating in this respect.

⁴ तच्च ब्रह्म परोक्षाभिहितं प्रत्यक्षतो विशेषेण निर्दिशति—अयं आत्मा ब्रह्म इति ।

⁵ “Philosophy of Religion” by Harold Höffding, P. 71.

Lastly, in तत्त्वमसि lies hidden not only the germ of the whole of Kantian philosophy, but the basis of all ethics, not only of the Vedanta, but of whatever “good morality” that has been preached so far, as has been incontestably proved by Schopenhauer in his “Basis of Morality.” For by serving a living link between consciousness and consciousness and identifying them

with each other, everything else which *appears* is relegated to the phenomenal world,—a knowledge the consummation of which is the highest flight that man can take in life. Thus the Four Great Sayings are not isolated words, but are intimately linked with one another in which is contained in a nutshell the whole of the philosophy of the Vedanta.

MANDUKYOPANISHAD

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

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rau

(It is shown now that the Mind is free from causality, unborn and one with Brahman. Perception of duality and predications of philosophical systems contradicting each other only serve to conceal the Reality. The philosophy of non-duality alone is free from faults.)

Gaudapada’s Karika

In the absence of causes, superior, inferior or middling, the mind is not born. In the absence of a cause, how can a result arise? (76)

Sankara’s Commentary

Meritorious actions performed according to the rules ordained by one’s caste (jati) and station in life (asrama) and free from desires, are superior causes leading one to be born as gods &c. Middling causes are mixtures of actions of merit and demerit and give rise to incarnations as men. Actions of demerit are the inferior causes, enabling one to be born as lower animals or remain as inanimate objects in the world. When the one and non-dual Consciousness of Atman, free from all fabrications (of avidya), does not see and does not relate itself to the superior, middle and inferior causes (or actions) which are fabrications of Avidya just

as a man of discrimination does not see any dirt in the sky which a boy imagines therein, then the mind does not take on the forms of gods (men, lower animals, plants &c.) which are respectively the results of the superior, middling and inferior causes. When the cause is absent, no result can arise, just as no sprout can come up in the absence of the seed.

Gaudapada’s Karika

To the mind free from causality, being unborn and being always one (non-dual) are alike. Everything being unborn, the mind remains unmanifested. (77)

Sankara’s Commentary

We have said that the mind remains unborn in the absence of a cause. Once more, we explain how the unborn mind remains. When the truth is realised, the causes of birth in the form of merit and demerit become of no account and

the mind is not born and is then called Release (Moksha). In the absence of objects, the mind remains One always and in all the three states (waking, dream and sleep). Even before the dawn of knowledge (that is, in the state of avidya) the mind always remains One, being without birth. Before the truth is realised, the mind may appear to be born and dual. But the same always remains unborn mind, remains without birth (that is, there is no duality) and non-dual. Therefore it never either exists nor ceases to be. It always remains of one form (that is, remains unchanged).

Gaudapada's Karika

One who knows the truth of the non-existence of causality and that there is no separate objective cause, reaches that highest state in which there is no sorrow, desire or fear. (78)

Sankara's Commentary

One who, in the aforesaid manner, knows the state of Reality which is devoid of all cause of birth and which being non-dual, can have no cause, who also knows the absence of external causes of the nature of merit and demerit, giving rise to incarnations as gods &c., and who is free from all desire for external good, attains to that fearless state in which there is neither desire nor sorrow and in which there is not a trace of ignorance (avidya). That is to say, he is not born again.

Gaudapada's Karika

Attachment to the unreal enables the mind to move in a similar (region), that is, unreality. When one comes to know the non-existence of external objects, the mind feels unattached (to objects) and turns away from them. (79)

Sankara's Commentary

Attachment to the unreal means belief in duality which has no real existence. Being sunk in the delusion of Avidya, the mind feels drawn to activity in a state which is like it. When one comes to know the unreality inseparable from duality, then the mind becomes unattached, has no desires and is drawn away from all unreal objects.

Gaudapada's Karika

By turning away from duality and not fabricating duality, (the mind) remains in a steady condition. This however is a matter concerning the wise. The mind is in a state of equilibrium, unborn and non-dual. (80)

Sankara's Commentary

When the mind does not busy itself with duality or is not fabricating duality, the mind is in a stable condition of the same nature as Brahman. The mind is of the same nature as Brahman, being non-dual and of the essence of Consciousness. This can be realised only by the wise. Therefore the mind is in equilibrium, unborn and non-dual.

Gaudapada's Karika

It is unborn, has no organs of sense, is dreamless and self-luminous. By its very nature, it is ever illuminating. (81)

Sankara's Commentary

How this is grasped only by the wise, is again explained. It is self-luminous, not requiring the aid of the sun to illuminate it. Its very nature is to shine. It is always shedding light. This character is its very nature.

Gaudapada's Karika

By limiting perception to one object, Bliss becomes covered up and

misery becomes manifested. The Lord is (the non-dual Atman). (82)

Sankara's Commentary

Though this is explained in various ways, why worldly people do not understand it, is now described. By limiting perception to single objects, its various qualities are grasped and by belief in the reality of unreal objects, the Bliss characteristic of the One is easily concealed. The knowledge of duality is itself enough to cloud the Bliss without requiring any other means to bring it about. A knowledge of Reality is difficult to obtain and misery manifests itself. The Lord is the non-dual Deity Atman. Though scriptures and Vedantic teachers proclaim this in various ways, it is not possible (for ordinary people) to understand it. The Srutis says "He who speaks of it, is looked upon with wonder and he who has obtained it is regarded as clever."

Gaudapada's Karika

People with no discrimination (that is, having undeveloped minds like children) conceal It (Brahman) by regarding It as existence, or non-existence or a combination of both or total non-existence, by predicating of It respectively change, no change, a combination of both and total negation. (83)

Sankara's Commentary

Existence, non-existence and the like, are fine points of comprehension to the learned, but conceal the Lord Paramatman from them. While this is so, what can be said of persons of a low grade of intellect? The following is said to explain this. Some disputants (Vaiseshikas) predicate existence to Atman. Others (Vainasika Bouddhas) predicate

non-existence to Atman. Others (such as, Pseudo-Vainasikas) and Digambaras (Jains) predicate existence and non-existence together, to Atman. The Nihilists (Madhyamika Bouddhas) totally deny existence to Atman. Of these, those that predicate existence to Atman, do so, as he is subject to change, to distinguish it from a jar and other objects that have only a transitory existence. Those that predicate non-existence do so, from Atman being immutable, not conditioned by objects. Those that attribute existence and non-existence together, do so, as they think it is subject to change and also immutable. To Nihilists, (Atman) is total non-entity. All these four schools of disputants, trying to find Brahman by predicating to It, change, no change, a combination of both and total negation, merely create a veil between themselves and Brahman and are therefore like children with no discrimination. The meaning is that while the learned cannot learn the truth regarding Brahman, what can be said of persons of a low grade of intellect?

Gaudapada's Karika

He is always concealed by the doctrines of those who try to understand Him by the four theories described (above). He who knows the Lord as untouched by these theories, is the all-seer. (84)

Sankara's Commentary

The essence of Reality, by the knowledge of which, those wanting in discrimination are rendered learned, is now described. The Lord is always kept concealed by the conclusions of those who try to understand Brahman by means of the four theories such as, of existence, of non-existence &c. But the Lord is untouched by the predicates of the four theories such as, of exis-

tence, of non-existence &c. That is to say, He is devoid of all fabrications such as existence &c. That sage, by whom the Purusha described in the Vedantic portions of the Upanishads, is realised, is the all-seer, is omniscient and is the truly learned man.

Gaudapada's Karika

Having obtained entire omniscience and that condition of Brahman which is non-dual, without a beginning, middle or end, what is there to be desired? (85)

Sankara's Commentary

"Having obtained the entire omniscience and that condition of Brahman," as described in the texts "He who is Brahman" and "This is the permanent glory of Brahman" &c. "Without beginning, middle and end" means that "he who does not know what creation, sustenance and dissolution are." Having obtained that position of Brahman, what is there beyond that realisation of his own Atman, to be striven for? It means that it is useless to do so. The Smriti says, "There is no purpose served by his doing any acts."

Gaudapada's Karika

This is humility of Vipras (Brahmanas) and is also known as natural serenity. Self-restraint is due to the natural restraint of the senses. The learned man rests in serenity. (86)

Sankara's Commentary

Humility of the Brahmanas is natural as it is the resting condition of Atman. This humility is also Sama (serenity), being natural and not fabricated. Self-restraint is due to the natural restraint of the senses and that is the calm and peaceful state of Brahman. The knower of Brahman who as stated above, attains to natural peace, rests in the serene and calm state characteristic of the nature of Brahman.

Gaudapada's Karika

Ordinary (or gross) worldly experience consists of a knowledge of (external) objects. Subtle worldly experience consists of perception not of external objects, (but objects of dream world). (87)

Sankara's Commentary

The schools of Philosophy which conceal (Brahman) are mutually contradictory and give room for the origin of such faults as desire and enmity &c., which are the causes of the Samsaric world. Having shown from their own reasonings that their theories are false, we conclude that the well-reasoned philosophy of non-duality characterised by natural peace and calmness, is devoid of the faults of the four theories and give no room for production of errors like desires &c. Here we begin a description of this self-contained philosophy. Duality characterised by percept and perception, offers room for all sciences and worldly experience and is known as the experience of the wakeful.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Psychological Causes of War

"All the causes of war are psychological at bottom," said Mr. Aldous Huxley in a recent broadcast speech.

"Psycho-Analysts profess to have explored the unconscious to a greater depth than has been reached by other investigators. Perhaps it is for this reason that they are so pessimistic about the immediate prospects of abolishing war."

That is a very unwelcome and depressing conclusion.

But the psycho-analyst is not going to let us satisfy ourselves with this righteous self-consciousness. Says Mr. Huxley, "We say, and with our conscious minds we firmly believe that war is a catastrophe; but our sub-conscious selves, it is evident, do not agree with our conscious selves."

According to Mr. Huxley the psychological factors which contribute towards war mania are as follows (1) "War strengthens all the ties that bind the individual to the group and heightens his sense of group solidarity to the pitch of intoxication." (2) "Most of the tasks in our modern world seem dull and pointless; war comes along and dignifies the dreariest routine with the name of patriotic work." (3) "War moreover produces a certain simplification in the social structure and there seems to be no doubt that men are on the whole happier in a simple than in a complicated society." (4) "People like excitement and are grateful for any excuse to express their feelings—particularly those feelings which education has taught their conscious minds to disapprove of. War justifies hatred, hollows violence, sanctifies delight in destruction—baptises with the sacred name of patriotism all the anti-social tendencies we have been so carefully trained to repress." Mr. Huxley has drawn our attention to the fact that "for every hundred people who kill themselves in peace-time, only about seventy kill themselves in war time." "It is interesting in this connection to

note that the suicide rate fell off during the Franco-Prussian war than during the Great War. One reason for this may be that more people could read in 1914 than in 1870. Where education is universal and compulsory more people are able to get excitement second-hand than in societies where education is reserved for a few. Literacy and cheap printing would account, at least in part, for the fact that the Great War caused the suicide rate to decline even in neutral countries. We see then that, for non-combatants and so long as material conditions remain tolerably good, war actually makes life seem more worth living." (5) "Like war itself nationalism, justifies the individual in giving expression to those anti-social impulses and emotions which he has always been taught to repress. The patriot is allowed to indulge with a good conscience in vanity and hatred—vanity in regard to his own group, hatred in regard to all other groups... Hatred and vanity pay a higher dividend in psychological satisfaction than do impersonal benevolence and reasonableness." That, in short, is the analysis of the war mentality.

Mr. Huxley has not exonerated the Governments from their responsibility for the wars, for "so far from discouraging nationalistic hatred and vanity, all governments directly or indirectly foment them."

Present day dictators who rule over the destinies of modern nations may probably prove themselves the cause of the much-talked-of next war. For says Mr. Huxley, "Eminent psychologists have often pointed out the danger we run in entrusting our destinies to men who may be suffering from mild or acute forms of neurosis, and who are psychologically, so ignorant that they are quite unaware of the nature of their own motives."

What is the Remedy?

One method suggested by Mr. Huxley is to satisfy the group feeling—"One

of the pleasures of belonging to a group is precisely the pleasure of despising other groups"—by enlarging the group to include the warring nations and find out others as targets for hatred! "We should be grateful enough for the Union of all Europeans—even if, as seems probable, that union were achieved only as the result of increased dislike and fear of Asiatics." But, then, "It is quite possible that for lack of a common enemy, the union of humanity will never be achieved!"

Another remedy Mr. Huxley has suggested is "to sublimate the impulses which at present find satisfaction in nationalism and war. Sport and other competitive activities can doubtless be made to fill at least a part of the gap. Much too could be done by making civilised life less monotonous. It is boredom that makes the emotional orgies of group feeling, vanity and hatred seem so delightful. Abolish boredom, and you abolish one of the main psychological reasons for nationalism, and so, indirectly, for war."

Mr. Huxley is not very hopeful of any good that religious and ethical campaign may do against war. For "History, it seems to me, affords no grounds for believing that it could effect the desired cure unaided. Religious and ethical preaching appeals only to the conscious mind. But man is not entirely or even mainly a conscious being."

And so the psycho-analyst is pessimistic about the immediate prospects of abolishing war.

Provocation

"ST. THOMAS PRAYS FOR THE CONVERSION OF INDIA." That was the placard exhibited by a Christian church on the last Christmas day, perhaps as part of the campaign, "the conversion of India crusade."

The Hindu has not sought to convert others to his community. He seeks only, in the words of Swami Vivekananda, "to make a Christian

a true Christian, a Moslem a true Moslem and a Hindu a true Hindu." He does not seek to destroy the faith of others but only to help them on along their own path to the one Goal towards which all religions lead. But we are pained to see that the Christian is bent upon provoking others into retorts and thereby creating unpleasant situations. Thus we heard a Hindu telling a Christian:

"Krishna is the only saviour of the world, the full manifestation of God on earth. Beware of false prophets. Do you think that the prophet who could not save himself but was crucified could save others? He prayed again and again to Yehovah to save him from the calamity but his god was as powerless as himself but allowed him to be nailed on the cross. No, he can't save you, nor his god. If he had prayed to Krishna he would have been saved, but the sinner that he was, it did not occur to him to take refuge in Him, but only in Yehovah who failed him at the last moment. So he cried out with his last breath 'O God, O God, hast thou forsaken me?' but his god did not care a fig for him. Bhagavan Krishna says, 'Whoever will take refuge in Me, I shall save him.' Therefore give up all false prophets and pray to Krishna and He alone can save you."

We are very sorry for such an outburst from a Hindu who ought to have known better. But that shows how the wind blows. It is bigotry that provokes bigotry and fanaticism that breeds fanaticism. We trust sane Hindus as well as sane Christians will keep aloof from such bigotries of their co-religionists. Or else, we will before long, have the unpleasant sight of more lunatic asylums in the country than churches and temples.

Dean Inge on Mysticism

In an interesting article on 'Religion in England' contributed to the

"Atlantic Monthly," Dean Inge speaks of Mysticism as one of the most powerful movements influencing religious thought in contemporary England. His own religious conviction is a form of Christianity strongly influenced by Platonism which is essentially mystic in its leanings. Mysticism seems to take the place of dogmatism in many quarters now-a-days.

Describing his conception of Mysticism he says: "Mysticism means the practice of the presence of God; its typical activity is prayer, 'the classical definition of which is the elevation of the mind to God.' Mysticism assumes that this communion between the human soul and God is not only possible, but is a fact of experience. Philosophically, Mysticism rests on a psychology of the Platonic type. Man consists of body, soul and spirit. The spirit belongs essentially to the eternal spiritual world, and in proportion as 'soul becomes spirit' we 'have our conversation in heaven,' even during our earthly probation. It is a law of life that we can only know what is like ourselves. Spiritual things, as Saint Paul says, are spiritually discerned. The Greek thinkers taught that salvation consists in 'becoming like God,' or (which for them was the same thing) in 'becoming immortal as far as possible.' The way to this liberation of our personality from its lower attachments is by a life of duty and self-discipline, and by concentration of our thoughts and reflection on divine and spiritual things. The so-called mystical phenomena—trance, ecstasy, abnormal visions and auditions—are not a necessary part of mysticism, and no doubt are often the result of nervous overstrain."

In India we are not in any way surprised to hear this admission of faith by a leading ecclesiastical

figure of England. In this country we have always recognised that religion cannot ultimately stand on dogmatism or even pure logic. If a religious doctrine should be of any serious consequence to life, it must be experienced in a way that carries greater conviction than even our sensuous experiences. Hence Indian sages have always upheld Anubhava as the highest test of Truth. It is the recognition of the possibility of realising the highest truth even in this life that has given rise to the doctrine of Jivan Mukti or liberation even while living. Union with God also implies that there is an underlying unity between God and the deepest nature of man. The extract from Dean Inge shows that he admits both these positions. The way for this union according to him is also not unlike the spiritual disciplines prescribed by Indian sages—performance of Swadharma, practice of self-control, devout reflection and meditation.

A Test of Mystic Experience

After referring to the attempts of modern psychologists to discredit the experiences of the mystics by classifying them with pathological manifestations, Dean Inge continues: "I have long thought that the evidential value of what it is the fashion to call religious experience is far greater than is usually recognised. In a sense, no doubt, the mystical vision is not transferable, it is even indescribable. But when we find a large number of persons, separated in time, place and even in religion, agreeing closely in what has been shown to them in their quest of the pearl of great price, it seems only reasonable to believe that they are speaking the truth, and that a whole-hearted devotion to a saintly life is in fact rewarded by the gift of 'seeing the

invisible,' as the Epistle to the Hebrews says. Now that the arguments from miracle and prophecy have quite lost their cogency, we cannot afford to neglect the confirmation which the mystics offer us, not, to be sure, of alleged events in the past and future, but of what the religious mind really desires, an assurance that there is a spiritual world, and that it is possible for man 'in heart and mind thither to ascend.'"

One thing is evident from this extract. Christianity has hitherto been claiming a monopoly of Truth and has been seeing the hand of the devil in the teachings of other religions and their saints and seers. As long as Christianity was based on mere dogma, it was easy to convince its followers of this teaching. But now when emphasis has to be shifted from dogma to experience, Christianity is feeling increasingly the necessity of abandoning its exclusive position; for any claim to exclusiveness in the realm of experience would render the experience in question abnormal and thereby detract from its spiritual value. Dean Inge recognises this position quite well, and displays a readiness to accept the experiences of all saints of all creeds as true. That shows whither the wind is blowing in the world of religion—it is in the direction of the universalism of Vedanta.

The Condition of Survival

Regarding Christianity's chances of survival in the West, Dean Inge says: "The church must come to terms with science. This will involve great changes; but if Christianity is essentially a way of living, based on the standard values which Christ came to reveal, I believe that it will survive by its intrinsic truth

and correspondence with the deepest needs and aspirations of human nature."

Dean Inge of course speaks here only of Christianity and its chances of survival. What he has in mind is not, however, the narrow type of dogmatic Christianity that churches and their missionaries familiarise us with. This is clear from the fact that in the passage quoted before he invokes the experiences of sages of all ages and climes in support of his belief in mysticism, in which he finds the best ally of Christianity. Hence his remarks are pertinent regarding the future of religion as a whole. There is a good deal of talk to-day in many quarters about the gradual passing away of the religious spirit from human society, and it is the conviction of some that it is bound to disappear completely from the world in the near future. This view, it must be remembered, is invariably propounded by men who have never experienced any deep religious feeling, and are therefore disposed to deny the existence of any specific religious need in human nature, as in the case, say, of the instinctive life of man. The denial of this need is, however, arbitrary, and is against the testimony of men who are most qualified to speak on it, namely, those who are themselves deeply religious. In the extract we have given above Dean Inge may be taken as ventilating the conviction of all such persons. Religion has an assured place in society, because it is rooted in human nature. There may be some in whom it rouses no response either because they have artificially starved and killed that side of their nature or because they have never allowed it to develop. Such cases are parallel to the examples of men who are impervious to the appeal of art.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

HINDU MYSTICISM ACCORDING TO THE UPANISHADS: By Mahendranath Sircar, Professor of Philosophy, Presidency College, Calcutta. Published by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., Broadway House, 68-74, Carter Lane, E. C., London. Pages 344. Price 15s. net.

From the earliest ages of India's history the Upanishads have been the fountain-head of inspiration for the Hindu mind. India's cultural history can be summed up as the expansion and amplification of the thoughts treasured up in these inspired scriptures. Philosophy, theology, religious symbolism and discipline, ethics, psychology and mysticism of the Hindus have all had their starting point with the Upanishads and have at every turn of their evolution returned again and again for fresh inspiration to the same source. Modern India in its yearning for a new orientation of its genius could not yet go beyond the Upanishads whose utterances are as much eternal as their import is universal.

Though commentaries have been written and logical systems constructed before this to bring out the philosophical implications of the Upanishads, to Professor Sircar falls the credit of giving us the first comprehensive and analytic exposition of the mysticism contained in them in its various aspects, and as such this volume will be welcomed by all as a substantial addition to the modern critical studies in English of this glorious heritage of the Hindus. The author has already to his credit three erudite works on Vedanta—"System of Vedantic Thought and Culture," "Comparative studies in Vedanta," and "Mysticism in the Bhagawad Gita." Professor Sircar's deep insight into the mysteries of mysticism, his powers of subtle and refined analysis of mystical realisations and his capacity for clear and profound exposition which have characterised those earlier works have been more

amply fulfilled in the present volume which has excelled them in perspicacity of thought and clearness of expression. As is to be expected, one finds the author with his fine receptivity and elasticity of mental make-up quite at home in the deep waters of the Upanishadic Mysticism.

Professor Sircar has not been unalive to the difficulties in the interpretation of the Upanishadic literature which has given rise to innumerable sectarian controversies. He has tried to keep clear of all theological and philosophical systems and has approached his study with a fresh mind and has tried to evaluate the Upanishadic realisations from a psychological point of view. Professor Sircar thinks that no finished logical systems are presented there; they are rather "intuitions and revelations received in the high flights of inspiration," "rich and definite in conclusions" and making use of "the language of symbols rather than of dialectic." The sublime grandeur and freshness of their teachings fascinate the soul and are a source of perennial inspiration to the mystic and the philosopher.

Professor Sircar defines Mysticism as "the direct awareness of reality conceived as truth." He believes that "mystical experience requires no proof. It is self-evident and self-sufficient. It does not look to anything for its verification." Without doubt the author here presents correctly the mystical attitude and the mystic's contention. But the statement, "Its end is not different from philosophy and its method of approach may not be the same", raises the question whether there can be more than one method of testing truth, whether there is any other approach to truth than that of philosophy.

Professor Sircar holds that "science and philosophy appraise truth in the outer court" whereas "mysticism goes straight into the inner court" which seems to be hardly consistent

with his earlier statement "Philosophy lifts the veil and discloses the mystery of life." One may readily agree with the author that mysticism gives 'peace' and 'bliss,' but then the quest of philosophy is different, though these may be the bye-products of the philosophical attainment of truth. Nor do we think that he need have been so grudging in his admission that "the Upanishads have not forsaken the path of rational realisation of the ultimate truth." However, Professor Sircar maintains that the Upanishadic search after truth and reality are predominantly mystical, "through the intuition of the soul."

A distinction has been drawn between empiric and transcendental intuitions. Exalted and sublime religious feelings are not to be confused with the intuition of Reality. "Mystic experiences are of different orders, some are experiences of the finer appearances, some of reality. The former are forms of psychism, the latter is knowledge." "Intuition is the final term, which is self-consciousness and not other-consciousness. The other-consciousness is the knowledge of not-self. It may cover the revelation of the cosmic mind; but since it is confined to the relative order, it cannot strictly be called intuition." Accordingly, the author would confine the word 'intuition' "to the final knowledge of the Absolute; it is that stage of knowledge where the division of subject and object does not obtain, and is therefore unique and absolute." Again, "the immediacy of the supra-sensuous revelations is to be distinguished from the immediacy of transcendent intuition." According to the author this latter is the highest intuition of the Upanishadic seers.

In this sense intuition is one with *sakshi*, it is *Atman*. "It is illuminated silence." It transcends "the plane of revelation." "Intuition in the Upanishads has this sense of transcendent existence in which the highest revelation becomes the highest existence." "In it psychological penetration becomes identified with metaphysical truth and it is therefore the identity of being and consciousness."

It is to be realised as the undivided intuition. It transcends duality and all sense of time, duration and space. "Here nothing is apprehended, neither existence, nor relations." "It is called liberation in the sense that the division of consciousness and reality is cancelled by the identity of them." "The knower vanishes here with the known."

This theme which forms the main teaching of the Upanishads has been expanded in the twenty-six chapters of the book from various standpoints and approaches. Though the book suffers to some extent from discursiveness and repetitions, it will nonetheless be welcomed as a brilliant study of the Upanishadic Mysticism by an able mind. Its value would have been more enhanced if the theses in each chapter had been more fully substantiated with ample quotations from the texts.

A TRUE INTERPRETATION OF VEDIC SACRIFICE: By Srimushna Narasimhacharya, B.A., 9, Kesava Perumal East-Ward Street, Mylapore, Madras. Pages 144. Price Re. 1-8-0.

Vedic sacrifices constitute the very background of Brahminical culture, life and thought. But scholars have experienced considerable difficulty in correctly interpreting the Mantras used in these sacrifices owing apparently to the use of unfamiliar metaphors employed for conveying the abstract conception of the Supreme Being, the sacrifices being the external means adopted to win the Light of God. There is an old tradition that the Aryan scriptures are the history of the universe written in cyphers having seven keys such as the astronomical, physiological, mythological, ceremonial, etc. While the world-religions have preserved one or more of these keys, the Vedic Rishis have preserved intact all of them.

Western scholars have attempted to interpret the Vedas in the light of mythology. Others including some Indian scholars have endeavoured to apply the key of modern science to the interpretation of the Mantras in the light of chemistry, physics and astronomy. Dr. V. G. Rele has furnished an altogether new and ingenious explana-

tion of the Vedic deities. Convinced that a majority of Hindu scriptural texts are books on subjects of a definitely biological character, Dr. Rele has evolved a theory that the Vedic deities represent the several centres of activity in the human nervous system.

The present author, while applying the scientific method to the interpretation of sacrificial rites, has not overlooked to invoke the aid of the traditional interpretation, based on Sayana and the Nirukta. He argues that if the Karmakanda is but a step to the Jnanakanda, and there is no conflict between them, then the right performance of the ritual must lead to the attainment of Jnanam, and ritual is thus but concretised philosophy. With numerous quotations the writer goes on to show how in the scheme of meditation, that sacrifice really is, the Yaga-sala is the human body, being built on its model, and the three fires are the heart, brain and the senses. The Soma juice, again, is but the blood as it circulates from the heart to the sense organs and back, Dorna-kalasa represents the heart, and so on. Space forbids our going in more detail into this original and interesting treatise which deserves our attention, as the author is furnishing a new key to the interpretation of the rituals as methods of training the mind in meditations paving the way for final illumination.

A. S.

DAWN AND OTHER POEMS: By K. Haidyanathan, B.A. Printed at the H. V. Press, Vellore.

This is a collection of fourteen poems with interpretations of such common phenomena as dawn or moonrise. The fact that the author proposes to dedicate the profits of the sale for Bihar Earthquake Relief adds a further charm.

THE VOICE OF PRAYER: *Prayers of the centuries selected and arranged by H. G. H. Tunnicliff, B. A. Published by Ivor Nicholson and Watson, Ltd., 44, Essex Street, Strand, London, W. C. 2.*

It is a beautiful collection of high and ennobling thoughts. These outpourings of the heart from mystics and poets of different ages will appeal to all sincere and ardent souls of any race or clime. To pious and devout Christians, the prayers will have a special attraction. They would console them in moments of agony and depression and contribute immensely to attune their mind to the great Redeemer. Each page brings in a new thought for the day, but like an altar-rose its beauty will not fade with the passing of the day. The get-up of the book is extremely fascinating and printing excellent. We earnestly hope that it will have a wide circulation and popularity.

SRIMAD BHAGAVAT GITA, by S. N. Tadpatrikar, M. A., Bhandarkar O. R. Institute, Poona 4. Price Rs. 3.

The book brings into light the old Kasmiri text of the Gita, supported by the commentators of the 10th century. In the introduction the author suggests some new lines of interpreting the text and its philosophy. He criticises the views of different Oriental and Indian scholars on many important topics such as the date and personality of Sri Krishna, its relationship with Mahabharata and the significance of certain popular terms, like Sankhya, Yoga, Sannyasa, etc. He advances ingenious arguments and quotations to support his own theories. It is a treatise which will appeal more to research students than to the ordinary common mind which lacks interest in controversial and polemic discussions.

NEWS AND REPORTS

**The Thondar Sangam, Madras
(1933-34)**

Ever since the colony of Ramakrishnapuram was founded, the Thondar Sangam, Mylapore, was doing some kind of service to improve the conditions of the illiterate poor of the locality. Its main objects are: (1) To collect a band of workers and train them physically, intellectually and spiritually for the efficient service of their fellowmen, (2) To work among the poor, and by spreading education, help them in relieving their poverty, sickness and ignorance. *An hour's labour of love* per week is the only contribution necessary for being a member of this society.

Night Schools: The most important part of its activities lies in conducting three night schools at Ramakrishnapuram, Punthottam Cheri and Pallakumanujan Cheri, the last two being Harijan centres. The first one has three sections, viz., for young children, youths and adults. The children are given tuition 6 days a week and the youths 5 days, while for the adults, there being no regular classes, education is being imparted through story-telling, news-giving and the reading of Bharatam. Deserving students are supplied with necessary school fees, text books, note books, slates, etc. Occasional lantern lectures are arranged exhibiting the life of Prahlada, Dhruva, the Adi-Dravida Saints and the prevention of malaria, cholera, small-pox and such other hygienic subjects. Anniversary celebrations, festivals, Bhajanas, and excursions were conducted to arouse healthy moral and religious feelings in people's hearts. To encourage economy and thrift a Co-operative Savings Bank was started in 1931, and it has been working successfully from its inception. *Panchayats* have been formed to look after the general welfare of the residents and sanitation, and to settle internal disputes.

Hospital Library Service: At the request of the Guild of Service the

Sangam undertook hospital service as one of its multifarious activities. The members visited the two main hospitals and distributed, books, magazines, pictures, etc., to those patients who could read, and themselves read to them who could not do so. Besides they tried to cheer up their depressed hearts with gramophone records and other musical entertainments. In the year under review 110 visits were made by the members.

As a mark of appreciation for the help rendered, the authorities of the Madras Library Association have presented a silver shield to the Society.

During the Kapaliwar temple festival the Sangam enrolled about 120 volunteers and did service to the devotees by protecting women and children from the rush of the crowd.

There is a *Study Circle*, whose object is to imbue the members with the true culture and the lofty ideals of our nation. The Sangam also helped the Ramakrishna Mission in its cyclone relief work in the Shiyali Taluk in January, 1934. Its total receipts are Rs. 328-9-2 and total disbursements, Rs. 578-9-2, thus incurring a debt of Rs. 250. The management earnestly hopes that the amount will be soon repaid and its work carried on with greater success by the sympathetic help and co-operation of the generous public. Any contribution, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by: Swami Rudrananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras.

**Sri Ramakrishna Vidyalaya,
Podanur (Coimbatore)**

This institution was started early in 1930 as a boarding home with only one boy. It has now gradually developed into a residential school with 49 students. There are seven workers of whom three are graduates. All of them board and live in the Vidyalaya itself. The work is divided into several departments each under a captain with a batch of boys to assist him. All the

work, not excluding cooking itself, is done by the boys themselves without the aid of any servant. The boys come from all sections of Hindu Society including Harijans. No differentiation is made among the inmates on grounds of caste or wealth. Love of country and service are taught through national songs and cleaning of slums, while religious education is imparted by narrating stories from the lives of saints and seers of our motherland. There is a *court* where the judges are elected by the boys themselves to decide disputes, settle difficulties and suggest improvements. A circulating medal system has been introduced to kindle a spirit of emulation, which has created a noble desire for getting distinction in studies, cleanliness and efficient work among the boys. They are medically examined twice a year and their weights are taken every month. A journal has been started to which articles and drawings are contributed by the pupils. Moving classes are often held in the surrounding villages. In the morning the boys help to clean the villages, and in the evening talks are given with the help of magic lantern and gramophone. This creates a lively interest in the village and sweet relationship between the villagers and the pupils of the Vidyalaya. Occasionally they are taken on excursions and visits to spinning and weaving mills, Agricultural and Forest Colleges and such other places of importance for enlightening them and improving their general fund of knowledge. The present need of the institution is to have a permanent place with necessary buildings for the school and the boarding house. To meet these demands sufficient funds are necessary, and the management hopes this will be forthcoming from the kind and sympathetic public.

**Relief Works of the Ramakrishna
Mission (1932-34)**

The Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission beg to place before the public a short account of their relief activities in different parts of the country:

Tornado Relief in Mymensing 1932.—A severe Tornado blew over this town and some of its adjacent villages. Hundreds of lives were lost. Thousands of trees were uprooted and all the houses and huts were completely blown away. A centre was opened from which 177 mds. of rice with other kinds of food-stuff were distributed among 500 recipients belonging to 5 villages. Besides giving medical relief, some 100 pieces of new clothes were also distributed.

Fire Relief in 1933.—In February, 1933 fire broke out in two different villages in the District of Jessore and after thorough inspection our workers supplied house-building materials and cloth to the most needy persons, the total cost amounting to Rs. 258-14-9. We had to undertake fire relief work in Murshidabad and Birbhum where we erected 28 and 13 houses respectively. We also helped the most deserving families with Rs. 50 in Manbhum, with Rs. 100 in Bankura and supplied building materials worth Rs. 86 in Bhubaneswar.

Flood Relief Work in Midnapore and Orissa, 1933.—On account of heavy and continuous downpour the whole subdivision of Contai in the district of Midnapore in Bengal and a large portion of the Districts of Puri and Cuttack in Orissa were visited by devastating floods. Huts collapsed and the suffering of the poor knew no bounds. Immediately we had to commence relief work in the affected areas, and besides clothes and medicines, doles of rice were freely distributed from 10 centres in Midnapore and Orissa. The centres in Contai sub-division had also to supply fodder for cattle and paddy (seeds) for sowing, in addition to constructing huts for the homeless.

Test Works in Orissa, 1934.—To help the poor labourers who were meeting starvation in their face we opened test works and begun the restoration of tanks and wells that had been filled up with sand and salt water. From two centres 11 new wells were dug and 5 old ones were repaired while 11 tanks were re-excavated.

Fire Relief in April 1934.—The poor villagers in Orissa who were hard hit by scourges of flood and scarcity of food became absolutely helpless when fire consumed their last remnant of protection. In spite of our paucity of funds we had to take up the work and supply hut-building materials to 142 destitute families.

Moreover our Mission at Rangoon, (Burma) undertook flood relief work in the Pegu and Toungoo Districts—which lasted from August to October, 1932. Rice, clothes and financial help for building huts were given to the sufferers—which amounted to Rs. 724-7-0.

The Mission expresses its deep sense of gratitude to all kind donors and sympathisers who promptly responded to its appeal and co-operated with it in various ways.

Ananda Ashrama, Dacca

The Ananda Ashrama is the only educational institution of its kind working for the uplift of women in East Bengal. A detailed account of the activities of the Ashrama was published in its 3rd report. The most important feature of the institution is its various industrial sections which train the students to earn an independent living. The daily routine of the institution is as follows: Getting up 5 A.M.; Bhajan, meditation, etc. 5-30 A.M.; cleaning 6 to 6-30 A.M.; tiffin 6-30 A.M.; study 7 to 8 A.M.; art class 8 to 10 A.M.; bath and cleaning 10 to 11 A.M.; meals 11 to 12 A.M.; school 12 to 3-30 P.M.; cleaning 3-30 to 4 P.M.; stitching, weaving, music, art class, etc., 4 to 5 P.M.; tiffin 5 P.M.; play and walking 5-30 to 6-30 P.M.; Arati 6-30 to 7 P.M.; study 7 to 9 P.M.; meals 9 P.M.; retiring to bed 9-30 P.M.

During the year under report (1933-34) the total number of girls in the Ashram were 50, of whom 16 were free students and 3 concession holders. The monthly expense of the Ashram came to Rs. 550. It is needless to add that the Ashram is slowly getting established, and receiving the appreciation and help of the local public.

Sri Ramakrishna Mission Seva Samiti, Karimganj, Sylhet

This Institution has completed the sixteenth year of its useful philanthropic career. The conjoined report for 1932 and 1933 shows that the Society has served the local public in diverse ways in spite of its insufficient resources. It has a pretty good library which is being utilised profitably by the students. Religious classes and lectures were held in the premises of the Ashrama and outside. During the period under review, the Samiti managed creditably two Primary Schools and one Night School for the spread of education among the backward classes. It maintained a charitable Homœopathic Dispensary for the helpless sufferers of the town and the adjacent villages, and also nursed eight destitute patients in their own houses, suffering from typhoid and other acute diseases. A training corps has been formed for the teaching of skilful nursing under an expert. The Society helped some poor families with doles of rice, clothes and money, and constructed one tin-shed for a leper inhabitant of an adjoining village. It celebrated birthday anniversaries of the Great Masters with regular worship, bhajana and feeding of the poor hungry Narayanas. The Society now appeals to the generous public for money for the building of a Students' Home and a Night School.

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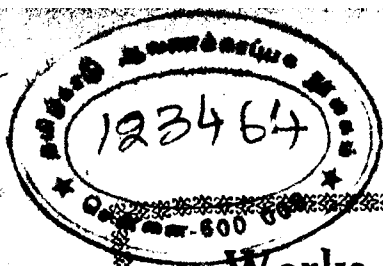
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