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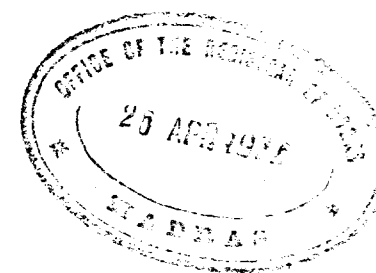
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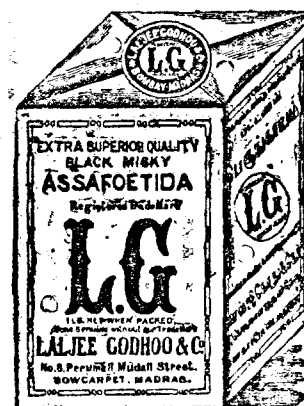
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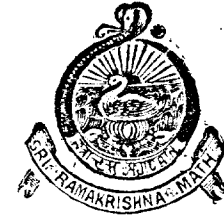
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Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman"

—Swami Vivekananda

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APRIL, 1935

[No. 12

HINDU ETHICS

ॐ

एते त्रयोदशाकाराः पृथक् सत्यैकलक्षणाः ।

भजन्ते सत्यमेवेह बृहन्ने च भारत ॥

सत्यं नामाव्ययं नित्यमविकारि तयैव च ।

सर्वधर्माविरुद्धेन योगेनैतदवाप्यते ॥

नास्ति सत्यात् परोधर्मो नावृतात् पातकं परम् ।

स्थितिर्हि सत्यं धर्मस्य तस्मात् सत्यं न लोपयेत् ॥

ये वदन्तीह सत्यानि प्राणत्यागेऽप्युपस्थिते ।

प्रमाणभूता भूतानां दुर्गाण्यतितरन्ति ते ॥

These thirteen forms of virtue*, though apparently distinct from one another, have but one common fundamental feature, viz., Truth. All these, O Bharata, serve Truth and are expressions of it.

Truth is immutable, eternal and unchangable. It may be acquired conjointly with other virtues, without militating against them.

There is no duty which is higher than Truth, and no sin more heinous than untruth. Indeed Truth is the very foundation of righteousness. For this reason one should never let Truth be neglected.

They that always speak Truth in this world, even when life is at stake, are exemplars for all creatures to imitate, and succeed in overcoming all difficulties.

—SHANTI PARVA (CLXII—22, 10 & 24 & CX—II)

* Mentioned in the previous issue.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

CHAPTER VI

The Master and Mathuranath

Hark ! O the supreme among the Kurus, I shall describe unto thee the most important aspects of My Divine Glory, of which the details are inexhaustible.

Gita X, 19.

A big flower takes a longer period to blossom fully.

MENTION has already been made of the fact that the gradual unfoldment of the teacher-aspect in the Master's life was taking place, to a great extent, before the very presence of Rani Rasmani and Mathuranath. With regard to the manifestation of the higher aspects of human character, the Master used to remark, "A big flower takes much longer time to blossom fully; a pithy tree grows very slowly." Not a little time and struggle were needed in the Master's life too for the manifestation of the unique aspect of the teacher! It required severe practice continually for twelve long years. This is not the place to give a detailed description of his spiritual practices.* Here, what we are particularly concerned with is the Guru-aspect of his character which blossoms like a lotus under the influence of the light of knowledge. Accordingly we shall deal chiefly with this topic

*These have been described at length by the author in another volume.

alone. Nevertheless, in the course of our procedure with the subject, other things indirectly connected with this main topic will incidentally come in. For instance, those devotees, with whom the Master was connected during the earlier period of this stage of development in him, will certainly come within the purview of this topic.

The Master's unique relation with Mathuranath: the characteristics of the latter.

The Master's relation with Mathuranath was indeed a unique affair. Mathuranath was wealthy and at the same time noble-minded; engaged in worldly affairs but yet a devotee at heart; often hasty but yet intelligent; a man of fiery temper but at the same time possessed of untiring patience and strong determination; equipped with English education and argumentative by nature but never too dogmatic to be convinced by cogent reasons. Although a sincere believer, he would never accept blindly anything and everything that might be said on religion, no matter whether such statements came from the Master, or his family-preceptor or whomsoever else. He was generous and straightforward, but never to be cheated in his estate-affairs on that account. On the other hand, he was found occasionally even to resort to such mischievous

policies and underhand methods as are usually adopted by rich landlords for the increase of their wealth. In fact, as Rani Rasmani had no male issue, Mathuranath, her youngest son-in-law, was her right-hand man in the able management and supervision of the estate-affairs, although her other sons-in-law too were living at that time; and her name became so famous in those days only because of the rare combination of Mathuranath's acute intelligence with that of the Rani.

Rani Rasmani and Mathuranath help the Master unawares in the unfoldment of the teacher-aspect in him. The friends as well as the enemies of divine incarnations help them in manifesting their latent powers.

"But what is this digression for?" our readers may question us here; "why is this Mathuranath brought in, all on a sudden, while the topic is concerned with the Master?" The reason is this: When the divine attitude was gradually manifesting itself in the Master like the butterfly issuing from its cocoon, it was Mathuranath who caught a faint glimpse of its future glory and appointed himself as its chief protector and helper. Under a holy inspiration, Rani Rasmani built the temple which was to be the fit place for the evolution of that unique character; and Mathuranath, her son-in-law, under a similar inspiration, supplied unstintedly whatever was needed for the manifestation of that Divinity. Of course, we are

able to understand this divine purpose only now after the lapse of such a long time. But these twin personalities seem to have never been able to fully understand why they did all those things, notwithstanding that they used to have merely a faint occasional glimpse of the future significance of their actions.

This fact seems to be a common feature in the lives of the great prophets of all ages. It is found that some mysterious power remains behind them removing all obstacles from their path, protecting them in every way under all circumstances and bringing all other persons entirely under their control. But nevertheless those persons, who thus become instrumental in the growth of divine personalities, never come to realise that whatever they do, out of love for or hatred against these prophets, becomes always helpful to them by removing the obstacles from their way and kindling their latent spirit of devotion. And people read with wonder their true significance only after a pretty long time. See for instance the effect of Kaikeyi's sending away Rama to the forest, of the life-long efforts of Kamsa to frustrate the mission of the Divine Child by keeping Vasudeva and Devaki in prison, of King Suddhodhana's building the pleasure garden in order to prevent Siddhartha from imbibing the spirit of renunciation, of the cruel attempt of the Kapalika Buddhists on the life of Sankara by means of black magic, of the malicious antagonism of some against Chaitanya's religion

of love or finally, of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ on the pretext of a false charge. In every instance the result was just the opposite of what was expected, as in the story of the monk who used to repeat "Thou hast misunderstood me, O Rama!"*

* The story runs as follows: A monk who had long been travelling constantly from one place of pilgrimage to another carrying by himself his bundle of necessary articles once got the idea that if he had a horse he would be relieved of the burden. Accordingly he began to repeat aloud, "Let me have a horse, O Rama!" Now the king's army was then passing through that very place where our monk was wandering about. One of the mares belonging to that army happened to give birth to a young one on the way. The horseman concerned was put to much trouble on that account and did not know what to do with the new-born colt that was yet too young to keep pace with the army which was to move from the place in no time. Finally he decided to get a man to carry the colt, and went out on this errand. Before long, his eye fell on our horse-begging monk, and finding him a robust man, without any further consideration the soldier forced him to

Nevertheless, the powerful and sagacious enemies as well as the loving friends have always applied their shrewd policies with quite different motives and will do the same in future too. Among these helpers of the prophets, the two groups, *viz*, the friendly and the inimical, have got this much of difference between them that the latter remains completely in the dark regarding the motives and the workings of the Divine Power, while the former, by following it with sincere devotion, attains occasionally some slight knowledge of it; and this knowledge gradually frees them from all desires and ultimately leads them to complete liberation and eternal peace. Mathuranath belonged to this last mentioned group.

carry the colt. The monk, thus put to great difficulty, began to repeat, "Thou hast misunderstood me, O Rama!" For, while he wanted a horse to carry his luggage, he himself had to carry the colt.

WHY NOT 'RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY IN INDIA'?

Is there a Conflict between Religion and Philosophy in India?

A few months back, Prof. Wadia of the Mysore University delivered an address on "Philosophy and Religion in Mysore," on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Bangalore Mythic Society. Some of the points referred to by the learned Professor in the course of his address have a relation to a much wider area than the State of Mysore. They are as

much true with regard to the religious life of the rest of India as they are with that of Mysore. We therefore deem it fit to make the following comments on these points of wider importance under the more comprehensive title—"Why not 'Religion and Philosophy in India'?"

It was opined by the learned Professor that there is a conflict between religion and philosophy in this country, and as an illustration of this conflict he referred to the

existence of caste system in spite of the universal principles of Vedanta, the most influential school of philosophy in India. The religious folk of this country have always taken pride in the thought that it is in India and India alone that religion and philosophy have gone hand in hand, each enriching and invigorating the other and helping, by this harmonious relation, the growth of a spiritual ideal according to which reason and faith have no need to wrangle for the allegiance of man. In the history of European thought, although religion and philosophy are known to have been united in a companionate alliance at an early period, they parted away as soon as they came to their own, and have ever since been at bitter feuds beyond any hope of reconciliation. In regard to India, however, the prevailing view has always been just the contrary. Right from the Vedic Age onward, philosophy has stood in the relation of an off-spring to religion, having had its source not so much in the element of wonder as in the desire to overcome moral and physical evil. In conformity, as it were, with the highest Indian traditions of filial tie, their cordial relations have never been sundered through all the vicissitudes of their career extending over thousands of years. This at least has been the view entertained by the religious men of India, and to many of them therefore the Professor's opinion may come as a shock.

The Philosophical Approach

The matter however requires a fuller consideration, if all its implications are to be elucidated properly. Owing to the very close relationship between religion and philosophy in this country, there is a general tendency among Indians to take the subject matter of both these as identical. However true this may be in regard to Indian thought, it is necessary to draw a distinction between these two in their usual academic significance, especially because that will help us to understand the uniqueness of Indian culture in having combined these two branches of thought that war with each other in other cultural systems. The subject matter of philosophy is the True, and the philosopher is one who seeks to give a logically consistent description of experience. The nature of the subject renders his approach towards it essentially intellectual. His success in the pursuit is to be measured by the degree of disinterestedness with which he proceeds on the analysis of experience. Complete disinterestedness, however, is a quality that is impossible of attainment in this world; yet the orthodox philosopher is expected to perform this impossible feat and study his subject matter without any intrusion of feelings or consideration of its consequences on the world at large. He is to segregate his personality from the subject of his study and treat the structure of Reality as if it existed quite independently of the perceiving mind

with no vital relation to the Truth of man. He is to ignore completely that just as in the case of our so-called true intellectual perceptions, the refined or purified feelings of man have also something corresponding to their contents in Reality. His conclusions too are not to be judged by their effects on his character and personality or from their repercussions on the life of men in general; the cold categories of the intellect under whose inspiration they have sprung are also to be their sole judge. Their validity lies in their logical consistency, not in their human worth.

The Religious Approach: its Origin, Method and Results

The religious approach towards the study of experience is however quite different. The incentive here is not so much the curiosity to *know* as the yearning to *be better*. No doubt, the human being finds himself placed in an enigmatic world bristling with problems for the intellect to solve; but the reactions of the religious mind are not to the same extent drawn by this aspect of experience as by the oppressing sense of imperfection and insecurity that life exercises on it. The religious man finds himself helplessly under the thralldom of the flesh and its desires. Something within tells him that he is not essentially their slave, but so secure is their hold on him that to effect an escape from their sway seems beyond the limits of his personal powers. The whole of Nature, both external and internal, seems to be conspiring against his

struggling self in an effort to keep him bound by the shackles of the flesh. The hopelessness of the task does not however stifle the urgings of the inward monitor, but only makes one all the more discontented with life.

An equally potent factor for dissatisfaction he finds in the general insecurity in which life in this world is placed. Nature seems to have set in ambush her malicious forces at every turn along the road of life, to pounce upon and destroy the heedless pilgrims that sojourn along its dangerous course. There are on the one hand the uncontrollable furies of the blind forces of Nature—the storms, the draughts, the floods, the tidal waves, the famines and the incurable diseases of the body and the mind,—and there are, on the other hand, man-made dangers of an equally formidable nature—wars, economic distress, unemployment, heartless cruelty and oppression, ingratitude, betrayal of love and trust and a host of other factors that civilisation has made us all familiar with. The progress of science and the harnessing of some of Nature's forces may have to a certain extent mitigated the dangers from the blind forces of Nature but the man-made diseases of human society only seem to grow into alarming proportions with the march of civilisation and the growing complicity of social relationships. Over and above these dangers attendant on life's pilgrimage is the sure and certain doom of death that awaits even the cleverest

of our kind who manage to overcome the other dangers and carve out a way for themselves in life. Nature seems to have made man with laborious care only to kill him in the end. But even in the midst of these baffling circumstances the human spirit yearns for security and immortal life.

What sets the religious mind on the path of enquiry is the urgent need it feels to overcome these twofold challenges of life—the moral evil within and the doom of extinction without—, in other words the desire for a perfect life, in contrast to mere wonder or curiosity to know as in the case of the philosopher. As the attitude is different, so too are the procedure and the result obtained. The philosopher, as we have already said, is to maintain an attitude of disinterestedness and study the world of experience abstracting it from his personality. But the religious man views experience as interpenetrated by the interests of his life. For him his personality forms an integral whole with experience. The study of the latter therefore means for him the discovery of the link subsisting between the two and the solution of the problem with which the enquiry began, namely, the facts of moral evil and death. His tool in this enquiry does not consist merely in the cold intellectual faculty; it embraces the whole personality of man. His intellect is enlivened by feeling and energised by will. When this whole and harmonious development of personality is completed, it

matures into what is called the faculty of intuition which enables him to view experience as a whole and probe into its very depths, unlike the philosopher whose predilection in favour of the intellect and neglect of feeling confine him to a partial and distorted view of experience. In the subject matter of his quest also there is not that onesided insistence on the True as in the case of the philosopher. The search is as much for the Good and the Beautiful as it is for the True, and the intuitive power which forms the main instrument in the quest, when perfected by the complete integration of all the faculties of man, reveals that the core of Reality is not merely the True, but is simultaneously the Good and the Beautiful. In fact the uniqueness of the knowledge that the religious mind attains in its perfection consists in the direct apprehension that what is the True is the Good, and that what is both the True and the Good is also the Beautiful. In other words, the distinction between fact and value which a mere intellectual approach can never get over stands resolved before the illumined gaze of the religious mind.

In the matter of the valuation of the results obtained also, the religious quest stands in contrast to the purely philosophic one. Logical consistency and the adequacy of the explanations of facts form the sole criterion in determining the merits and demerits of a philosophic system. But what determines the success or otherwise

of a seeker in the sphere of religion does not consist so much in the value that the intellectual and literary standards discover in his statements as in the transformation observable in his life and character. The statements of religious truth may indeed be clothed in logic and in polished language; but that in itself is no indication of success in religious life, unless the conquest of moral evil and death have been achieved through a realisation of the essentially spiritual nature of Reality. Thus the perfection of religion consists in saintliness while a type of intellectual obesity is the goal of philosophy.

The Fate of Philosophy in Europe

We have drawn at some length this contrast between religion and philosophy in order to bring out clearly the uniqueness of Indian thought in having effected an inseparable union between these two branches of culture. The failure of Europe in this respect is only too patent, as indicated by the hostility of philosophy towards religion in that part of the world. No doubt, an attempt was made in Medieval times to effect a union between them, but it failed eventually with the intellectual advancement of Europe. It may be interesting to investigate why such a combination did not succeed in the case of Europe. To our mind this failure is to be attributed to the denial of religious liberty, as it inevitably happens when religion is controlled by an ecclesiastical hierarchy created and supported by the State. The

State and the Church undertook to keep the conscience of men. They formulated the creeds which people were to swallow under the threat of the rack and the burning pyre. The Scripture could not be interpreted in the light of one's understanding or spiritual insight; they were to be understood as the State and the Church wanted men to understand. In other words, under the influence of extraneous agencies as the State and the ecclesiastical hierarchy, religion became more a branch of politics than a force for spiritual upliftment. And politics, it must be remembered, is not the field for the display of man's speculative genius or for the practice of saintly innocence. The result of this was that the intellectual sections of Europe had to bid goodbye to the heresy-hunting religious traditions of their land and proceed on independent lines in their quest after an intellectual solution of the riddle of the universe. Philosophy thus separated itself from religion, but this challenge of the intellect was to produce a more momentous consequence than the mere fact of separation. With its liberation from the tutelage of religion, philosophy began to rely more and more on the experimental sciences for its data, as these were more in agreement with its intellectual bias and its demand for studying experience after isolating it from the experimenter. But eventually the servant was to oust the master from his seat of authority and appropriate the sole right of studying

experience from the point of view of the intellect. In other words, philosophy as an independent branch of study waned in importance and experimental science came to take its place. And to-day in a thinker like Bertrand Russell this movement has reached its culmination; for according to Russell philosophy has no subject matter of its own, and it is to end its glorious career soon by merging itself in science. Science, therefore, is the philosophy of modern Europe.

The Limitations of Science

There are champions of science to-day who look upon their favourite subject as the only panacea for all the ills of the world. But they forget that while science has in many respects made us familiar with the mechanism of the universe, it has not cast even a gleam of light on the mystery of it. As Prof. Radhakrishnan says in his latest book, *East and West in Religion*, "The scientific interpretation of the universe which resolves the world into an invisible game of billiards, where the atoms are the balls which collide and pass on their motion from one to another, states only how things happen and not why. Even in those who think that further questions are unnecessary, there stirs the awareness of an attitude yet unrealised. They vaguely feel that the universe has a depth of being beyond that made known to the senses and the intellect. Our sense of wonder and our sensitivity to the envioning mystery

are in no way diminished by progress in science." Science or the philosophy of Europe can never overcome this defect because of the inherent presupposition in its attitude and method that the world can be studied in its essential truth by completely isolating it from the mind that experiences it. Therefore, while one should be thankful to science for throwing much light on the mechanical aspect of the universe and for rendering it possible for the human being to establish control over various forces of Nature, it will be a vain expectation indeed, if science or scientific method is relied upon for a solution of life's mystery and its deepest problems. On the other hand, it is even necessary to recognise the fact that with all its boasted achievements in the realm of matter, it has absolutely failed to make the life of man happier in terms of mental peace and poise, contentment, inward joy and freedom from fear and worries. The fate of modern Europe is proof positive to this fact. Not only has it miserably failed in this respect, but has, by the apotheosis of the scientific method, created a positive antagonism in men against the intuitive method of religion, the one way for the solution of life's mystery and the attainment of lasting happiness, and has to that extent made a positive contribution towards the misery of mankind. Such indeed are the disastrous results of the declaration of independence on the part of the intellect from the federation

of human faculties in the history of European thought.

Relation between Science, Philosophy and Religion in India

Let us now turn our attention to the relation between religion and philosophy in Indian thought. The review of the relation existing between them in Europe would make it possible for us to appreciate better the significance of the same obtaining in India. That the relation has always been cordial, we have stated already. With the single exception of the Charvaka system, the Indian version of materialism, every system of philosophy in India, whether orthodox or heterodox, has allied itself with religion. In the absence of a jealous Church and a persecuting State, religion was kept aloof from politics, and men of speculative genius could therefore find, within its fold itself, ample scope for the exercise of their speculative genius. As a consequence there was no hard and fast distinction between religious men, philosophers and scientists. Eminent Indian thinkers like Yagnavalkya, Gautama, Kanada, Badarayana, Jaimini, Gaudapada, Asanga, Nagarjuna, Dinnaga, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva and a host of others are as well-known for their spiritual greatness as they are for their philosophical acumen. Men like Nagarjuna, Bhaskara, Charaka and Susruta are as great authorities in natural sciences as they are in religion and philosophy.

Nor is there recognised any hard and fast distinction between the

subject matter and method of religion and philosophy. No doubt in the academic study of philosophy the rational faculty of man is given the fullest scope, but even in its widest wheelings, philosophy centres round truths whose validity has been established by the intuitive method. In India the limitations of the intellect have always been recognised, and along with it also the futility of setting it up as an independent and all-sufficient means for the solution of life's mystery. Reason can justify, can in certain respects act even as a stepping stone to, the great verities of life; but it cannot in itself discover them. Cold intellectualism gets benumbed before it reaches the higher levels of the soul. The quest of the True abstracted from the Good and the Beautiful, the study of the world independent of man is a fruitless enterprise as far as the solution of life's mystery is concerned. It is this characteristic of Indian thought that is expressed with such telling effect in that famous conversation supposed to have taken place between a wandering Indian philosopher and Socrates, the great thinker of ancient Greece. When in reply to a question, Socrates told the Indian sage that the world is the object of his study, the saintly visitor from our land is reported to have remarked, "How can you know the world without knowing man?" The pragmatist's dictum that man is the measure of things is a statement of great significance. A world divorced from man, a

Reality disconnected with his hopes and fears, loves and aspirations is a pure abstraction—a dream of the fanatics of the intellect. A study of such a conception may yield the little things of life, but not its greatest prize. For Reality is not only the True, but also the Good and the Beautiful—it is Sat-Chit-Ananda. The inseparable alliance between religion and philosophy in India is a recognition of this fundamental fact.

Where Vedanta differs from Science

It is sometimes said that Vedanta, the most important system of Indian thought, is not a religion but a science. This however is a misrepresentation, an example of suppressing the main characteristic of a thing by too great an insistence on a secondary one. In maintaining experience (Anubhuti) to be the final test of spiritual facts, and in offering the highest generalisation of the universe that the human mind can conceive of, Vedanta embodies in itself some of the most admirable features of modern science, but that in itself does not lower it or, as some would prefer, elevate it to the status of a science. It may be a scientific religion, but yet it remains a religion for all that. For the Vedantic inquiry has its origin in the religious impulse, and it reaches its consummation in the religious ideal, namely, the overcoming of the sense of sin and the fear of death. As an illustration of this we point to the fact that of the preliminary disciplines required of a

student of Vedanta, the most important is Mumukshutwa, an intense desire for liberation. The inquiry that springs from it is not, as in the case of the scientist, a dispassionate and dis-interested quest abstracted from one's personality and the deepest longings of the heart. It is on the other hand an undertaking to which the whole fervour of one's heart has to be harnessed, an activity of momentous consequence to one's life, which one would not have undertaken but for the tremendous moral force urging from within. Nor does its end consist in arriving at a theory of the universe but in an entire transformation of one's personality and one's outlook on life and its values. A scientist begins his career with a sense of curiosity gripping his mind, and ends it perhaps as an intellectual giant; the Vedantin begins his in response to a moral and a personal problem, and ends it in the status of sainthood.

Philosophy as the Generalissimo of Religion

This inter-relationship with life is the most important characteristic of every school of Indian philosophy. It is also their point of contact with religion. Whether it is in Samkhya or Yoga, Nyaya or Vaisesika, Purva Mimamsa or Vedanta, one does not, according to Indian traditions, deserve the name of a philosopher, unless one has brought one's life into conformity with one's teaching. Whether the central point of one's philosophy be the

unity of all existence or the separateness of the self from all objects or the supremacy of an all-embracing intelligence over the universe, the function of the philosopher does not end in a mere dialectical demonstration of these teachings. Such a demonstration is counted as next to nothing, unless the ideas become clothed in flesh and blood in the daily life of the thinker. Realisation not speculation, Jivanmukti not barren intellectualism is the goal of Indian philosophy, and in accepting such a goal, philosophy has acknowledged its allegiance to religion. It is contented to play the part of the generalissimo of religion in warring against the great enemies of man, namely, death and moral evil.

The Effects of Indian Philosophy on Social Life

This long string of reflections has carried us far into the intricate question of the relation between philosophy, science and religion, leaving behind the original question with which we started, namely, Prof. Wadia's remark that there is a conflict between religion and philosophy in this country. Religion, it must be remembered, has a two-fold function—one in relation to the individual and the other in relation to the society. When Prof. Wadia speaks of the relation between religion and philosophy, his remark is too wide in so far as he fails to make this distinction. We have tried to show in the foregoing paragraphs that as far as the individual side is concerned, there is

perfect harmony between religion and philosophy in this country. The Professor's example of a conflict as seen in the existence of caste system side by side with the universal ideals of Vedanta really refers to the question as to how far India has worked out the implications of her philosophy in her social life. We must in the first place point out that in every country there is noticed this gulf of difference between the actual and the ideal, between the hopes that man entertains in his best moments and his actual performance amidst the hard realities of life. India too is not an exception to this rule. But it may be questioned whether caste system is after all such an engine of tyranny purposely devised by our social leaders in flagrant violation of the universal principles of Vedanta? Acute differences of opinion are likely to occur on this point. To cite the law of Karma in justification of man-made distinctions would be but playing into the hands of hypocrisy. A correct estimate of the caste system can be made only if it is viewed in reference to the historical, racial, and economic problems of Indian society in the past. The selfishness of man and the exigencies of life's struggle must no doubt have contributed mostly to the social rigidity, the spirit of exclusiveness and the oppressive tendencies characteristic of caste in actual working. But its ideals are great. The influence of Vedantic thinkers has infused into this

system of social organisation the idea of Swadharma according to which every duty faithfully discharged is an efficacious form of worshipping the Supreme. By such worship every one becomes entitled to the highest goal irrespective of one's social status. This conception of the equal sanctity of all work, which Indian philosophy impressed on our form of social organisation, certainly acted as a leavening influence on it, and mitigated to some extent at least the cruelties and selfishness of life's struggle.

We point out this in order to show that Indian philosophy has not remained entirely aloof from the collective life of the race too.

But we do admit that it has yet to influence our social life in many more ways and that in order to make our social life consistent with the highest ideals of our religion and philosophy, we have to fight against the forces of greed, selfishness and oppression which are characteristic of the brutal struggle of life. In this respect the Professor's remarks are not out of place. This infusion of the social life with the spiritual ideals of the nation was a favourite idea of Swami Vivekananda. His doctrine of Practical Vedanta is largely a call to effect such a useful synthesis of philosophy and social life. The path of progress for India lies in such a course.

THE MESSAGE OF THE GITA*

By Swami Ranganathananda

THE two important problems which absorb the attention of Sri Krishna are the nature of the self and the problem of conduct. Of these, he proceeds to a consideration of the former first, and disposes of the latter afterwards. The ego in man is the cause of all errors and the origin of all false values. It is that to which we refer all our judgments regarding everything in our experience, and being itself limited and circumscribed, it is not able to confer infallibility to its judgments. Hence the errors. Hence also doubts, which demand further enquiry. Deeper inquiry reveals the totally unreal character of the ego, thus shifting the self to a deeper

reality. Here we come to the great conception of the Sakshi (Witness), which no philosophy in the West has yet arrived at, but towards which Western thought is steadily and unmistakably proceeding through its application of scientific methods to the problems of psychology. That the ego is unreal, that man's individuality does not consist in the ego, is what modern biology and psychology also teach. Says H. G. Wells in his "Science of Life", that voluminous digest of all the latest biological knowledge:

"Alone, in the silence of the night and on a score of thoughtful occasions we have demanded: Can this self, so vividly central to my

* Vide "Sri Krishna in the Gita," in the January issue.

universe, so greedily possessive of the world, ever cease to be? Without it surely there is no world at all! And yet this conscious self dies nightly when we sleep, and we cannot trace the stages by which in its stages it crept to an awareness of its own existence."

"Personality may be only one of Nature's methods, a convenient provisional delusion of considerable strategic value." (Page 852).

"The more intelligent and comprehensive man's picture of the universe has become, the more intolerable has become his concentration upon the individual life with its inevitable final rejection."

"He escapes from his ego by this merger (identification with and participation in a greater being), and acquires an impersonal immortality in the association, his identity dissolving into the greater identity. This is the essence of much religious mysticism, and it is remarkable how closely the biological analysis of individuality brings us to the mystics. The individual, according to this second line of thought, saves himself by losing himself. But in mystical teaching he loses himself in the Deity, and in the scientific interpretation of life he forgets himself as Tom, Dick or Harry and discovers himself as Man. The Buddhist treatment of the same necessity is to teach that the individual life is a painful delusion from which men escape by conquest of individual desire. Western mystic and Eastern sage find a strong effect of endorsement in modern science and the every-day teaching of practical morality; both teach that self must be subordinated, that self is a method and not an end." (Ibid. pp. 878 and 879.)

Modern biological and psychological analysis must go deeper in

the search for man's sense of individuality in order to avert the conclusion of Nihilism. We in India see behind the ego, which is part of the ceaseless flow of Nature, the entity called Sakshi, who witnesses all this flow and change and whose philosophical significance has yet to be fully grasped. Yet, all true knowledge, all valid judgments in logic or science imply unmistakably a shifting of the subject from the ego to the Sakshi. When science insists on studying things from the point of view of the objects themselves by eliminating the personal equation, it is, in effect, emphasising only the Sakshibhava. For, the limited vision of the ego gives place to the unlimited and universal vision of the Sakshi by the practice of scientific or intellectual detachment. In ordinary life also, when we insist on what is called impartial judgment, what is achieved is this same ego-elimination. The two important characteristics of the Sakshi are its detachment and universality. It marks the highest point of perfection in the process of de-personalisation. Thus it is the fulfilment of the scientific attitude as well. That it is the fulfilment and aim of ethical, including religious, discipline also will be shown afterwards.

When Sri Krishna tells Arjuna that the Self of man is unborn, immortal and eternal, he is referring to this Sakshi.

"The unreal never is. The Real never is not. Men possessed with the knowledge of the Truth fully know both these." (Gita, II, 16).¹

"And the Supreme Purusha in this body is also called the Looker-on, the Permitter, the Supporter, the Experiencer and the great Lord,

1. नास्ततो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।
उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥

and as the Highest Self." (Gita XIII, 22).²

"Transmigrating from one body to another, or residing (in the same) or experiencing, as He is united with the Gunas,—the deluded do not see Him, but those who have the eye of wisdom behold Him." (XV, 10)³

"He who is free from the notion of egoism, whose intelligence is not affected (by good or evil), though he kills these people, he kills not, nor is bound (by the action)." (XVIII, 17).⁴

The ego being a changing entity is unreal; so also are all its objects. Hence Sri Krishna asks Arjuna to bear all dualities of experience like heat and cold, pain and pleasure, and identify himself with the permanent and unchanging Self—the Sakshi.

"Notions of heat and cold, of pain and pleasure, are born, O son of Kunthi, only of the contact of the senses with their objects. They have a beginning and an end. They are impermanent in their nature. Bear them patiently, O descendant of Bharata." (Gita, II, 14).⁵

The difficulty of comprehending this Self is very well brought out by Sri Krishna himself.

"Some look upon the Self as marvellous. Others look upon it as wonderful. Others again speak of It as a wonder. And still others,

though hearing, do not understand It at all." (Gita, ii. 29).⁶

Thus does Sri Krishna teach Arjuna the philosophy of the Atman (Sankhya Yoga). Next he proceeds to draw the ethical implications of his metaphysics. Sri Krishna recognized long ago that a rational ethics must be based on the highest metaphysics. Mankind has been searching for a sanction for ethical discipline. Prophets and philosophers have offered various theories regarding ethical life. Unselfishness has been unanimously taught as the highest ethical virtue by all religions and philosophies alike. But whereas religions seek its explanation in the words of an inspired prophet or a revealed scripture, philosophers like Kant find it in the Categorical Imperative. Both these are unsatisfactory. Ethics could get no sanction from Kant's Pure Reason and its metaphysics. He fell back upon intuition and discovered the Categorical Imperative as the basis of all ethical endeavour. But the demand for a rational ethics is still there, and Kant's Categorical Imperative is nothing better, if not worse in its application, than ethics based on revelation. In India alone we have a metaphysics which explains the rationale of all ethics and morality.

Ethics have to solve the conflicts between the rival demands of self and society, selfishness and altruism. When ethics teach the suppression of self as the essence of moral life, it asks us merely to transcend the unreal and find our being in the real—the Sakshi. "Why should I

2. उपद्रष्टाऽनुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।
परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥

3. उत्कामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम्
विमूढा नातुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥

4. यस्य नाहङ्कृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
हृत्वाऽपि स इमं लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥

5. मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।
आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तास्तितित्तचस्व भारत ।

6. आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेनमाश्चर्यवद्दति
तथैव चान्यः ।

आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न
चैव कश्चित् ॥

be unselfish?" asks the rationalist of to-day, expecting a rational answer. Because, "The self is a fever; the self is a delusion," as Buddha says. And since realization of Truth requires the attainment of the detached view-point of the Sakshi, ethical discipline must be combined with scientific and intellectual discipline for its fullest realization. To the discipline of the intellect which science insists in its pursuit of Truth must be added a discipline of the whole life covering every moment of one's existence. Life is a continuous struggle characterised by ceaseless activity. How to order life and its activities so that it may yield its fruit in the knowledge of Truth—is the great problem which faces all mankind. How to make work conducive to individual and social welfare? To this perennial problem Sri Krishna gives a solution which is at once original and unique in the history of thought—I refer to the teaching of Karma Yoga.

Before enquiry, man takes his ego or self as real, and all actions are judged from that standpoint. At this stage man works with various motives, and the highest of motives at the time of Sri Krishna was going to heaven, which was made into a philosophy of Karma Marga by the Mimamsakas. But philosophic enquiry destroyed the basis of this doctrine by showing the impermanence and unreality of the ego, and by the magic wand of his philosophy Sri Krishna transformed the Karma Marga into the wonderfully effective system of Karma Yoga. He showed that sacrifices and rituals are not the essence of an ethical life and placed life under the guidance of philosophy instead of theology.

"The wisdom of Self-realization has been declared unto thee. Harken thou now to the wisdom

of Yoga, endued with which, O son of Pritha, thou shalt break through the bonds of Karma." (Gita, ii. 39). And he extols this Karma Yoga in these words:

"In this, there is no waste of unfinished attempt, nor is there production of contrary results. Even very little of this Dharma protects one from great terror." (Gita, ii. 40).⁷

We have already seen in a previous paragraph that the two characteristics of the real Self or Sakshi are, (1) Its detachment and (2) Its freedom from limited or circumscribed vision. We have also seen how scientific enquiry helps in a measure to attain this exalted view-point. We shall now proceed to enquire how ethical endeavour also finds its meaning and completion in this consummation. A deliberate conquest of the false self or ego is the *sine qua non* for the attainment of the true Self.

To this end Lord Krishna gives a twofold advice. (1) All works, whether pleasant or unpleasant, should be performed in the sense of duty. What does this imply? That work by itself is neither good nor bad, neither high nor low, but the preferences of the ego evaluate all work according to its whims. Through the sense of duty we disregard the false values which the ego has attached to work and thus transcend the ego itself. This helps us to realize the second characteristic of the Sakshi, *viz.*, freedom from limited vision, or, what amounts to the same thing, getting universality

7. एषा तेऽभिहिता साङ्ख्ये बुद्धिर्योगी त्विमांशुः ।
बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥

8. नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।
स्वरूपमप्यस्य धमेत्युपायते महतो भयात् ॥

of outlook. (2) By not caring for the fruits of our actions or by being unattached to them, we are asked to realise the first characteristic of the Sakshi—detachment. Sri Krishna condemns those who work with various motives as men of narrow intellect—'Kripanah phalahetavah,' and defines Karma Yoga thus: 'Yogah karmasu kausalam.' He extols those who do work in this spirit in these words:—

"The wise possessed of this evenness of mind, abandoning the fruits of their actions, freed for ever from the fetters of birth, go to that state which is beyond all evil." (Gita, II, 51).⁹

Thus work for work's sake, duty for duty's sake is the first stage in ethical and spiritual discipline. There is still a higher phase of life which is taught in the Gita and which we find in no other scripture or philosophy in the world. Duty is the hard school where man learns to crucify his ego. This phase is characterised by ceaseless struggle and tension. But when the centre has been shifted from the ego to the Sakshi, duty fulfils itself and the individual works from the highest standpoint. The urge to break all bondages and fly into freedom compels one to criticise at a higher stage the concept of duty itself. Duty is certainly high; but there is an element of compulsion in it. We may call it inner compulsion (Categorical Imperative), or external compulsion, but compulsion it is. Hence it must be transcended. The man of duty is at best a disciplined slave. Hence the Gita teaches man to rise above even this duty and work as a free being. When one has disciplined oneself in the rigorous school of

duty, one becomes fit to work as a master. The Gita devotes many passages to describe this stage beyond duty:

"That man who lives devoid of longing, abandoning all desires, without the sense of "I" and "mine," attains to peace." (Gita, II, 71).¹⁰

"But the man who is devoted to the Self, and is satisfied with the Self, and content in the Self alone, has no obligatory duty." (Gita, III, 17).¹¹

"Whose undertakings are all devoid of the desire of results, and whose actions are burnt by the fire of knowledge, him, the sages call wise." (Gita, IV, 19).¹²

"When the completely controlled mind rests serenely in the Self alone, free from longing after all desires, then is one called steadfast (in the Self)." (Gita, VI, 18).¹³

"He who hates no creature, and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of "I" and "mine", even-minded in pain and pleasure, and forbearing, ever content and steady in meditation, self-controlled, possessed of firm conviction, with mind and intellect fixed on Me,—he who is thus devoted to Me, is dear to Me." (Gita, XII, 13 and 14).¹⁴

10. विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥

11. यस्त्वात्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥
आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥

12. यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसङ्गल्पवर्जिताः ।
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः परित्तं बुधाः ॥

13. यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।
निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥

14. अद्वेष्य सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥

सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।
सम्यग्चित्तमनोबुद्धिर्यो मे भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥

9. कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।
जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥

"He who is the same to friend and foe, and also in honour and dishonour; the same in heat and cold, in pleasure and pain; free from attachment; to whom censure and praise are equal; who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded, full of devotion—that man is dear to Me." (Gita, XII, 18 and 19.)¹⁵

When man attains the Sakshi consciousness, he finds life in an entirely new perspective. All the false values which the ego had attached to life and its functions, get destroyed, and they reveal themselves in their true forms. Such a life is the acme of ethical perfection. Man leaves far behind him all the struggles and joys and hates, competitions and sorrows, which is life to every one of us, and views life as a grand harmony, everything in tune with everything else and with himself. Then words of love alone fall from his lips, all his thoughts make for the good of the world, and all his actions seek the welfare of mankind as a whole. They are as Sri Krishna says, "Sarvabhutahiteratah" (ever interested in the good of all beings), and their works have always only one reference, "Lokasamgrahartham" (the welfare of mankind). Such men, in the words of Christ, are the salt of the earth.

In this philosophy and in this ethical teaching we have the meaning and explanation of all life's activities. Here I must mention one important feature of the Gita teaching—its synthetic note. Under the hegemony of his comprehensive

philosophy of life, Sri Krishna synthesises all the paths of Jnana, Karma, Bhakti and Yoga, and whatever other paths there be, by emphasising the essential nature and common feature of all these. Whether we are asked to surrender ourselves to God or to Guru, or work without any attachment, whether we are asked to calm the mind or analyse our thoughts, what we in essence do and achieve is the suppression of the ego which is the mask which Truth wears in every one of us. Whatever practices we do, if we once shift our centre of individuality to Sakshi, we go beyond all the dualities and struggles of life, and attain universality of outlook and breadth of heart. Not only that, all measure of large-heartedness and breadth of outlook we see in the world, bespeak only of this attainment in various degrees.

We have here in broad outline, the Gita teaching and its implications. One thing strikes us, and that is its non-sectarian and non-credal character. In whatever position of life we be, to whatever creed or religion we may belong, the Gita teaching is unlimited in its scope. It has only one message—the message of strength, a message which raises man to higher and higher levels of self-expression. It never seeks to make a Jew a Gentile, a Hindu a Christian or a Mohammadan, or a Westerner an Easterner, and *vice versa*. It appeals to every man and woman to apply its teachings to his or her circumstances and march towards the citadel of Truth, with only one warning, that is, not to rest content on the way. There is no crying quarter in the search for truth.

It is a happy augury for our times and for our nation that the Gita has become our national scripture. In these days of conflict,

struggle and confusion, we want nothing so much as the inspiring words of Sri Krishna to show us our true goal and path—the same words that solved Arjuna's confusion. Momentous problems are there before us, which stagger the wisdom of the bravest of our Motherland. But if we can hearken to the counsels of Sri Krishna, and making Parthasarathi our Sarathi (charioteer), forge ahead with courage in our hearts and strength

in our muscles and nerves, the future of our Motherland is assured. It is our great good fortune that Sri Krishna has vouchsafed to us in Mahatmaji a typical and living example of his ethical teaching. Men like Gandhiji who live lives of selfless service are the real mainstay of a nation. Let us only hope and pray that such men are produced in greater abundance in future not only in India but also in the world outside.

FROM VILLAGE WINDOWS

Swami Nirlepananda

MY deeper acquaintance with our Bengal villages and the villagers' way of life at present, has made me very familiar with the inner psychology of their attitude towards the womenfolk. In the very heart of things there is something obdurately unreasonable and *slavishly tyrannic* about that. As situation stands now, the males in our society have been instrumental in almost perpetuating the natural weakness of the females and are condemning and ill-treating them on the very same score. This is the tragic aspect of the situation. Scientists say that female bodies are deficient in hormonal contents in blood.

Nobody can deny that book-education has its value. But in some cases it does not signify a reasoned outlook on life, or broadness and generosity of heart. There are the village orthodox folk, some of whom can quote before you piles of antiquated Sanskrit Smriti Slokas telling that sex-urge in women is ten or fifteenfold greater than in men. This is just a piece of wisdom coming out of this over-educated literate

class scrupulously keeping out of all progressive movements of regeneration.

Shortness of vision is very slow and hard to die away. They are now up to finish secretly as many child marriages as they possibly can, in spite of the recent legislation against it. Many of them have become aware of the fact that the law requires an amount of money-deposit to move *bonafide* on the part of a plaintiff to institute a suit on this score, which in cases of middle class people is prohibitive. In the few months before the Sarda Act found its place in the Statute Book we noticed in all neighbouring villages almost a feverish rush to transact nuptials of six months' old babies. The orthodox section was all-active at this period. It seemed as if the signal of a grim danger ahead was sounded, and all were up and doing and exceptionally enthusiastic to meet the emergency, as if to give a suitable reply to it with all the strength at their command. They hold very low and poor ideas about the morality of our girls. Some

15. समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविजितः ॥
सुखनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी सन्तुष्टो येन केनचित् ।
अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिः भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो
नरः ॥

tried to convince me that the Sarda Act would usher in a reign of social immorality. Our religion, they said, is in peril. They were strongly of opinion that girls of fourteen cannot remain chaste; that however much we may try to educate our girls the inferiority of womenfolk will remain as a part of a divine and just dispensation; that moral laxity and latitude of action is allowable in the case of men while women cannot be pardoned for lapses; that the latter are born only to cook, to rear children and to look after the domestic affairs and comforts of men; that however cruel and vicious the husbands may be, they are to be veritably worshipped as gods by their wives; that if girls attain puberty in their father's places before marriage, fourteen generations of their fathers will have hell in after-life; that the bad habit of drinking tea does no harm in the case of men but in women it is unpardonable. Such are in gist their confirmed views on the matter. We do not know if selfishness can go further than this.

Ramakrishna used to say that however much you may try to hurl your weapon on the back of a crocodile, the weapon would rebound without achieving its object. My trying to *reason* with them otherwise has convinced me of the practical truth of the above statement. But on our part, we must heroically and courageously push on, although these people will be trying their utmost to stem the tide of mental and social emancipation. For, we know that in the midst of the clash of adversaries and oppositionists, who are ultimately the truest friends of real advancement (provided both are sincere in their advocacy), the cause of truth and welfare will undoubtedly gather

newer and fresher strength day by day. For all attempts to keep away progressive ideas will be frustrated and crushed to dust. The voice of the majority is not always the voice of God, although for the time being it rules supreme and thereby *causes* so much agony and so much heart-breaking. The brave heart must plod on and struggle hard to establish the supremacy of justice and fair-play. The doors that are now banged will one day automatically be opened when there has been an adequate amount of knocking.

In the interior villages marriage of girls takes place generally at a much earlier age than in urban parts of Bengal. Let us recount a few eloquent, pertinent figures. Eighty-six out of a thousand are given away in wedlock while below ten years whereas in other parts of the province the age is twelve and a half. Here only two per cent females are literate and eight per cent males. The Bankura District occupies the sixth place among the thirty districts of Bengal in the matter of the spread of primary education. Out of a total of five lakhs of women, one and a half are widows. About the remarriage of widows which is now a hateful taboo but which undoubtedly existed in bygone ages in our land, we want to mention this much that each case ought to have a special prescription according to its requirement and that forced and compulsory widowhood is giving rise to moral lapses. Moreover, unless we have in our midst a class of vocal, literate widows we cannot really know the mind of this class on the problem. It would not do to foist our opinion upon them.

In the meantime a thing to be much regretted is that we are finding in our Hindu homes less of

active sympathy and arrangements for the moral and spiritual training of the girl-widows on the part of their parents or guardians. If a widowed girl of fourteen sees constantly before her very eyes that her aged mother of fifty and father of sixty are feeding fat over luxurious dishes and showing no willingness to part with the least amount of brightness, brilliancy and lavishness of dress, if she sees all her elders in merriment and indulging in excess of food, dress, drink and enjoyment, whereas hard and rigid ascetic discipline is demanded of her—to say the least, she is quite helpless in such an atmosphere. What can she do? There must be an environment of self-discipline, mortification, moderation, spiritual practices, meditation upon one's divine nature, if we want our girl-widows to be pure in life and manners. The way to curb one's animality is the same for everybody. If the group-spirit is full of purity, it is easy for the individual to be pure.

There have been before the country several institutions lately established to foster these habits and to meet the necessary demand. But what India and specially Bengal asks at this supreme moment of her national life, through the suppressed sobs and tears of these widows, coming from generation to generation, —is a thorough change in the attitude, treatment and viewpoints of the wielders of our social and household machinery, the heads and chiefs of our families. Will not our Grihasta-ashramas really deserve the sacred name they carry, and in real substance and spirit be once more full of the needed setting of pure moral moderation, if we seriously want continence, generosity, self-surrender and above all a life of sacrifice for others on the part of our widows? Let the guardians of

each one of this group ask themselves this question seriously once more and try to practically show sympathy for the cruel and hard lot of these. The keepers of social authority have to rebuild their mental frames in order to achieve this. If India wants to rise, her daughters—half of the nation—must rise to realise the spiritual destiny of our human selves through every avenue and by-path of life's manifold avocations. Healthy growth of womanhood in our country has been for ages deliberately, silently strangled, suppressed, and neglected. One meets with ample and convincing evidence of this, if he or she is in touch with the heart of the people, specially in the real India of villages. This outright disregard of Maha-Sakti has told heavily on our racial life. Ours has been so long a futile and foolish attempt to walk on one leg. We are prone to think that it is also one of the main under-current causes of our downfall.

The Svami Vivekananda has urged us all to help the regeneration and elevation of our masses in villages without *injuring* religion. By *religion* he distinctly and decidedly meant the *life-giving progressive ideals of spirituality* without which all glamour of scientific rationalisation of a mechanical civilisation is nothing. We are not to attempt to stick to and hug to our bosom all effete, enervating rites and ceremonies masquerading under the garb of faith and Dharma.

The nation lives in the cottage, the Svami has said, but alas! nobody cares for them. He meant by it that all that is healthy, all that is conducive to morality, sanitation, plain living and high thinking and spiritual idealism are to be meticulously supported and kept intact with all our earnestness—carefully

maintained, preserved, added to and emphasised hundred-fold. But all that in the name of faith and religion has a tendency of weakening and enervating the race, must be mercilessly brushed aside. Some of our daily customs and observances are excellent and worth preserving. For example, the extreme scrupulousness and rigidity with which the Seva of the cattle is enjoined upon, incidentally the ideal of Bhuta-Yajna, is admirable for the welfare of the race. The daily household practices of burning incense in the morning and evening and keeping things and places clean, tending carefully the Tulasi and other plants, the various *floras* for

the worship and decoration of the family deities, the regular repeating of the Lord's name by the family inmates, the sounding of conches and cymbals on ceremonial occasions, the chanting of sacred hymns with associations of purity reminding all and sundry about the spiritual ideal of life, observance of days of fastings enjoined upon the pious for their untold benefits—physical, moral and supra-moral, the various festivals and Pujas which act as so many unifying factors bringing glee and merriment almost in every month of the year—are all so many means for the spiritual protection, encouragement, maintenance, growth and advancement of the nation.

OUR EXPERIMENTS IN MORAL EDUCATION: ITS IDEAL AND PRACTICE*

By Swami Yatiswarananda

(Continued from the previous issue)

The Need for a New Ideal in Education

I HAVE made it clear that we look upon the human soul not as an automaton but as a living, self-conscious entity possessing an innate moral and spiritual nature, a fact that should not be lost sight of in any scheme of education that we may formulate. And this I have done in order to stress the great necessity of moral and spiritual culture without which no education is complete and fruitful. The conception of a merely intellectual education that is prevalent in our modern world needs a thorough overhauling. Seeing the evil effects of such an education one of our living Indian thinkers has observed,—“We have heard of the three R's

long enough. This fourth R of genuine religion' (including moral culture) is more important than them all.” Many an educationist in the West is also thinking in a similar strain. “We commonly classify education,” says one, “under three heads,—primary, secondary and higher. To these three I should like to add a fourth, highest. The highest education is religion but that is also education.” Rightly does a thoughtful Western writer observe—“Both East and West seem to feel that an educational system that does not eventually lead a man out of the world of human affairs into the wider consciousness of spiritual things has failed in its mission and will not measure up to the soaring demand of the human soul.”

An all-round education implies a true synthesis which, to quote the words of an English educationist, “must inevitably take into full and vivid account the significance of all forms of religion, and seek moral values in all.” By religion which is inseparable from ethics we mean not doctrines or dogmas, forms or ceremonies, but the manifestation of the innate divinity in man, his sense of purity, sympathy for fellow-beings, ideal of true freedom, and also awakening of divine consciousness. All these may be likened to the ornaments of the soul, the glory of which man forgets through ignorance and lack of conscious control of his personality according to the highest knowledge and light.

Ordinarily, education and real culture do not go together. We become literate but not cultured. We become intellectual but not self-controlled. We become self-conscious but not altruistic. And even if we become moral, it is more out of fear and constraint than out of intrinsic goodness and purity. But true morality should be natural and not forced. It should be the self-expression of an inner principle and must have its foundations in the Divine in man. And hence there lies the greatest necessity for formulating a revised system of education that will combine physical and mental culture with soul-culture, and bring into existence a new type of men and women who, endowed with right knowledge, noble sentiments, controlled will power and a scrupulous sense of duty, will “work for their own welfare as well as for the welfare of humanity in general.”

To Discover the Ethical Principles in Ourselves

I make bold to speak of an idealistic or even Utopian scheme of

education, as this Congress itself places before us the high ideal:—“To discover the age-long values which form the invisible bonds between peoples and generations, and to make them the groundwork of moral education.” “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 of all.” “In the course of our systematic experiments along similar lines, we have found that the best way to awaken the faith in good and in unity is to “discover” them in our own souls which are in their essential nature free from all forms of evil but become immorally inclined as the consequence of forgetting their true glory and identifying themselves with the false.”

There is no doubt that during the early stages of ethical culture there exists in us an interminable tug of war between the lower and the higher emotions in us. When the nobler sentiments gain the upper hand, we follow what the Upanishad calls the “path of the good,” while when the baser feelings predominate we pursue “the path of the pleasant,” the path of evil. “One thing is good, and quite different indeed is the pleasant. Good is attained by him who follows the good, but loses he the goal who chooses the pleasant.” The conflict involved in avoiding the pleasant and following the good is gradually minimised as we pursue the higher course of life with an effort of the will and try to purify our understanding, sublimate our feelings and strengthen our will. Ethical life then becomes more and more easy and natural as the result of our giving up the false ego and regaining our true Self and realising our natural purity, and along with this we gain true Self-respect and

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

dignity that will make it impossible for one to stoop low to what is mean and vile. Thus having once lost the innate glory of the Self, we can discover and manifest it in course of time by following the right methods and means. We should always bear in mind that moral qualities are not things super-added to our nature by an outside agency; they are instead the natural endowments of the true Self of man, the Divine Principle in us which can be realised through the performance of duty, the practice of sense-control, and mental discipline, through prayers, concentration and meditation—in short, through the scrupulous pursuit of the path of virtue in all its phases.

Metaphysical Foundations of Morals

It is a pity that in the various fields of life and thought all over the world, we have enough theories to degrade and hate one another, but not to elevate and love one another. And the only means to counteract the evil influences that have become a menace to human society, is to realise the mainspring of true love and unity.

But we live in an age of criticism and scepticism. And very often people ask—“Why should I not follow my own inclinations and impulses? Why should I be moral and love my fellow beings?” Appeal to the authorities, religious prophets and scriptures are of no avail to them. They want rational explanations in order to be convinced. There are people who refuse to be impressed by any arguments, however reasonable they may be. But for those who are open to conviction, the only rational explanation is that purity and unity are not merely the laws of the prophets, but are also the laws of our very being

—the laws of the God within, the laws of the Universal Self, the Self of all. And these laws can be realised by subordinating the lower nature to the higher nature, the lower Self to the higher Self. The true seeker must be prepared to face the truth even if it be what is called metaphysical. The foundations of morals, according to the Vedanta, lies in the metaphysical fact of the unity of all beings in the Universal Self. Ethics thus comes to have not only a utilitarian value but also a philosophic support and a metaphysical justification.

We know from our experience that it is not possible for the average human being to be moral merely at the divine command. Something more is necessary in order to convince him, particularly when he wants rational explanations. Dr. Deussen, the German Vedantist scholar, speaking on this point has observed, “The Gospels fix quite correctly as the highest law of morality: Love your neighbour as yourself. But why should I do so, since by the order of nature I feel pain and pleasure only in myself, not in my neighbour? The answer, he adds, is in the Vedanta, in the great formula—That (the Universal Self) thou art. It gives in three words metaphysics and morals in one. You shall love your neighbour as yourself, because you and your neighbour are in your real nature one and the same. With a deep insight does a Western author observe on this point: “Here.....we have deeply laid the metaphysical foundation of the duty of loving our neighbour and acting towards him as though he was our Self. *That thou art.* That is to say, there is a deeper inclusive Self, in which you and he are one: and loving service is the note or sign of this practical identity.”

The same idea is expressed in the Bhagavad Gita with reference to the man of God-vision. “Seeing the Lord equally existent everywhere, he injures not the Self by Self,” and, not only that, he becomes “engaged in the good of all beings.” We have thus seen that the common source of all moral forces, of goodness and unity, lies within us, in the God within, in the One Self, in the Universal Principle of Existence and Light manifesting Itself in all and through all. In the recognition of this Divine Principle lies the hope of true fellowship and world-unity that we need so badly in our modern world.

The Paramount Necessity for Moral Culture

From what I have said already, I have made this fact clear that it is impossible for us to look upon ethical training and spiritual culture as things detached from each other, and these again as separate from general education. And when I speak of ethical culture alone, I do so, stressing certain facts which are in reality inseparable from and interconnected with spiritual practice. From one standpoint ethical discipline stands in between physical life and spiritual life, connecting the two. It enables the student to follow the right code of conduct in his contact with his fellow beings, and also to practise the right type of meditation and concentration with reference to his pursuit of the spiritual path. We whole-heartedly believe that without strict ethical discipline there can be no true spiritual life, as without it upright dealings with others are never possible in the course of the performance of the manifold duties of our life.

As I have already pointed out, in the average human beings like our-

selves, we find a combination of good and evil tendencies, and moral life usually means strifes and struggles between two opposite sets of thoughts and desires. And in the words of one of the Hindu Scriptures, “The stream of tendencies flowing through good and evil channels is to be directed by self-effort along the good path. When it has entered the evil path, it is to be turned towards the good path.” Sometimes, the evil tendencies are as strong as the good ones. But for the higher evolution of our soul we should control the flow of energy along wrong lines and direct the energy so saved through better channels. So does Sri Krishna say in the Bhagavad Gita, “Attachment and aversion of the senses for their respective objects are common to man. Let none come under their sway, they are his foes.” And real moral life is not a negative process. If it means a conscious withdrawal of the senses and the mind from the path of evil, it implies at the same time, also a conscious pursuit of the path of the good, the path of duty and virtue in thought, word and deed.

One may ask: What is ethical life? How to put it in a nutshell? What is the code of conduct that can be followed by all irrespective of all differences in life and thought? Manu, the Hindu law-giver, answers this question directly, “Harmlessness, truthfulness, non-covetousness, cleanliness, restraint of the senses from evil courses—this in brief is the path of virtue for all.” All the great teachers and religions of the world speak of these virtues as of paramount importance in individual and collective life. And these qualities are, to quote the words of a renowned Hindu author, not merely other-worldly virtues. They are

of the greatest and most immediate practical use in this world. They are the cement which enables human beings to cohere in an organised society. As soon as they fall below a minimum degree in any community, that community begins to decay and break up."

The Danger ahead and the Remedy

It is a defect in our modern education that mental purity is not stressed as much as physical cleanliness, neither moral danger as much as physical danger. Nowadays there is a growing fear of the poison gas in all countries. Different kinds of masks and preventive measures are being devised for protection from it, and people are also being trained accordingly. This is all right. But along with it, we should also consider how men, women and particularly children are to be protected from the poisonous thoughts that rise from the hearts of the evil-minded, pollute society and bring about moral and spiritual, nay, even physical ruin.

And as the mechanisms of physical destruction are becoming more and more scientific and dangerous, so also the contrivances for moral and spiritual ruin are being made more and more scientific and deadly. What we need first of all is an awakening to the sense of the great danger that faces us. There is a widespread panic about the destruction that may be caused by scientific warfare. We should feel a greater panic thinking of the greater havoc that is being made by moral looseness and perversity amongst us.

May the Lord grant that we may fully recognise the immensity of the moral danger which is more disastrous than physical destruction. And it is only then that we shall take up moral education in right earnest and in a systematic way.

The time has arrived when we should realise fully that the forces of evil and immorality are fast growing in strength, and that these threaten the well-being, nay, the very existence, of our human society. It is the duty of all who see the dangers ahead, and believe in moral order and ethical life, to set aside all philosophical and theological differences, all national and racial prejudices and unite to work together in a spirit of co-operation and fellowship, for strengthening the forces of good through the spread of true moral education, and the salvage of our civilisation which seems to be fast sinking into the depth of the abyss. May the Lord save mankind from destruction! May He actuate us all with noble thoughts and make us follow the right code of conduct. In the words of the devotee let us all pray—

"May the world be peaceful, may the wicked become gentle! May all creatures think of mutual welfare! May all minds be engaged in what is good and auspicious."

And,

"Common be our prayer, common be our end, common be our purpose, common be our deliberations."

Om Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!

(Concluded)

MANDUKYOPANISHAD

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

By Dr. M. Srinivasa Rau

(Having dealt with the faults of other systems of philosophy, it is now proposed in this section to give a description of the philosophy of Non-duality.)

Of such nature is the world, as understood by Vedanta. Though external objects are absent, perception (of objects created by the mind) goes on, quite as well as if they were present (outside the perceiver). This subtle experience is quite well differentiated from the gross worldly experience, and as it is common to all creatures, is known as dream.

Gaudapada's Karika

That is said to be beyond experience, where there is no object and no perception. Knowledge, the knowable and true Reality (Vigneyam) are proclaimed by the wise. (88)

Sankara's Commentary

That which is devoid of percept and perception is said to be beyond experience. Experience means the percepts and their perception. In the absence of these, there is sleep containing the seeds of future experiences. This is useful for the easy comprehension of the essence of Reality. That Gnana (Consciousness) by which one knows in succession the waking experience, the dream experience and sleep, is that which knows the three knowables; for anything other than these three is not knowable. All the fabrications of other schools of thought concealing (Brahman), are included in these three knowables. Vigneya is the true Reality which is known as the Fourth,

non-dual, unborn and of the essence of Atman. Thus the knower of Brahman describes all that begin with the waking experience and end with Vigneya.

Gaudapada's Karika

When one knows the Consciousness (Knowledge) and the three knowables one after the other, that man of high intellect will realise omniscience (Brahman) everywhere. (89)

Sankara's Commentary

Knowledge (Consciousness) has three knowables to know, beginning with waking experience. The first consists of the gross (with external objects as percepts). The second is more subtle on account of the absence (of gross external percepts). The third is what results from the absence of these two and is beyond experience. When the absence of these three states, one after another, is realised, there is the true Reality, which is the Fourth, non-dual, unborn, fearless: to the man of high intellect who realises this, in this world only, there will be omniscience. He is a man of high intellect, because his intellect grasps that which transcends experience. The knowledge once obtained, of the nature of one's own Atman, is not subject to any change. The knowledge obtained by realisation of the true Reality, is not like the knowledge obtained by the other

schools of thought, subject either to birth or destruction.

Gaudapada's Karika

The thing to be avoided, the thing to be known, the thing to be acquired and the thing to be matured, are the four means preliminary to the attainment of true knowledge. Of these, except the thing to be known, the other three are mere fabrications of Avidya (ignorance). (90)

Sankara's Commentary

To overcome a possible doubt, whether the three states of waking (dream and sleep), which are described as knowable one after another, are on that account to be considered real, the following is stated. The things to be given up are the three states of waking, dream and sleep which are superimposed on Atman, like a snake on a rope. The thing to be known is the true Reality, free from the four theories of existence, non-existence &c. The things to be acquired are the three means for the acquisition of true knowledge, namely, full knowledge of theory, child-like innocence and silence (concentration). These should be practised by the sage, free from the three desires (for children, wealth and fame). The thing to be matured, consists of the faults, such as, attachment, aversion, delusion &c., (which are to be got rid of by deeply meditating on their being obstacles to Moksha). These four things to be avoided, known, acquired and matured, are to be understood by the sage as the preliminary means (for Moksha). Of these, with the exception of the thing to be known which is one with Brahman, the others are to be regarded as fabrications of Avidya (ignorance). The three, namely, the things

to be avoided, acquired and matured, are regarded by the knowers of Brahman as not real.

Gaudapada's Karika

All (so-called) Atmans are naturally to be known as without beginning like Akasa. There is no variety in any form and place. (91)

Sankara's Commentary

The true Reality is naturally like Akasa, very subtle, unattached and all-pervading. The (so-called) Atmans are to be known by the seekers after release as beginningless and permanent. To remove any doubt suggested by the use of the plural (Atmans), it is said that there is not the least trace of any variety in any place and at any time.

Gaudapada's Karika

All Atmans are well-determined to be of the very nature of Consciousness, from the very beginning. He who finds peace in this way will attain immortality. (92)

Sankara's Commentary

Though known, the Atmans are superimpositions and not real. To show this, the following is said. (Brahman) is naturally from the very beginning all Consciousness, just as the sun is always of the nature of luminosity. All Atmans are well determined to be eternally of the nature of (Brahman). That seeker after release (Moksha), who, in the aforesaid manner, has no doubt of his own nature stands in no need of knowledge and definition either for himself or for others, just as the sun stands in no need of light other than his own to illumine himself or others. Who thus finds peace always in himself, not finding any necessity for being taught, becomes fit for immortality.

Gaudapada's Karika

All Atmans are from the very beginning in peace, are unborn and by their very nature free from action. They are all alike and not different from one another. (Therefore) Moksha (or Santi) is unborn, is all alike and is wisdom. (93)

Sankara's Commentary

This is said to show that Santi (peace) is not a thing to be brought about in Atmans. These from the very beginning rest in peace, are unborn and by their very nature are free from action, that is, of the very nature of eternal Moksha (release). Because of this, all Atmans are alike and not different from each other and of the pure essence of Atman. Therefore, Peace or Release is not a thing that can be fabricated. As it is always of one nature, such a thing as action cannot be conceived in it.

Gaudapada's Karika

Where there is no wisdom, (people) always move about in difference only. Being convinced of differences, and talking of separateness, they are therefore known as narrow-minded. (94)

Sankara's Commentary

Those who realise the essence of Reality as described above, are high-minded. Those who are bound to differences, walk in the way of Samsara. Those who talk of many objects, are dualists. These are the narrow-minded people. Where there is no wisdom, they argue about differences and always walk in the path of duality, which is a fabrication of Avidya (ignorance). Therefore it is that they deserve the name of 'narrow-minded.'

Gaudapada's Karika

Whoever becomes convinced that (Atman or Brahman) is unborn and uniformly alike (without change) are known in the world as persons of high intellect. Ordinary people of the world cannot reach to that level. (95)

Sankara's Commentary

This essence of Reality cannot be understood by men of low intellect, by the unlearned, by those outside the pale of Vedanta, by the low-minded and by the unwise. Whoever, women and others included, becomes convinced of the Atman being unborn and uniformly alike (without differences), such people become in this world, men of high intellect with a knowledge of unsurpassed Truth. The essence of Reality known to such people, can never be grasped by worldly men of ordinary intellect. "Even the gods in seeking Him who is the Atman of all living creatures, who is alike in all, miss the true path and may be said to be seeking the foot-prints of one who has no feet." "The way is not seen like the path of birds flying in the sky," so the Smritis say.

Gaudapada's Karika

That is to be known as Gnana (Consciousness) which is itself unborn and remains unattached among Atmans (Jivas) which are also unborn. As it does not go about, Gnana (Consciousness) is described as unattached. (96)

Sankara's Commentary

What constitutes high-mindedness is described. Among the unborn and unmoving Atmans (Jivas), the unborn and motionless Consciousness remains like heat and light in the sun. Therefore

as it is unattached among the (surrounding) objects (and Jivas), it is said to be unborn. Consciousness does not move about among the objects (and Jivas), and for that reason it is described as being unattached, like the sky (to the objects in it).

Gaudapada's Karika

In the minds of the ignorant, if there arises even the least trace of variety, there can never be unattachment. How can there be any release from bondage? (97)

Sankara's Commentary

In the case of other schools of thought, in whom discrimination is wanting, even when the idea of the least trace of variety arises, among external or internal objects, there can never be unattachment. What is the use of speaking of release from bondage?

Gaudapada's Karika

All Atmans (Jivas) are (really) without any bond (that is, obstructions to knowledge), as by their very nature, they are pure (free from blemishes). From the very beginning they are pure Consciousness and therefore are released. They are capable of being known. (98)

Sankara's Commentary

(It is objected): By speaking of non-release from bondage, your (that is, the Advaitic) school of thought predicates the existence of some obstructions to knowledge. (To this, is replied): No, the bondages or obstructions are of the nature of Avidya (ignorance) and so the Atmans (Jivas) are free from all bondages. By nature, they are pure. From the beginning, they are Consciousness and therefore released. If you ask, how you speak of them

as 'knowable,' (we reply) because they are capable of being known. Just as we speak of the sun as shining, though the sun is of the very nature of luminosity and just as we speak of the mountains as standing, though they have no movement at all, so in this case.

Gaudapada's Karika

The knowledge of a knower does not move anywhere but is all pervading in the Atmans. So do all attributes and knowledge. But this is not what was said by Buddha. (99)

Sankara's Commentary

The knowledge (Consciousness) of one who has realised Brahman, does not move out into objects but is centred in itself like light in the sun. It pervades everything like Akasa. All attributes of those deserving worship and of the wise belong to Atman which is all-pervading like Akasa and does not move into other objects (attributes). All that has been said above, is summed up here. The Consciousness of the Knower, all-pervading like Akasa, and the Universal Consciousness which is also all-pervading like Akasa, do not move out into any objects (attributes external to itself). So also are the attributes (unrelated to anything). Like the Akasa, the essence of Brahman-Atman is motionless, actionless, undivided, eternal, non-dual, unattached, unseen, incomprehensible, beyond hunger (and other desires). As the Sruti says, "The sight is never lost". Buddha did not speak of a thing which is devoid of the differentiation into knowledge, the knowable and the knower, the true essence of non-dual Reality. But the denial of external objects and their fabrication by mind, are near the non-dual Brahman. Such a knowledge of

non-dual Reality can be attained only by a study of Vedanta.

Gaudapada's Karika

Having realised that condition which is devoid of variety, difficult to be comprehended, very sublime, unborn, uniform and essence of wisdom, we offer our salutations as best as we can. (100)

Sankara's Commentary

At the conclusion of the treatise, we offer our salutations to praise the essence of Reality. It is difficult to be comprehended, as it is beyond the four theories formulated by various schools of Philosophy. Therefore it is very sublime, beyond the reach of the ignorant like the bottom of the sea. Having realised such a state without variety, unborn, uniform and full of wisdom, and having become one with it, we fall prostrate to do honour to it. Though beyond experience, we salute it from the point of view of ordinary experience.

Salutations to God and Teacher.

I bow to the Brahman who dispels the fears of his devotees, who

though unborn, appears to be born through the greatness of his power, who though at rest, appears to be in motion and who though One, appears as many to those who under the influence of ignorance perceive the attributes of a variety of objects. (1)

I fall down at the feet of the supreme teacher, the worshipped of the worshipful, who seeing the creatures (Jivas) immersed in the ocean (of Samsara) infested with terrible monsters in the form of repeated births, through mercy to them, brought forth for their sake, this nectar, difficult to be found even by Devas, by churning the ocean of Vedas using the intellect as the churning rod. (2)

I hold in reverence with all my soul the purifying feet of him who dispels all fear of Samsara, by the light of whose intellect the darkness of illusion of my mind has been overcome and has disappeared, only showing itself above and below the waters of this terrible ocean of Samsara. Those who take refuge at his feet, obtain knowledge of Vedas (Srutis), peace of mind and humility, in plenty and at once. (3)

FINIS

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Hindu Ethical Ideals

In his Kamla Lectures delivered recently at Madras Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyar has covered all the important aspects of Hindu Ethics. He sheds the light of a mature and scholarly mind on many intricate and vexed problems of Hindu Ethics, and has as ably defended the fundamental principles of Hindu morality from the charges of ignorant foreign

critics as he has rescued it from the zeal of rigid orthodoxy. We shall give below his views on some of the important questions of Hindu Ethics.

The Sanction of Ethics

In his first lecture, Sir Sivaswamy points out that the Hindu thinkers, like other ancients, do not trace the rules of ethics to any rational standards as modern writers on ethics

usually do. They base ethics on the firm rock of revelation that is the *Śrutis* or the *Vedas*. But the practice of the virtuous and the approval of the enlightened conscience too are according to the *Dharma Sastras* sources of unquestionable authority.

To lay the foundation of ethics on a revealed authority may not perhaps meet with the approval of many a modern mind, but it must be remembered that even those who claim to have freed themselves from the shackles of scriptural authority only transfer their allegiance to another form of authority, namely, the opinion of the society. Reliance on authority therefore seems to be the fate of the common man. A tendency towards rigidity will be the inevitable result of such a reliance, but the admission of the authoritativeness of the conduct of wise men and of enlightened conscience is more than enough to checkmate this tendency.

The attitude of Hindu thinkers towards Sex

With reference to the attitude of Hindu thinkers towards sex he says: "Unlike Christianity Hinduism never attached any notion of impurity to sex. Marriage was regarded not as a concession to the weakness of human nature, nor was married life regarded as a morally inferior condition to virginity. No pre-eminence was attached to virginity as distinguished from chastity in the scale of virtues. Life-long celibacy was permitted but never enjoined as an ideal. The practice of asceticism in India did not have a degrading effect upon the general conception of sex in religion or in society.....The fact that anthropomorphic conceptions of the Deity in India included both the female and the male elements is an illustration of the absence in the

Hindu mind of all notions of impurity about sex."

While this view is a fairly correct representation of the Hindu outlook on the question, it is however likely to give rise to certain misconceptions. It is perfectly true that asceticism in India has no degrading effect on the conception of sex, and that marriage is never looked upon as a concession to human weakness, as evidenced by the fact that it is called a *Samskara* that goes to purify the individuals concerned. But the very fact that it is considered a *Samskara* shows that the Hindu moralists never look upon marriage from a sexual point of view. In the Hindu ideal of marriage sex has a place only in so far as it is concerned with progeny; it does not in any way countenance the purely physical aspect of it. In fact, the maximum degree of self-control possible for the human being is the ideal that Hinduism places before man not only in matters of sex, but with regard to all the appetites of the body. Hence the Hindu moral codes measure the success of married life also according to the standards of continence, and prescribe *Brahmacharya* as a discipline to be followed even by the householder.

Remarks on Caste

Regarding the origin of caste Sir Sivaswamy opines that all the Brahmanical theories as to its origin are either allegorical representations or speculative explanations of a pre-existing institution, that the institution is not the off-shoot of a theory, that the original divisions of *Varna* could have been only two—the fair-skinned Aryans and the dark-skinned *Sudras*—that when the division of occupation led to separate groups, and racial and occupational differences combined to help the formation

of separate groups, there must have grown up a tendency to use the words '*Varna*' and '*Jati*' in the same sense of exclusive group or caste.

The setting up of different standards of punishment for offenders of different castes, these punishments increasing in severity as the status of the offender is lower, is perhaps the most unjustifiable feature of caste system as enforced by the State in the past. While criticising this objectionable feature, Sir Sivaswamy also draws attention to the fact how in the midst of all those apparently unjustifiable rules in favour of the higher castes, there are certain cases at least in which the gravity of the offence increases in proportion to the status of the offender, and how in the case of theft, the fine on a *Vaisya* and a *Kshatriya* and Brahmin accused is twice, four times, eight or sixteen times respectively the fine of the *Sudra*. It is a thousand-fold, if the king himself is the thief.

Ahimsa in Hinduism

Sir Sivaswamy contradicts the common notion that the solicitude of modern Hinduism for the life of lower animals is a legacy of Buddhism. He contends that the sanctity attached to all kinds of life and the duty of abstaining from any form of injury to living beings and showing compassion to all animals down to the smallest creatures is one of the essential tenets of Hinduism and that it is a mistake to say that the Brahmins borrowed these doctrines from Buddhism. What is novel in Buddha's teaching is not the doctrine of *Ahimsa*, but the condemnation of blood-sacrifices which the Vedic religion considers as exceptions to the general rule of *Ahimsa*. Though Buddha lays stress on the importance of compassion,

neither he nor his followers have any objection to the use of animal food. Nor is the Hindu altogether prohibited from taking animal food; even Brahmins did so in ancient times. Passages both in favour and against the use of animal food are to be seen in Hindu *Sastras*. The only explanation, Sir Sivaswamy opines, of this apparent divergence in the rules as to killing animals for food is that the Hindu moralists do not consider it unlawful provided it is done without needless cruelty. But abstinence from meat is considered meritorious.

Karma and Relief of Suffering

In dealing with the doctrine of Karma, Sir Sivaswamy draws attention to the common criticism of that doctrine that it cannot justify the admiration of pain and suffering endured by men for the sake of others or the relief of suffering which is the result of man's own deeds. The mistake committed by such critics is that they ignore the fact that the doctrine affirms the freedom of the will. There is therefore place in it for the deliberate choice of suffering for the sake of others. Nor does the theory prohibit one from taking measures to relieve the sufferings that are due to a person's past misdeeds. For it does not ask man to go against his reason or act against the dictates of humanity. We may add in this connection that this criticism is as absurd as saying that if a boy gets indigestion by over-eating, his parents should not take measures to relieve him, because his sufferings are due to his own action.

Vedantic Ethics and Manly Virtues

Another common criticism levelled against the ethics of Vedanta is that it lacks inspiration to streng-

then the manly qualities required for the practical side of life. As against this Sir Sivaswamy points out that there can be no better or more closely reasoned and eloquent call to duty than that contained in the second chapter of the Gita. Again these critics who are generally Christians forget the early history of Christianity, and seek an appraisal of other systems in the light of the life and thought of the 19th or 20th century. They ascribe to the influence of Christian ethics, movements that are due to the forces of scientific discovery, rationalism and the expansion of the range of human interests and sympathies brought about by modern improvements in the means of communication. This is unfair.

Are They Changes for the better

Sir Sivaswamy considers the question whether the changes that have taken place in the ethical conception of the modern Hindu society are really changes for the better. While acknowledging the difficulty in answering this question, he thinks that while in the case of some virtues such as reverence and chastity there has been a decline, other virtues like self-sacrifice for the good of others and patriotism have been developed to a praiseworthy extent.

All will agree that the modern Indian is more patriotic than his fore-fathers. This does not however indicate any development of the intrinsic moral worth. While the spirit of service and self-sacrifice found expression in the smaller unit of the village in the past, it embraces a wider area to-day because of the growing consciousness of India as forming a single political unit. This has undoubtedly led to greater political consciousness, but has it

added to the moral bulk of the modern Indian? On the other hand, the growth of individualism and the influence of modern western education which encourage selfish ambition at the expense of spiritual values seem to counteract the spirit of unselfishness and disinterested charity.

Relativity in Moral Rules

Sir Sivaswamy opines that no absolute standards can be fixed in formulating moral rules and ends, and that this has to be done in relation to the particular conditions of a country or an age. In illustration of this he points out that while individualism has become the bane of the West and has given rise to the counteracting forces of socialism and communism, in India where the joint family checks its growth, it has to be fostered to some extent. Similarly nationalism and patriotism are virtues to be encouraged and developed in India, while they have reached undesirable length in Europe and America and made them injuriously aggressive. Every European and American nation is fond of preaching to other nations the advantage of cultivating an international mind and throwing their doors open to an influx of foreign goods from countries which have long since attained industrial development and predominance, while they are themselves following a policy of economic self-sufficiency.

The Clash of Cultures

In his sixth and last lecture on Hindu Moral Ideals, Sir Sivaswamy Aiyar discusses the drift of modern tendencies and the future. He describes how the clash of Eastern and Western systems of civilisation and culture is creating far-reaching changes in our religious and ethical conceptions, our social

and political ideas, and our civic, national and economic ideals. Quoting Bertrand Russell the lecturer points out how a hundred and fifty years of science have proved more explosive than five hundred years of pre-scientific culture. A Rousseau or a Gandhi may preach the blessings of plain living and high thinking, but the common sense of even the country-side refuses to return to the old days and prefer the old-time bullock cart to the railway and the motor bus. Every institution and belief has now to submit to the challenge of reason and justify itself. "Religion has been obliged to make terms with the spirit of science. Fortunately for this reconciliation, science and religion are now alike inspired by a spirit of humility and decreasing dogmatism."

Types of Religious Folk

Under the influence of these modern conditions India presents diverse types of religious beliefs. The lecturer finds it convenient to divide these into five classes according to the intensity and character of their beliefs: (1) the masses and women who are intensely religious and at the same time superstitious, (2) that section of literates and the educated who do not think of religion, but appreciate the convenience of conformity to established conventions, (3) the sceptics, (4) the revivalists who cling to all the old tenets and practices, discovering fanciful explanations under the guidance of allegory, symbolism or esoteric truths, and (5) the believers who accept the essential tenets of Hinduism and endeavour to reconcile their faith with the requirements of reason.

Taking all these facts into consideration, the lecturer still feels that the proportion of religiously-minded people in this country is much

larger than in any other country, and certainly not less.

An Important Pronouncement

Sir Sivaswamy then proceeds to state that these modern influences have failed to create any inclination on the part of the Hindus to leave Hinduism and embrace some other faith. In a weighty passage, he declares:

"So far as I can see, there is no likelihood of any mass movement towards conversion of the Hindus to any other religion except perhaps in the case of the Depressed Classes who may be tempted to embrace one or the other of the proselytising religions, if the evil of untouchability is not soon eradicated. So far as the intelligentsia of the country are concerned, they believe that no religion can claim any intrinsic superiority over the others, that Hinduism is as capable of adaptation as other religions and that the guidance, which the purer forms of Hinduism can furnish in matters of religion and ethics, is quite as valuable as that to be found in other systems. Hinduism has far greater powers of accommodation than the other creeds of the world, and would have less difficulty in reconciling its philosophic basis with the conclusions of modern scientific thought."

Remove the Load of Ritualism

Sir Sivaswamy then warns the Hindus that their religion will have greater chances of survival if they rescue the essentials of their faith from the burden of ritualism and ceremonial observances. In his opinion caste has little chances of survival under modern conditions. The fact that it has survived older attacks does not ensure its safety at the present day; for the new forces of nationalism and science are much

more powerful and penetrating than the previous attacks on caste. But, continues Sir Sivaswamy, the disappearance of caste need not affect Hinduism as a religion; on the other hand it would help the promotion of unity in India. That caste is disintegrating to-day is shown by the fact that modern Hindus are showing increasing disregard for its three main features, namely, restrictions on occupation, inter-dining and inter-marriage.

This observation of Sir Sivaswamy on caste is one to which we wish to draw the attention of those Hindus who designate themselves specially as Sanatanis. It is high time that Hindus should realise that Hinduism is called Sanatana Dharma not because its social structure is eternal, but because it embodies certain eternal laws of spiritual life. Caste in the social sense is the product of the social conditions of the past, and when those conditions no longer exist, it is also bound to pass away, as it is actually doing under our very eyes. Yet there are pious Hindus who cherish the baseless fear that with its disappearance Hinduism too will disappear. We must realise to-day that in the old social organisation of Varnashrama Dharma there are two kinds of law involved—Varna Dharma and Ashrama Dharma. These Varna Dharmas are the caste laws, and these are now passing away and are bound to pass away—because there are now no Varnas as understood in the past. The Ashrama Dharmas are more intimately related to man's spiritual growth, and these are to be preserved with such modifications as are required by our modern conditions of life. Hinduism as a religion is not going to suffer in the least by such a change. On the other hand it will only be strengthened, and exercise a greater appeal on people who are

at present outside the Hindu fold. There is a chance of a European or an American becoming a Hindu in the sense of accepting the Ashrama Dharmas in some form or other; but there is absolutely no chance at the present day of any people in the world, either civilised or uncivilised, accepting the Varna Dharma.

Family Life

Speaking about the conditions of family life to-day, Sir Sivaswamy refers to the rapid disintegration of the family, the startling changes in the long established notions of the relation between the sexes and the growing disregard for the codes of marriage and sexual ethics in western countries. "The causes of this upheaval of morals of Europe and America are the industrial revolution which drew young people away from their homes in the country and obliged them to live in towns and cities free from the control and supervision of the parents; the postponement of marriage till the parties became economically self-sufficient which denied to many people sexual expression just at the time when the urgency of the biological instinct was strongest, the emancipation of women, their objection to the double standard of morals for the two sexes and their desire for economic independence, the modern discovery of contraceptives which offer to the unmarried women a ready means of obtaining sex gratification outside marriage without risk of parenthood, and the laws which make divorce easy."

It is instructive to note the views of such a veteran thinker and politician as Sir Sivaswamy about the possible intrusion of similar subversive forces into the family life of India also. It is too optimistic, Sir Sivaswamy thinks, for one to believe that these new ideas of morality will

not exert any influence over India, because they are against the spirit of Hinduism. So are they with the family ethics of Victorian England and America, but the force of circumstances and the modern economic conditions are now subjecting these countries to the full fury of these ideas. There is no reason to think that India would escape a similar result, especially as women in India are in a "feverish hurry to catch up western notions in politics and sociology and economics."

"The problem is how to check similar changes in India. Reactionary conservatives may advocate a reversion to the old policy of denying all education or at least higher education to women and keeping them under subjection of men. But such proposals are preposterous. Some may be inclined to think that even though it might not be possible to shut out knowledge of other kinds to women, this country should follow the Roman Catholics and strictly exclude any knowledge of birth control. But like other scientific inventions and discoveries, the methods of birth-control are capable of being put to bad as well as good uses and it would be absurd to deprive a people of a remedy not merely against the evils of over-population, but also against the evils arising from excessive child-bearing. It will be equally a mistake to postpone marriage to a later stage. In the West it is productive of great unhappiness and injury to morals. While economic independence is desirable on many grounds, it seems very unwise to encourage the ambition for a professional career in women, except perhaps in those who may be specially gifted for particular callings. The old Hindu ideal of the woman as the

maker of the home, which considers the position of the wife and the mother most sacred and honourable in society is one which we cannot afford to abandon, and it must be the ideal of woman's education in India to impress upon the minds of girls that exalted ideal. There is no need to fear that it will be found inadequate to the requirements of a rational, wholesome and happy life even under modern conditions. The Hindu conception of marriage may appear somewhat unromantic, but romances are unfortunately built upon illusions and do not last in this world of work, stress and realities. This does not mean, however, that no change is required in Hindu marriage laws. They are more liberal to men than to women; and it is necessary to provide the remedy of the dissolution of marriage to women as well as for men in cases where the maintenance of the legal bond would produce grave hardship. While avoiding undue facilities for such dissolution of the tie, it is necessary to avoid too great stringency."

In these very sober and well-balanced remarks, Sir Sivaswamy has touched upon many of the very controversial topics in modern social life. Especially the questions of birth-control and admission of women in general to professional careers are matters on which wide divergences of opinion are likely to prevail. But there is no gain-saying the fact that plans of social upliftment in any part of the world at the present day have to tackle these problems in all earnestness. It is a well-known fact that many modern States like Italy, Germany and Russia have made strong pronouncement on these questions, either in favour or against them. India too cannot afford to postpone them indefinitely.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE INDIA THAT IS INDIA: By Elizabeth Sharpe. Published by Luzac & Co., London. Pp. 110. Price 3 sh.

The book, as hinted by its very title, claims to speak on India untouched by the new ideas and ideals that are transforming her in consequence of her coming in contact with the modern West.

It is not a complete picture or a serious and scholarly study of India, but gives glimpses of various aspects of Indian life at once colourful and sympathetic. The Purdah, the Zenana life of the princely aristocracy, polygamy, widowhood, the Jains, the Sadhus and the religious fairs, the untouchables and the Indian girl—these form the subject-matter of the book. It may be recommended as interesting reading for the parlour.

The motive of the concluding chapter is a bit dubious. The writer's taunting sneer on educated India demanding political freedom, for the mere fact that they are not liked by the orthodox for their new-fangled ways, is quite out of place, if not also impertinent. She ought to have known that some of the best champions of India's political rights are orthodox in religious and social sentiments. If Europe could outgrow her Mediaevalism, we do not see why India could not do the same.

THE SAKTAS: By Ernest A. Payne, B. A., B. D., B. Litt. Published by Y. M. C. A. Publishing House, 5, Russel Street, Calcutta. Pages 153. Price, cloth Rs. 3-8, paper Rs. 2-8.

Saktaism has been the object of violent criticism at the hands of western scholars, mostly because many of its elements are distasteful to them. This book written partly with a view to correct these unjust criticisms have fallen unconsciously into their rut. The author has concentrated on the 'dark,' 'crude,' 'repellent,' 'superstitious' side of the cult, and though occasional glimpses of its higher ideas are given, his obstinate refusal to

understand and appreciate the real principles of the Tantra which have been conspicuously omitted, is only too apparent. Naturally, the views of Sir John Woodroffe whose voluminous studies of the Tantras expound the real philosophy and theories of the cult have not been quite acceptable to the author, and his defence of the faith has come in for a good deal of criticism. The real difficulty with the author seems to be that he cannot appreciate the great achievement of the Tantras in ennobling and sublimating the crude cults prevalent among the uncivilised aborigines as well as the invaders, with which the philosophical religion of the Vedic Aryans came into contact, by imparting to them higher ideas of Godhead and organising the existing liturgies and sacraments with a system of symbolical and national worship, which attempt the author has wrongly found fit to call 'justification' and 'apology.'

Tantrikism stands alone among religions in having tried to lead the aspirant along the path of least resistance to the goal of religion by spiritualising even the animal passions through appropriate rituals, symbols, prayers and dedications, by building upon existing faiths and convictions and practices and raising them to philosophical levels, thus differing in this respect from dogmatic and missionary religions. Obscenities of the cult are obscenities in the brutal human nature; the fault of the Tantras, if it is a fault at all, is the fault of recognising this fact, and if it might have dragged down a few, its power to ennoble and sublimate the crude in a vast number of men has to be duly recognised. Failure to understand this has been the cause of much misplaced criticism by the author. The book is no less dogmatic in its condemnation of the worship of the terrible, while the only religion in the world which has dared to face the Truth without hugging pleasing superstitions has been the Sakta cult. Unless it be that

all religions are superstitions there is no point in calling Saktaism a superstition, though its excesses and exaggerations are to be condemned.

The book gives a topographical description of the cult, its historical origin and growth, and comparisons with other mystery cults including Judaism and Roman Catholicism. It contains a variety of information about the cult, is critical and interesting and affords stimulating reading.

TOWARDS TRANSCENDENCE: Published by Rameshwar De, Chander Nagore. Pp. 46.

The articles in this book are claimed to be "the experiences of a seeker from the contradictions of a limited human mind to the effulgence of the Higher Mind following the path of a direct and original research." The book speaks of undiscovered possibilities

hidden in the deeper reaches of the mind which could be brought into the conscious plane by a process of transcendence of the various lower planes by which man becomes the superman possessed of great psychic powers, and later emerges with a still higher order of consciousness, as the Divine Personality.

A GLIMPSE OF GAUTAMA (THE BUDDHA): By K. R. Menon. Published by A. Augustine, Yurindo Printing Works, 76 and 78, Waterloo Street, Singapore. 1934.

This is a booklet depicting the chief episodes of Lord Buddha's life and his important teachings in rhymed English verse. The writer is no doubt full of devotion for the Great Master, which gives a charm to his writing, but we wish he had chosen some other medium of expression than English verse.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Birthday Celebration

The 100th birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated as usual at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, on Sunday, the 10th of March. The Tithi Pooja fell on Wednesday, the 6th of March, and was observed by special Pooja, Homa and Bhajana. On the day of public celebration there was Bhajana all through the morning, and there was the feeding of Daridra Narayanas in the noon. The evening's programme consisted of an inspiring Harikatha Kalakshepam by Murthi Rao Bhagavatar, which was followed by a public meeting presided over by Prof. P. N. Srinivasachariar, M.A., Principal of the Pachaiyappa's College. Mr. M. R. Shanmukasundaram, Avl., B.A., B.L., spoke in Tamil and Mr. G. Sundaram Aiyar, M.A., L.T., in English on "Sri Ramakrishna and His Message." The President in his concluding remarks gave a masterly analysis of the mystic experiences of Sri Ramakrishna. The day's proceedings terminated with Mangalarati and distribution of Prasad.

Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras

The thirtieth annual report of the Home shows that it has made considerable progress in various departments during the year. Through the kind assistance of Janab C. Abdul Hakim Saheb Bahadur, a dormitory for accommodating 36 students of the Industrial section has been built. The strength of the Home, at the end of the year, was 154, classified as: Lower Secondary 40, High School 62, Industrial School 28, Arts Colleges 22; Medical School and College 2. The results at the public examinations were satisfactory. In the Industrial School, four students completed the final year course in Mechanical Engineering and two students of the third year were selected for training in the Royal Indian Air Force at Karachi.

The supervision of the boys was vested in the hands of the Ward Masters and the Warden, a Sannyasin of the Mission. In order to instil into them the habits of self-reliance and

service, the major portion of the household management was given to the charge of the boys themselves. Along with religious and moral training, physical culture also received proper attention. Regular classes in music were held, and all the Hindu festivals including the birthdays of the incarnations were celebrated in a fitting manner. The social and recreative activities were many-sided. The boys conducted three manuscript magazines, the Tamil, the English and the Arts magazines, with much credit. The Manual Training Classes in Carpentry, Weaving and Rattan Work, were also conducted efficiently and evoked the admiration of the Advisor to the Government on Vocational Education. The garden work was successful, as a mark of which, in the competition held by the Agri-Horticultural Society, the Home was awarded a prize. The library received important additions of books, the total number coming up to 7,213. The Industrial School and the High School have separate libraries of their own, which were also well used.

In the Industrial School a new section was opened, viz., the Automobile Engineering Course to train students for the L.A.E. diploma.

The Mambalam Branch School completed its second year showing satisfactory results. The strength rose from below three hundred to nearly four hundred, and the staff was also increased by the addition of more qualified teachers.

The present needs of the Home are three-fold: The improvement of the Permanent Fund; the full and up-to-date equipment of the Jubilee Workshop; and the development of the Mambalam Branch School creating a

permanent habitation for it. The total receipts were 39,529-0-5 and the expenditure Rs. 39,651-10-11, resulting in a deficit of Rs. 122-10-6 met from Revenue Reserve Account. Lastly the Management sends its fervent appeal to the generous public for sympathy and co-operation with a view to consolidate the activities of the institution and to enable it to cope with the increasing demands on its service.

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There water or earth, air or fire exists not; there shines not the sun nor the stars; there the moon does not rise nor gloom can enter. The Brahmin who is a master of meditation realises it in deep silence through his self and becomes free from fetters of form and formlessness, pleasure and pain.

—Bahiya Suttam, Bodhi Vaggo, Udana.

२. अत्थि भिक्खवे तदायतनं, यत्थ नेव पटवी न आपो न तेजो न वायो न आकासान्नायतनं न विज्याणाञ्चायतनं न आकिञ्चनञ्चायतनं न नेव सम्मानासञ्चायतनं नायं लोको न परलोको न उभो न चन्दिमसूरिया, तत्तापहे भिक्खवे नेव आगतिं वदामि न गतिं न टिति न उप्पत्तिं अप्पत्तिट्ठं अनारम्भणमेव तं एसेवन्तो दुक्खस्सति ।

There is, O Bhikkus, an abode where earth, water, air or fire does not exist; the six Ayatanas (senses) such as eye, ear, nose, tongue, body

and mind cannot reach it; neither the sun nor the moon shines there: it is neither this world nor the next. There is no ascent to or descent from that place. It has no origin, no motion and no rest. That abode does not rest on or hang from anything. But all miseries end there.

Nibban Suttam, Patligamiya Vaggo, Udana.

३. अरिय भिक्खवे अजातं अभूतं अकतं असङ्गतं, नोचेतं भिक्खवे अभविस्स अजातं अभूतं अकतं असङ्गतं, नविदं जातस्स भूतस्स कतस्स सङ्गतस्स निस्सरणं सञ्चायेय । यस्मा च खो भिक्खवे अरिय अजातं अभूतं अकतं असङ्गतं, तस्मा जातस्स भूतस्स कतस्स सङ्गतस्स निस्सरणं पञ्चायति ।

There is, O Bhikkus, such an one which is unborn, unmade, unoriginated, uncompounded. Had there been not such an unborn, unmade, unoriginated and uncompounded one, there would not be any escape from the born, the originated, the made and the compounded. As there is such an unborn, unoriginated, unmade and uncompounded one, so it is possible to transcend the born, the made, the compounded, and the originated.

Nibban Suttam, Patligamiya Vaggo, Udana.

THE INSPIRATIONS OF THE ENLIGHTENED ONE

1. When the mind is ridden by any hankering, it becomes restless. The mind rid of desires and wrong visions never loses its balance. Freedom from fickleness makes the mind collected and calm. Stillness eliminates the roots of lust and attachment, desirelessness burns the seeds of Samsar, or transmigration. He who goes beyond birth and death does not belong to this world or the next. He gets riddance from all sorrows.

2. All woe and wailing, all sorrow and suffering, of this world spring from fondness of men and things. Those who have no objects of attachment are really happy and peaceful. Undiluted and ineffable peace and blessedness belong to them who do not fall in love with anything of this transitory world.

3. As the fire of the red-hot iron is extinguished by the beatings of the hammer and nobody knows where it goes, so fully liberated are they who cross the deluge of desire and lust. All miseries vanish from them for good and they enjoy ever-lasting peace.

4. The wise associate with the sinners but never contact their sins. As the swan drinks the milk and leaves the water, so the wise always learn the good qualities of others and safeguard themselves against the contagion of evils and impurities.

5. Charity adds to the virtues of man. The man of self-control has no enemy. The skilled one sets aside all follies. Man attains Nirvana by casting off all attachment, ignorance and jealousy.

6. This world of beings is steeped in the darkness of desires and is overcome with deep infatuation and so consider this earth to be real. But, alas, the ignorant do not know that it is all shadowy and fleeting and will disappear next moment.

7. When there is water everywhere nobody searches for a tank. He who has uprooted the creeper of desires and drinks the ambrosia of Nirvana does not hanker after anything of the here or the hereafter.

8. Not even Brahma or any other immortal, not to speak of mortals, can know the man whose mind does not rest in the phenomenon, and breaking the chain of bondage has scaled the steep wall of Avidya. Such a man devoid of any longing delights in wisdom and ecstasy.

9. Men of the world are blinded by Kama and Trishna and are entangled in the net of Vasanas. As the fishes caught in the net slowly and surely approach death, and as the calf thirsts for the milk of the cow, so men enslaved by desires proceed towards old age, disease and death.

10. The more a man runs after pleasure, the more he fetters himself. The more one runs away from it, the more he frees himself. As the worms and insects jump into the fire only to be burned, so the ignorant hunt for happiness only to suffer. Real peace does not rest anywhere outside like moon-shine or the lustre of a jewel. The mine of bliss is hidden in the depths of one's own being. Search for it in your own self. Search after happiness in the external world is like running after mirage.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

This Divine Power determines the lives of ordinary human beings too, as It does the lives of prophets; for, these two types of lives have got a striking resemblance between them.

THIS play of the Divine Power is found not exclusively in the lives of prophets alone. We are struck with wonder at the sight of Its effects, prominently present in these saintly lives, and hence it is noticed by us without any effort on our part. Herein lies the only difference. For, careful scrutiny will reveal its presence in less striking form even in our own daily lives and in the history of the world. By means of long-earned wisdom or by comparing many incidents of human lives it becomes quite obvious that man is always a mere puppet in the hands of this Divine Power. And there is no wonder that ordinary lives have such striking resemblance to the lives of prophets. For, these superhuman characters are the types or models, as it were, set up before the common man for building up his own life and character. Observe, for instance, how the spiritual life of India, the meeting ground of diverse races and their diverse cultures, is monopolised by the few great prophets like Rama, Krishna, Chaitanya, etc. Observe again how the new ideal set up by the

life of Sri Ramakrishna, the prophet of the modern age, and a product of the unique co-ordination of the ideals lived and preached by all the prophets of the past, is fast spreading its influence and has already within this short span of time captured the imagination of its land of birth. What will be the culmination of this new ideal, our readers may guess if they can. As for us, we are wholly incompetent to comprehend or predict its future.

Mathuranath was a devotee, but never a simpleton on that account.

Hearing about Mathuranath's implicit faith in, and whole-hearted devotion for, the Master, our sophisticated minds at once hasten to conclude: "The fellow must have been a simpleton. Or else, how could a normal man have so much devotion for another of his fellow-beings? If it were our opportunity to appraise the greatness of Sri Ramakrishna, we would see how he could generate so much devotion in our minds by the sheer merit of his character." As if to have devotion is a matter of great disgrace! Hence our attempt to show that Mathuranath was never a credulous simpleton, by describing his character in so far as we have heard about him from the Master. He was in no way less critical or even less sceptical than we. He too was

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assailed by doubts regarding the Master's superhuman character and his uncommon behaviour, and did not hesitate to test him at every step. But what of that? How long could the *Airavata* of doubt that was firmly lodged in Mathuranath's mind withstand the powerful impact of the *Ganga* of the Master's holy character which was an unprecedented combination of the bright light of knowledge and the nectar of divine love? Before long he was dislodged and swept away once for all. * What could now Mathuranath do, conquered as he was in every respect, but take refuge at the holy feet of the Master? Therefore it will not take much time to understand that while dealing with Mathuranath we are only describing the teacher-aspect of the Master.

*The allusion is to the following Puranic story. While the river Ganga was descending from her heavenly abode down upon this earth, she was shut up in a cave in the Himalayas and could not come out unless the stone walls of the cave were split open. Now a mighty task like this required enormous strength and could not be done by any ordinary creature. Hence *Airavata*, the elephant-king, was invoked, and he came and without much difficulty pierced the rock with his powerful tusks and a passage for the river was thus made. Being extremely inflated with pride on account of this extraordinary feat, the elephant did not hesitate even to slight the sacred stream. But presently, the apparently feeble rivulet rushed out of the cave and the proud elephant was carried off his feet and swept away from her path like a mere bit of straw. The elephant-king, thus disgraced, came to realise how extremely foolish it was to trifle with gods.

Mathuranath's first attraction towards the Master, and its gradual developments.

Mathuranath was drawn towards the Master at the very first meeting on account of his child-like simplicity, sweet character and attractive personal beauty. Later on, during the initial period of his spiritual practices the Master used to have occasional fits of divine ecstasy, and would often lose himself completely under its influence. At the time of worship, he sometimes happened to worship his own person instead of the holy image, finding the vision of the Deity within himself. His extraordinary devotion would time and again make him transcend the limits of formal worship and do things in his daily life which seemed to the common man to be quite unmeaning and unjustifiable. For this reason he soon became a target of public criticism and an object of universal distrust. But even then Mathuranath's worldly wisdom, his acute understanding and his sense of justice suggested to him: 'Do not believe in anything said against him whom you have known to be possessed of a sweet and simple character at the very first meeting, unless and until you find personally some ocular proof justifying the public denunciation.' Hence it was that Mathuranath used to give private visits to the Kali Temple at Dakshineswar and observe minutely the behaviour of the Master. As a result of his inquiries he arrived at this conclusion that the youthful Gadadhar was a living image of

devotion and simplicity, and that whatever he did was due to the excess of his devotion. Therefore Mathuranath, possessed as he was of worldly wisdom, tried to convince the Master that excess in everything was to be avoided, and that devotion, though good in itself, should not be carried to such an extent as to lose oneself completely under its influence. He wanted to impress upon the Master that utter disregard of popular opinion would not only rouse public criticism, but worse than that, would endanger his wits by the tendency it created to follow his own whims always. Although Mathuranath tried to restrain the Master's excesses with the above arguments, the spirit of devotion that was sleeping within him would sometimes wake up on account of his contact with the Master and make him argue in this way: 'Do we not hear about the apparently abnormal behaviour of the religious aspirants of the past like Ramprasad and others, which was prompted by their excessive devotion? Likewise, may not Gadadhar's condition and his behaviour too be of the same nature?' Therefore Mathuranath finally resolved not to interfere with the Master in his apparent eccentricity, but only to watch on patiently what all this would come to, and take such steps later on as might be found reasonable. This kind of attitude on the part of a wealthy master towards one of his insignificant employees does speak indeed of his great patience.

The infectious power of devotion brings about a change in Mathuranath.

Devotion has got the property of spreading its infection. It is a fact of our daily experience that like the physical transformation, changes in the thought-world too spread from one individual to another. This is because the entire universe, with its grosser as well as the subtler aspects, is the modification of the same substance and is guided by the same laws. For the vindication of this truth we need not now-a-days depend merely on the superhuman realisations of the Vedic sages. This has become almost a proved fact in the Natural Sciences too. Hence there is nothing strange in that the spirit of devotion roused in one individual awakens in others too the same spirit lying in a dormant state. That is why the Scriptures lay so much emphasis on the company of religious men as a special means for imbibing the spirit of devotion. It can be very well inferred that Mathuranath's change was undoubtedly due to this fact. The further he proceeded in his scrutiny of the Master's behaviour day after day, the greater became the awakening of devotion in him, although he remained quite unaware of it. We find unmistakable signs of this fact from his subsequent actions. But even then, as it usually happens with worldly men, his mind too would at one moment be full of devotion and the next moment be overcast by the dark shadow of doubt. This alterna-

tion of belief and disbelief certainly continued through a pretty long period before the Master's throne was finally installed unshakably in his heart. That is why we find that although the Master's intense love of God and his peculiar behaviour under its promptings appeared to Mathuranath as only the excesses of his devotion, nevertheless their further increase in the Master's life raised such doubts in Mathuranath's mind as to whether this was not due to the Master's loss of sanity. But this doubt only awakened pity in his heart, and he set himself to the task of restoring the Master's health to the normal condition with the help of experienced physicians.

Mathuranath, equipped with modern education, argues with the Master whether even Divine Will can change the laws of Nature. The red china-rose plant bears white flowers.

Mathuranath's command of English was not at all negligible. Through this English language the occidental mode of thinking and the ideas and ideals peculiar to the West found access to his mind, producing in him thereby, as they usually do, the spirit of indifference and a sort of self-importance which make one think of oneself as inferior to none. Hence it is that we find Mathuranath even attempting to restrain the Master, with the help of arguments, from losing all control over himself on account of his devotion. We may cite for illustration here

the discussion that took place between the Master and Mathuranath as to whether God had to obey the laws of His own making in guiding the course of the world. The Master would say, "Mathur told me that even God has to obey the laws of Nature. Even He does not possess the power of transgressing the laws once made by Him. To this I replied, 'What do you say! The maker of a law can rescind it at any moment or substitute it by another, if he so pleases.' But he would never accept this and said in his defence, 'A red-flower plant will bear only red flowers and never white ones. For, that is His law. Let us see if He can make a red-flower plant produce white flowers now.' I said, 'He can do that also as well as everything else if He so pleases.' But he won't be convinced. Next day, while going towards the pine trees, I found in a red china-rose plant two flowers on different twigs of the same branch, of which one was red, and the other pure white without the slightest tinge of red anywhere. At once I broke the whole branch and threw it in front of Mathur. Then only he admitted his defeat." Thus we can very well understand that Mathuranath argued with the Master in various ways with a view to restrain him from his excesses of devotion which Mathuranath believed to be but a form of mental disorder brought about by physical deterioration.

Mathuranath is forced to ponder over the Master's condition every day.

Mathuranath, worldly-minded though he was, began to spend more and more time in the company of the Master and to bestow much thought on him, partly through curiosity, partly out of pity, considering the Master's ecstasy a form of physical disorder. Occasionally, however, he was overcome by the feelings of surprise and devotion, and interpreted this condition as an effect of his love of God. Moreover, how was it possible for Mathuranath to remain indifferent, while under the influence of the newly imbibed God-intoxication the Master would create new

situations every day? One day, sitting on the carpet meant for the worshipper, he realises the vision of the Divine Mother within his own person and himself uses all the things arranged for the Deity. The next day, the ceremony of *Aratrikam* (waving of lights, etc., before the sacred image) is continued for three hours, to the great inconvenience of the temple employees. On the third day, perhaps, he rolls on the ground, rubbing his face against the earth and weeping and wailing most pitifully, drawing around him thereby a large group of curious spectators. Innumerable are the instances we have heard from the Master of the daily happenings of like nature.

A CRITIQUE OF THE MODERN TEMPER

Our Greetings

 UR greetings to the readers of the *Vedanta Kesari* at the commencement of the twenty-second year of its existence!

For the past twenty-one years it has been the aim of the *Vedanta Kesari* to place before its readers the great spiritual ideals of Indian culture, and interpret the same in relation to the problems of modern life. The great thoughts and experiences of India's sages have all been recorded either in Sanskrit or in the vernaculars of the land—the former of which is at present known only to a very small section of our people, while the latter, due to their great diversity, make the mutual

exchange of ideas between different linguistic units well nigh impossible. Besides, these sacred writings require a long and laborious study of a whole lifetime, if they are to be understood and appreciated properly. The keenness of life's struggle in these days is so great that it is only very few who can afford to devote the time required for this, and for the equally arduous task of studying the tendencies of modern thought and interpreting the ancient wisdom in terms of it. Many a busy man of the world may therefore feel the need of a brief and simple presentation of these ideas. The *Vedanta Kesari* has been doing its mite to supply this need by placing

the religion and philosophy of India in an easily understandable form before men who can find little time to make a special study of them.

The Progress of Non-religious Outlook

But the very utility of religion and philosophy has been very seriously questioned in all parts of the world. Many a renowned thinker of the day has opined that religion is nothing more than a passing phenomenon in the life of humanity, and that at the present day mankind is fast outgrowing the stage when it can serve as a discipline in life. It is contended that the religious world-view has sprung from man's ignorance regarding the natural interpretation of the universe, and that as the progress of science is bringing one department after another of organic and inorganic phenomena within the domain of mechanical laws, the boundaries of religion are gradually receding from one entrenched position to another, until mankind learns one day to dispense with every idea of a non-material factor in the interpretation of the world and the ordering of life. This invasion of naturalism, if it began with the province of natural phenomena, has however been steadily engulfing other fields of human knowledge. Even history is interpreted to-day by the upholders of the communist doctrine in terms of class wars and economic conflicts and not as an expression of ideas or as the revelation of a spiritual principle. The conception of the world and of life, as being in

themselves self-sufficient, is so constantly dinned into the mind of man that he has learnt to accept it without questioning, especially seeing that it offers a philosophy of life that agrees so well with his own natural inclinations.

Even in India where the supremacy of spiritual ideals is supposed to rest on more secure foundations, the shifting of interest from God to Mammon is but too apparent a phenomenon to escape the notice of any observer. With the growth of political consciousness, the expansion of trade and industries, and the infiltration of communist views of history, the attention of talented men is getting more and more exclusively absorbed in activities of a purely worldly significance. What we depreciate here is not the tendency on the part of the modern Indian, and, as for the matter of that, of the modern man in general, to bestow increasing attention on the work of improving the conditions of life. What makes one think is the consideration whether the advancement of the interests of material life necessarily implies an unspiritual attitude towards life? And then again does that material prosperity gained by an eschewal of spiritual values, really serve the purpose which it is expected to serve, namely, the advancement of human happiness?

No Sanction from Science

Why is it that modernism is so closely associated with an unspiritual attitude of mind? We are often given to understand that it is

because materialism has the sanction of reason while the spiritual outlook on life is devoid of the gracious approval of that supreme authority. This is a view which is often put forward with great vehemence and which the common man is forced to swallow without a grain of salt. A little investigation would however show that no claim of a more preposterous type has ever been put forward; for, the blessings of reason are not, in fact, bestowed in a greater measure on a materialistic world-view than on a spiritual interpretation of experience. Science which was hitherto supposed to be the stronghold of materialism is to-day declining to accept the overtures of that philosophy. The billiard-ball conception of matter, as something characterised by inertia or resistance and diffused in space in the form of irreducible particles, has now been abandoned by science. It has declared its incapacity to say what that familiar object of experience is. Matter has been dematerialised, and all the commonsense notion of it as a hard or soft something 'spread out there,' is demonstrated as having no foundation in fact. Eminent scientists have begun to doubt whether mind after all is not the back-ground of matter too. Says Eddington: "The Victorian physicist felt that he knew just what he was talking about when he used such terms as *matter* and *atoms*. Atoms were tiny billiard balls, a crisp statement that was supposed to tell you all about their nature in a way which could never

be achieved for transcendental things like consciousness, beauty or honour. But now we realise that science has nothing to say as to the intrinsic nature of the atom. The physical atom is like every thing else in physics, a schedule of pointer-readings. The schedule is, we agree, attached to some unknown back-ground. Why not then attach it to something of spiritual nature of which a prominent characteristic is *thought*. It seems rather silly to prefer to attach it to something of a so-called 'concrete' nature inconsistent with thought, and then to wonder where the thought comes from."

The Commonsense View of the Matter

Leaving aside the latest conclusions of science, let us for a moment confine our attention to the purely commonsense conception of matter, and see how far it can form the support of a purely materialistic world-view. Commonsense conceives matter as something having 'resistance', as an entity which makes itself felt by impinging itself on one or more of our senses. Now this very idea of 'resistance' or the capacity to make itself felt implies a conscious entity which becomes aware of the resistance. If one denies this perceiving consciousness, the very notion of resistance or seability associated with matter becomes quite meaningless and incomprehensible. When we analyse our thought, we thus find that even commonsense requires us to admit that

matter and consciousness are two poles of existence. Such being the case, to conceive of consciousness as a by-product of matter, as the materialistic world-view does, is a violation of our very laws of thought. No true philosophy of materialism can, however, be constructed without subordinating spirit to matter, and if this subordination is inadmissible, materialism as a philosophy based on reason and commonsense has no legs to stand upon.

Its Irreconcilability with Life

We shall now consider the materialistic outlook on life from another point of view. Among the dogmatics of materialism is the belief that life has no significance transcending itself. The human personality had no past before the physical organism came into existence and it has no future after the dissolution of the same at death. Life is therefore to be valued only for the experiences confined to its limits, and these experiences, it is contended, are sufficient to act as an incentive to man in the struggle of life. As a matter of fact, the quest after the momentary pleasures of life, the hope of something 'turning up' in the near future, is found sufficient to sustain the common man in the midst of the tribulations of life, but the question is whether such hopes and expectations are in themselves a rational justification of man's clinging to life in the light of the materialistic world-view. An observation of the lives of men in

general shows that even in the case of the most fortunate of us, fifty per cent at least of our experiences are of a nature that can be characterised as miserable and painful. The threat of ill-health, of incurable diseases, of financial ruin, of disappointments, of faithlessness on the part of the near and dear ones, —in fact the miseries of the body and mind in varied forms are the daily experience of most of us. Even if some one is fortunate enough to be less harassed and molested by these than some others, there is no man who can escape the inevitable hour of death, however high-placed and powerful he may be in life. As the poet has said, "The paths of glory lead but to the grave." It is true that in the midst of the troubles and uncertainties of life, every one has got his passing turns of joy and happiness; but it will occur to a thoughtful mind why, seeing that death is the end of all, should man submit himself to be victimised by the buffets of life's relentless furies. The crumbs of joy and pleasure that occasionally fall to his lot cannot form a sufficient inducement to a reflective mind to undergo the unbearable miseries that are in store for him. If death is the end of all, why not hasten that inevitable hour, so that through its early intervention, one may be saved from many a future hour of pain and anguish. True, one will thereby be robbed of a few pleasurable experiences, but that in itself is no loss when it saves one from a larger quota of miseries. Thus if a

man is a consistent materialist and is prepared to act as his reason dictates and not as his desires prompt him, the only course left for him is to bring about an early death through suicide.

In fact life is impossible in this world without the sustaining influence of a purpose to be served by it. The generality of men are however devoid of that breadth of vision necessary to view life as a whole and discover its significance. But the unavoidable necessity to order their life round some purpose or other drives them to seek the same in some petty interest like pursuit of wealth or honour, serving the family, community or country, etc., and absorbed in these mad strivings, they stifle all those questionings of the mind seeking for the ultimate meaning of life. A rationalist, as the materialist claims himself to be, cannot however, in consistency with his own professions, allow himself to be thus hoodwinked and be content to live in the fool's paradise, taking the ephemeral to be the permanent, the partial to be the whole. He cannot escape an unpleasant situation by turning his face away from the problem in the fashion of the ostrich, but must push forward his investigation to the logical conclusion, however startling and unpleasant that may be. And if a man, firm in his allegiance to a materialistic world-view, were to study life and its problems in a thoroughly dispassionate spirit, he must necessarily become convinced of its meaning-

lessness and seek a solution of its problems in suicide.

Are the materialists in general ready to tread fearlessly towards this, the natural goal of their philosophy? There is however no evidence to show their readiness to adopt this course. In fact, man's clinging to life is so great, that even when reduced to the last straits of poverty and ill-health, he refuses to part with life willingly. Law, which is nothing but an expression of man's collective will, recognises this inherent yearning of all for life that it forbids a physician from bringing about the easy death of a patient even when he is suffering from the excruciating pangs of an incurable disease. The recognition of suicide as a crime by the State in all parts of the world shows how humanity looks upon it as an anti-social practice that lays the axe at the foundations of civilisation.

Yet we have to remember that in spite of all his boast of being a rationalist, this is the philosophy of the materialist—a philosophy leading to a goal that receives alike the condemnation of his own innate nature and the conscience of humanity as a whole.

The Illusory Nature of the Materialist's Solution

In the foregoing paragraphs we have seen that the common man's belief that materialism is the only philosophy having the sanction of reason is one of those many illusions that are accepted as true without questioning. It has the sanction of neither science nor of reason; on

the other hand it bristles with contradictions and eventually leads to a cult of suicide. What then may be the reason for its wide prevalence? The most important and perhaps the most obvious reason is the fact that of all world-views it is the one that falls so splendidly in agreement with man's instinctive life and gives sanction to an unrestricted exercise of his baser faculties. The appeal of the sensuous is so irresistible to the human mind that it manufactures spacious reasons in the service of its baser inclinations even from the flimsiest of materials. The materialism of the common man is in fact the product of thoughtlessness even though he may claim the prescriptive right over reason for his philosophy when pressed to justify his attitude in a controversy. The body and its needs, the world and its goods, seem to be the only things immediately connected with our happiness and well-being in the present that in their short-sightedness the majority of men are not disposed to spend even a serious thought on this important question. But little do they realise that though food, clothing, house, family, education, etc., are to a certain extent necessary for the attainment of the "good life", man can never feel happy merely by possessing all these in abundance. If material comforts and a high standard of living could have made a nation happy, America, the wealthiest country in the world, should have been the paradise on earth, abounding in happy homes and smiling faces. But a

study of American social life, however, reveals that unhappiness in the most poignant form lies hidden underneath the garb of plenty and prosperity. With family life disrupted, with domestic ties loosened, with individualism running rampant and with social vices growing in virulence, America is to-day in the grips of a mental fever resulting from the mental strain and restlessness of a mad competitive life. The consequent agony through which the human spirit is passing in that country is well indicated by its number of suicides which is the largest in the world.

But man is more fond of the 'pleasant' than he is of the 'good.' He is too short-sighted to seek for anything beyond the immediate present. The attractions of the senses triumph over the call of eternity. Acting by the dictum that a bird in hand is better than two in the bush, he succumbs to a way of living that centres exclusively round the body and its interests. When required to justify his way of life he finds in materialism a ready-made philosophy as an ally of his desires, and strangely enough pooh-poohs the opposite view of life in the firm belief that reason is in exclusive alliance with his world-view. But how unfounded that claim is we have shown in the foregoing paragraphs. The only support of materialism is its coincidence with the desires of the human heart.

The Opposite View

It may be remarked, however, that the flimsiness and unprovability of

the materialistic philosophy is no positive demonstration of its opposite, namely, the spiritual world-view, and that unless positive evidence is coming in its favour, it cannot be accepted by men endowed with commonsense. The champions of the spiritual world-view, however, never brag like their opponents that their philosophy can be proved conclusively by logic. In the absence of conclusive proof on either side, are we then to remain agnostic and have no certainty regarding this ultimate question? To resort to agnosticism may be easy and fashionable but one who takes to life seriously will find its delights extremely repugnant. A question so vital, imminent and urgent in its significance cannot be set aside in such a light-hearted fashion. The fate of life cannot be allowed to hang in the air. An answer either way has to be given; for on that depends the whole ordering of our life.

If then materialism is unsatisfactory and the question involved cannot at the same time be shelved aside as difficult, how are we to arrive at some positive attitude without doing serious violence to our commonsense? On what grounds can we accept the spiritual world-view? To our mind it appears that though a strictly logical demonstration of it is not possible, we can substantiate it on grounds that are powerfully appealing to our commonsense. In the first place the probability of such an outlook is quite apparent to a disinterested mind. The problem has a two-fold

aspect—firstly whether the personality of man is at its root a spiritual entity and secondly whether the universe as a whole is under the sway of a Supreme Intelligence. With regard to the first point, as against the materialistic hypothesis that consciousness is merely an epiphenomenon of material evolution, a by-product of physical energies, the spiritual world-view maintains that consciousness is the more fundamental factor in personality and that the physical organism is only an instrument for its expression on the material plane. The body and consciousness act and react on each other, and while from a merely partial consideration of the evidence regarding their interaction it is possible to argue in favour of a purely materialistic theory, the weight of evidence, however, when taken as a whole goes much against it. Especially, the various phenomena connected with suggestion and hypnosis form the strongest evidence against a theory based on the primacy of the body over consciousness. Moreover, if consciousness were merely a property of the body, it would be knowable to all alike, including oneself, as is the case with other physical properties. But while all manifestations of consciousness in a person are only vague matters of inference to others, they form the most immediate and unquestionable facts of experience to the person concerned. A person experiences his tooth-ache in a way quite different from the dentist's knowledge of it. This important

difference suggests that consciousness is not a mere property of the body. In regard to cosmos as a whole, the old arguments in favour of a Supreme Intelligence from the presence of design and purpose in the universe and from the necessity of a first Intelligent Mover for bringing about the combination of the simples constituting the universe still have a good deal of force.

But the types of arguments referred to above cannot be put forward as conclusive proofs of the spiritual view of the universe. They at best point towards the possibility of it. But this possibility is, however, strengthened, nay, reduced to certainty, when we remember that it is corroborated by the testimony of the saints and sages of all climes and ages, who have experienced the universe and the human personality as essentially spiritual at their core. It is thus on the dictates of reason strengthened by the evidence of reliable testimony that we interpret experience as being essentially spiritual. Of course, it goes without saying that when by proper spiritual discipline one comes into direct touch with the underlying spiritual substratum, one requires no longer the support of an extraneous authority like reason for one's conviction.

The Remedy

It may seem paradoxical why men should show such strong lean-

ings towards the materialistic world-view in spite of its having no rational sanction. As we have said before, it is only because such an outlook favours the instinctive life to which man is so strongly wedded. Conditions of modern life have a tendency to accentuate this attitude in man due to the great demands they make on his time and energies for attending to the purely physical and social needs of life. Pre-occupations of this description engage our attention so completely that the majority of us feel no inclination at all to bestow any serious thought on these questions of momentous importance to our well-being. It is only the dynamic influence of great lives, radiating the power of spiritual energy, that can give a higher turn to the hopes and aspirations of mankind. Great men are, however, few and far between, but their life's history and their teachings survive them, and serve as a potential resource on which humanity may rely for its spiritual enrichment. Therefore the only practicable way of directing the attention of busy men towards matters spiritual consists in popularising easy and attractive literature dealing with the great spiritual thoughts and achievements left behind by our sages and saints as a legacy to mankind.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

By a Disciple

IT was about half-past eight in the evening. A mat was spread on the floor near the bed of the Mother. She was getting ready for sleep. As soon as she saw me, she said, "Come in, my darling! Come and sit near me. Sarala, give her a little water with some sweets. She worked hard for the whole day, and then rushed in here to visit me." I objected to the sweets, but she turned a deaf ear to my protest. She said, "One should take good care of the body. * * * * *"

Referring to her rash, she said, "What is this, my child? People get the rash and they are also quickly cured of it. But in my case, if I get any disease, it does not leave me at all. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'People with disease, grief, sin and sorrows would come and touch me, and I must suffer for them.' This statement, my child, is absolutely true. Perhaps this applies in my case also. Sri Ramakrishna was then ill. Some devotees went to Dakshineswar to worship the Divine Mother Kali with various articles of worship. But when they learned that Sri Ramakrishna had been staying at Cossipore, they came there and offered those articles before the image of Sri Ramakrishna, and afterwards they took Prasad. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'Look how unfair it is. The offerings were brought for Kali and given to me.' * I was almost dead with fear. I knew that he had been suffering from illness. This incident

* The incident happened at Cossipore Garden, where Sri Ramakrishna was lying ill of throat cancer.

might aggravate it. I don't know why they did that sort of thing. Later on at night, he said to me, 'You will see that in course of time I shall be worshipped in every house. You will find that all will follow me. Don't worry about it.' Only that day, I heard him speaking in the first person. He could never say 'I' or 'mine.' If he intended to speak of himself, he would always point to his body.

"Trailokya * used to give me seven rupees a month. After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna, Dinu, the manager of the Temple, and other officers stopped my monthly allowance. † My relatives also joined with them. Naren repeatedly asked them not to stop my allowance, but still they carried out their desire. But through the grace of Sri Ramakrishna, I never suffered for want of money. Dinu and others have disappeared and been forgotten, but I am getting along quite well. And why should it not be so? Sri Ramakrishna said to me, 'One who meditates on me can never suffer from physical wants.'

"After Sri Ramakrishna's passing away, they had a difference of opinion as to who should possess the shawl, the shirt and other costly clothings of Sri Ramakrishna. These were no doubt the treasures of his devo-

* Trailokya was the son of Mathur Babu, the son-in-law of Rani Rasmani. When it became impossible for Sri Ramakrishna to continue the worship in the Temple, Trailokya transferred his salary of seven rupees to the Holy Mother.

† The Holy Mother was then in Brindaban. When she heard about it, she said, "Let them stop my allowance. Sri Ramakrishna is now dead. What shall I do with money?"

tees. They would always cherish them with great respect and care. They at last arranged those articles left by Sri Ramakrishna, packed them in a box, and kept it in the outer hall of Balaram's house. But such was the will of Sri Ramakrishna that one of the servants opened the box, removed some of the clothings and sold or otherwise disposed of them. It was a mistake on their part to keep those things in the hall. They should have kept those articles in an inner apartment. The few articles of his daily use, and his shirts and clothing are now preserved in the Belur Math.

"My father-in-law was a fiery Brahmin devoted to the duties and injunctions of a Brahmin's life. He would never accept anything from anybody. He sternly refused to accept any presents from others, even if they were brought to his house. Someone would secretly give some articles of food to my mother-in-law. She would cook them and offer them to Raghuvir.* Afterwards they would all enjoy the Prasad. But my father-in-law would have been angry if he had known it. He had a burning devotion. Mother Sitala† was his constant companion. It was the daily habit of his life to get up in the small hours of the morning and go to pluck flowers. One day he went to the garden of the Lahas‡, when, a young girl of nine came to him and said, 'Father, come this way. There are many flowers on that branch. While I bend the branch, you pluck the flowers.' He said, 'Who are you, my child? What are you doing here in the early morning?'

* Their family deity.

† One of the female deities worshipped by the Hindus.

‡ Landlord of the village.

She smiled and said, 'It is I. I belong to the Halder family.' On account of his spiritual nature, God incarnated Himself as his son. With Him came other companions, the helpers of this mission, such as Naren, Rakhal, Balaram, Bhavanath, Monomohan—O! that's a long story, my child! The younger Naren at last became attached to gold and lust. He was involved in pecuniary matters. Every thing that Sri Ramakrishna prophesied about the devotees has proved true to the very letter.

"One girl of Kamarpukur, named Haridasi, intending to go to Navadvip*, came to our house and stayed here. She loved me very dearly. Her faith was immeasurable. She kept with her some dust particles of Sri Ramakrishna's birth-place, and said, 'This place is itself Navadvip. Chaitanya himself has been born here. Why should I go to the other Navadvip.' Ah, what tremendous faith! After Sri Ramakrishna's passing away, a monk from Orissa came to Kamarpukur. I used to supply him with rice, Dal and other foodstuffs. Every morning and evening I would go to him and enquire about his welfare. I built a small hut for him. Every day the sky would be overcast with dark clouds, and rain seemed imminent. With folded hands I would pray to God, saying, 'O Lord, please postpone the rain till the construction of the hut is finished. You may pour any amount of rain after that. The villagers alone supplied me with the necessary materials, such as timber, rope, etc. Every day, we apprehended rain. However, the hut was constructed, and a few days later the monk gave up his body in that very hut."

* The birth-place of Sri Chaitanya, whom the Hindus worship as an Incarnation of God,

The Mother said, "Come, child, let us go inside the room." Then she said, "Sri Ramakrishna used to tell us that his body came from Gaya. After his mother's passing away, Sri Ramakrishna requested me to go to Gaya and offer the Pindam.* I said, 'How is that possible? The Pindam is offered only by the son. How can I do so, when you are alive?' Sri Ramakrishna said, 'That will be all right. It is not possible for me to go to Gaya. Once I go there, I cannot come back.'† I said, 'Then don't worry about it.' I myself went to Gaya later on and offered the Pindam."

It was half-past nine in the evening. I prostrated before her and took my leave.

* * *

No sooner had the Holy Mother caught sight of me than she said, "Come in, my child. How are you?" She asked another devotee to rub the medicinal oil on her back. The woman asked me to do it. The Mother said, "Dear me! She worked hard for the whole day. Allow her a little rest. (To me): Sit down, my child. They were just talking about Sri Bhaskarananda. I have also been to see him at Benares. A number of women accompanied me. I was then in a terrible state of mind. It was just after Sri Ramakrishna's passing away. At that time I made my first pilgrimage to Brindaban. When I saw Bhaskarananda at Benares, he was totally naked. But that did not create the slightest agitation in his mind. The moment he saw me and the other

* Food and drink offering to the departed ancestors.

† As the readers of Sri Ramakrishna's biography know, he was born as the result of a vision of God (Vishnu) his father had at Gaya. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that as he had got his body from Gaya, it would fall off if he went there again.

women, he cried out, 'Don't be embarrassed, Mother. I see in you all the Mother of the Universe. Why should you be bashful?'...Alas, what a great soul! Completely beyond all worldly ideas. In cold and heat alike, he always remained naked."

After the rubbing of the oil was over, the Mother said, "Come along. We shall read from Sri Ramakrishna's Gospel. Sarala has left for the boarding house, otherwise she would have read from the book." In the course of our reading, the conversation drifted to various spiritual disciplines and realisations.

Mother: These devotees—Golap Ma and Jogin Ma—devoted a great deal of time to meditation and Japam. It is useful to speak about these spiritual disciplines. Such a subject of conversation stimulates religious fervour in the minds of others. (Some young disciples were present there. Regarding spiritual visions, the Holy Mother did not say much. Perhaps she did not want to speak about them before others.)

Nalini: Dear aunt! We hear that people are absorbed in meditation and Japam. They see and feel God. I spent so many days in your holy company. But what have I gained after all?

Mother: Why should they not see such visions of God? That they should have these realisations is quite natural to them. How much faith and devotion they possess. One must have faith and devotion; then alone one realises God. How little do you possess these virtues!

Nalini: Well, dear aunt, people say that you are Antar-yamin, the inner controller of all. Are you really so? Can you read my thought?

The Mother smiled a little. Nalini insisted. Then the Mother said, "Their devotion for me makes them say so." And she added, "Who am I, child? Sri Ramakrishna is all in all. Please pray to Sri Ramakrishna," (with folded hands, she saluted the Master) "so that I may be free from all trace of egoism."

* * *

The Mother was still lying in bed. She asked me to massage her feet gently. While massaging them I questioned her, "Mother, I should like to ask you about something. Will you feel uncomfortable?" The Mother said, "No, never! Please tell me what you have to say." Then the Mother said, "Is it possible to enjoy that bliss every day? Everything is true. Nothing is false. Sri Ramakrishna is all. He is both the Prakriti and Purusha. You will realise everything from him alone."

Devotee: Mother, I repeat the name of God with great concentration for a long time. I cannot follow your other instructions regarding meditation. Then I have to pass through them quickly as I cannot afford to neglect my household duties. Is there anything wrong in that?

Mother: No, my child, there is nothing wrong in it.

Devotee: Some one said to me, 'I hear, now and then, during my meditation at midnight, a kind of sound. Mostly the sound originates from the right side of the body. But at times particularly when the mind comes down to the physical consciousness, I feel the sound coming up from the left side as well.'

Mother (after a little thought): Yes, the sound comes up from the

right side. The left side belongs to the 'physical plane.' One gets these experiences when the Kundalini is awakened. The feeling on the right side denotes real spiritual progress. In the end, the mind itself becomes one's own teacher. It is much better to control the mind even for two minutes and pray to God.

I did not like to ask for further explanations regarding the 'physical plane.' She was not at all well. A woman devotee came to the room and asked about fixing the mosquito-curtain. I was thinking of taking my leave. Directly the Holy Mother raised her head from the pillow and said, "You may take your leave now; I am up from the bed." It is not permissible to prostrate before a person when he is in bed. No sooner did I prostrate before her than the Mother said, "Come again, my child. Come next time when it is still light; but perhaps you cannot finish your household duties so early. Anyhow, come again." The mosquito-curtain was drawn, but she put her face outside it and bade me farewell. I left the room and came to the verandah; but still, I heard her repeating the name of God in a compassionate voice. Such indescribable love! The time we spent in her holy company was free from all the sorrows and miseries of the world.

Some time after that I went to see the Mother. Noticing her physical afflictions, the monastic devotees said to her, "Mother, this time when you get well, we shall not allow you to initiate anybody. You suffer so much because you take upon yourself the fruits of others' iniquities." The Mother smiled and said, "Why so, children? Was Sri Ramakrishna born this time only to enjoy, 'Rasa-

golla'?" All became silent. How can we foolish children appreciate the deep significance expressed through these words? This reminds me of another incident. A lady of good family, through the irony of her past Karma, took to an immoral life; but she had in store the result of some good work too. She met a holy man and through his advice came to realise her evil deeds and mistakes. Extremely repentant, the lady came one day, at his suggestion, to visit the Holy Mother. Hesitating to enter the Chapel, she stood near the door and began to cry. She related the deeds of her past iniquity

* A delicious kind of Bengali sweet. The meaning is that the purpose of Sri Ramakrishna's incarnation was not to enjoy only sweet things. He was born to alleviate the misery of others through his own suffering.

to the Mother and at last said, "Mother, is there any way open to me? I am not fit to enter this holy Chapel. I cannot go near you." The Holy Mother herself advanced a few steps, and with her arms encircled the woman's neck, she said with great love, "Come in, my child, come inside the room. You have understood your mistakes, you are repentant now. Come along, I shall initiate you. Surrender everything at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna. There is no fear for you." She carried on her shoulders the heavy burden of the sins and sufferings of all, and their disease and grief. It is possible only for such a compassionate Mother, the saviour of the down-trodden, to say, "What! Did Sri Ramakrishna incarnate himself only to eat Rasagolla?"

PROGRESS OR PHILOSOPHY?

By Swami Iswarananda

INDIA has been blamed for her preoccupation with philosophical pursuits. The complaint is still being repeated that the unworldly outlook of her people has taken away all her zest from the pursuit of worldly ends, that constant brooding over the evanescence of this life has bred indifference towards all earthly concerns, resulting in an appalling mass of ignorance, illiteracy, filth, disease, famine and death. She has lost all power of resistance and has become a prey to every foreigner who chooses to subdue and exploit her. The advent of western civilization has roused her up from her long inertia and stupor and set her athinking of her mundane welfare. India, the philosophic India, is coming to her senses and will do good to shake herself off

once for all from the hold of philosophy! That is the exhortation we hear from some of our leaders.

It has to be admitted that there is a germ of truth in this charge. It is mainly directed against that philosophy which teaches that this world, this life, is an evanescent delusion. It would equally apply to those realistic theologies and philosophies as well, which teach that this world and life are real; for they equally believe in the existence of other worlds which are as real as this world, but more worthy to be sought for and thereby make their followers other-worldly, if not unworldly. These philosophies and theologies have gone deep into the life of the nation, and all attempts to cure them of this common attitude of indifference to the concerns of

this world are proving almost futile. Hence the cry of despair and complaint.

But in admitting so far, we should like to remind those who plead for a realistic outlook, that the Hindu scheme of life has made ample provision for such people. There is the path of *Pravriti-marga* (Activity) for them. Laziness is not encouraged by any of the philosophies; it is in human nature. All scriptures exhort man to a life of struggle. Man is to strive either for *Dharma* (virtuous life), *Artha* (wealth) or *Kama* (enjoyment), if he cannot tread the path of *Moksha* (liberation). The *Moksha-marga* is for the few, for those who have become convinced of the illusory nature of this world and this life. For the vast majority this truth of philosophy is only a hypothesis, something which they have heard, but not yet fully convinced of. They have to take this world as real and the Hindu scriptures, accordingly, have laid down elaborate rules and regulations in great detail about almost every aspect of worldly life. The Rishis paid as much attention to the guidance of the nation in the world of *Vyavahara* (relative existence) and *Pravriti-marga*, as they paid to the *Paramarthika* (the plane of absolute truth) and the *Nivriti-marga* (the path of liberation) for the seekers after Truth and liberation. Hindus do not require to be reminded how much the path of action has been emphasised in their great scripture, the Gita. Philosophy deals with the whole of life and as such has not excluded from its scope the due satisfaction of the innate urges and aspirations of the average man. The possibility of the realisation of the highest truth and the goal of life even in the active life of the householder has not been

excluded by the Hindu philosophers.

Yet, on the whole, the accusation that the philosophic and religious outlook of her people has bred other-worldly view of life to the detriment of her worldly prosperity, is fairly valid. A nation which has heard for generations that this world is evanescent, this life transcient, ephemeral, a delusion, a dream, a snare and a bondage—and as such to be got rid off—could not be expected to throw itself heart and soul into making a heaven of this earth with as much enthusiasm as those who believe in the solid reality and reliability of this world. Pre-Upanishadic Aryans enjoyed this world with as much gusto and abandon as any other realistic people on earth. But from the days of the Upanishads up to the present day her best thinkers after a full examination of the nature of the world have found it unsatisfactory and unreliable. She has known that this world is never going to be perfect. She does not believe in a millennium when there will be no evil and only good will reign. Good and evil are the obverse and reverse of the same coin, one does not exist without the other. Life is a mixture of pain and pleasure, of happiness and misery, individual or national. It is futile to hope to completely get rid of the one without getting rid of the other. Through numberless centuries India has, therefore, remained calm in the midst of great national calamities; she knew it is in vain to shut her eyes to facts and never forgot the hard-earned truth she learned for long centuries. Patience born of this lesson alone has borne her up in spite of the severest misfortunes inflicted by nature and tyrannies and exploitation by alien invaders. Shall she, in a moment of impatience, blinded by the glamour

of western prosperity, and unable to bear the ridicule of the children of yesterday, kick away that adamant rock of safety, her philosophy, which has helped her to weather the storms and thunders and rains and floods through untold centuries and which still keeps her up as a nation with a life and a message? It is a law of nature that the individual after a life of hard-earned experience and service of the species must die and make room for the generations that are to come. It has been so even with races and nations as well. But the father lives in the son. Greece was conquered and in turn conquered her conqueror. The Roman Empire did not die without leaving her impress upon Europe. Greece and Rome are alive in every fibre of European civilization. India has an undying message and when that message is delivered it shall not matter to her whether she lives or dies. For this she has lived these aeons and she shall not die so long as she holds to this mission of hers in the economy of nations, but if she dies, she shall yet gasp out with her last breath, "This world, this life is a delusion, born of ignorance."

Europe is undoubtedly great in her own way. Her power and prosperity, her knowledge and organisation, her wonderful inventions and discoveries shall no doubt be the objects of emulation for India. Nor should we be unwilling to learn from them those things in which they are great, and to adapt them to our requirements and our genius. By all means let India go in for Swaraj, parliamentary government, manhood or womanhood suffrage, universal education, industrial development, up-to-date sanitation and scientific discoveries. By all means let her try socialism, or communism, or capitalism—which

ever is conducive to her worldly welfare. Why not she have her dream of poverty and ill-health be displaced for a while by the dream of prosperity and health? We do not see any harm in that. Only let her not forget that after all it is only a dream. If she forgets, she forgets it to her cost. Is it possible to reconcile this philosophy with worldly prosperity? For those who doubt it we point to the prosperity of the great Maurian Empire when the teachings of the great Buddha, who preached the evanescence of this life, had been the inspiration of every household throughout the length and breadth of this vast continent.

To those of her children who are impatient of her unworldly outlook and would gladly give it up for the realistic attitude of the western modern civilization, India has to utter a word of warning. Only let them ponder over the outcome and lessons of the present day western attitude towards life. It is a matter of common knowledge that beneath her prosperity Europe is unhappy. There is fear at the back of her laughter. Which nation in Europe knows to-day a night of peaceful sleep? Every nation lives in fear of every other. The race for armaments is as keen as ever. The strong and the cunning are ever ready to spring at the throat of the weak and the unwary. Like dogs they snarl at each other and will soon come to grips. Their economic arrangements and political constitutions are undergoing sudden and violent changes. Their family life is fast breaking up. Cut-throat individual and national competition for power and wealth is sweeping them into the vortex of political and economic crisis. Insecurity and uncertainty are writ large in the face of contemporary European

politics. Jealousy, hatred, greed, rivalry, vanity, vengeance, exploitation, and cruelty to the weak are fast devastating their morale and form the cause of their peacelessness. When this world is everything and everybody wants the largest share—the outcome will be the fate of modern Europe. Nay, more. Europe and her politics may soon prove the curse of the world, for the next war, if we are to believe the trend of events, may not spare any nation on earth. Those who put too much faith in the realistic attitude have to ponder deeply before they would ask India to give up her unworldly outlook.

India is poor, ignorant, diseased and weak—a bad dream indeed, nevertheless a dream. The West is strong, dominating, conquering, surrounded by all comforts—a happy dream, nevertheless a dream. Is it not so? India has thrown the challenge to prove it otherwise. Her thinkers did not seek a comfortable make-believe philosophy. They dared to face the Truth and unhesitatingly, fearlessly, unashamedly proclaimed that this Universe of solid earths, suns and stars, of heavens and hells, of gods and paradises is no better than a dream, that this ego, this body of man is as unreal as those in a dream and that

the sooner this truth is realised the better for the world. Then alone the false values which man has set on his individuality, his body, his possessions, his country, his race, will disappear. It is the false realistic outlook that has brought in selfishness and greed, jealousy and hatred, exploitation and cruelty. The world will be a hundredfold happier, if it is got rid of. If only a hundred men and women in every country had realised this fact of the vanity of this life of delusion, this earth would be a heaven even without motor cars, aeroplanes, wireless sets, cinemas, bombs and poison gases. But the power of ignorance is such that this chasing of the will-o-the-wisp will go on. Man in search of happiness has no time to think of the true way to it, just like the bridegroom who, it is said, in the hurry of marriage ceremonies just forgot to tie the thread of wedlock! Few are they who dare face the truth, and the wheel of falsehood rolls on, scattering misery and pain, regardless of our groaning. Let, then, every child of India, in silent indifference to the childish jeer and ridicule of the West, utter every morning the sacred formula, "This world is *mithya*, a passing dream, a mirage; the Self, the Self alone is true."

IN THE COMPANY OF A MAHATMA*

SEVERAL years ago in the month of February many philosophical papers were read in the Belur Monastery on the anniversary day of the (Calcutta) Vivekananda Society. All appeared to be dull and dry to me. I felt very uneasy thinking that my time was thus spent in vain. A few days before this, on the occasion of a special celebration, I had gone to the Belur Math and seen a monk explaining the Upanishadic texts early in the morning in the verandah facing the Ganges. The monk who gave readings from the Upanishads was young, and had a divine complexion. He was a tall figure with yellow robes on his person and had a charming appearance. His pronunciation was sweet and clear. The topic was the dialogue between Yajnavalkya and Gargi of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. That day I had gone there with a very heavy and uneasy mind. Though I felt better for the time being, that feeling of relief did not last long. Walking to and fro there for a while I returned to Calcutta. Mental uneasiness continued as before. This day I had expected very much that it would be possible for me to leave the Math with a calm and composed mind, but the hearing of those dry essays did not benefit me at all. I was thinking what to do when a monk got up and spoke a few words. It was strange that his few words changed my mind unexpectedly. His speech was not eloquent nor had his language any uncommon grandeur. But his ideas touched me deeply. I could not then mark any distinctive feature

in his countenance, rather he seemed to be a man of common calibre. Particularly the beautiful face and sweet voice of the reader of the Upanishad of the former day being still fresh in my memory, I was not much attracted by his appearance. He concluded the philosophical discussion after speaking a few words on the Dvaita, the Vishistadvaita and the Advaita. I came to understand from his words that the Vishistadvaita stands between the Dvaita and the Advaita. According to this school the world and the individual, being the manifestations of Brahman, are neither one nor different as the shell, the kernel and the seeds forming the Bilva-fruit. He said,—“The followers of all creeds are unanimously in favour of prayer. Forget all differences and be prayerful. Try to approach God. Address Him as Mother. If you call Him Father the feeling of fear or dryness may come. If you call Him as Mother everything becomes sweet and soft. There would then not be the least trace of hesitation or delicacy. This is the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna, the great prophet of harmony. Om peace, peace, peace be to all.”

I left the Math with a hopeful heart. After a long time I came to know that the said speaker was no other than Swami Turiyananda, a celebrated monk of the Ramakrishna Order, popularly known as Hari Maharaj.

Afterwards, one day in the Belur Math, Swami Subodhananda made many affectionate enquiries of

myself and instructed me to correspond with revered Hari Maharaj. He also wrote to Hari Maharaj about me. I wrote a letter to Swami Turiyananda sometime prior to the Purna Kumbhamela. He was then staying in Kankhal near Hardwar. My desire was to go to the Kumbhamela and meet him there. By a kind reply, he encouraged me to go on a pilgrimage to Kumbhamela but wrote to me that he would go to Uttar Kasi. I went to Hardwar but could not see him. After sometime during the Dasra festival I heard that he was lying ill in the Balaram Mandir (in Calcutta). I went to him and after prostrations expressed my desire to stay with him for sometime. He said that it would be possible when he would be staying in the Belur Math or Benares. Afterwards I went to Benares once and saw him in the Home of Service there. He told me many things about politics and enquired in solitude about my spiritual practices. I told him what I was practising. Thereupon forbidding me to continue the Sadhanas I was practising he said, “Man becomes demented by such spiritual practices but as you are a celibate, they could not do any harm to you.” It was unfortunate that the idea of asking him for some Sadhanas did not occur to me then. Most probably he used to give instructions in spiritual matters in response only to earnest prayer. However, I visited him almost daily during my short stay in Benares. After six months of this visit I went to Benares in January of 1921 and had the opportunity of living there for three months together. I used to go to Hari Maharaj everyday. On my desiring to understand the meaning of some Slokas of the Gita he began to teach me the same. One day he read

the following Slokas of the tenth chapter :—

*“With their minds wholly in me, with their senses absorbed in me, mutually enlightening, and always speaking of me they are satisfied and delighted.” (9)

“To them ever steadfast and serving me with affection I give that Buddhi Yoga by which they come unto me.” (10)

“Out of mere compassion for them, I, abiding in their hearts, destroy the darkness in them born of ignorance, by the luminous lamp of knowledge.” (11)

After reading out the Slokas he explained the term ‘Atmabhavastha’ or ‘abiding in their hearts.’ He said—“Sri Ramakrishna expounded the meaning of this term to Swami Vivekananda by saying—‘The Lord residing in the hearts of the devotees removes their ignorance.’ Girish Ch. Ghose who was then there with Swami Vivekananda said, ‘He descends as man in flesh and blood and then destroys the darkness.’ When both were thus debating, Sri Ramakrishna encouraged Swami Vivekananda with these words :—‘Why don’t you say that I am with you?’”

Another day Swami Turiyananda threw a new light on the meaning of the following verses of the Gita :—

सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।
नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन् ॥१३॥
न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।
न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥१४॥

* मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥६॥
तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥१०॥
तेषामेवानुक्तमप्यर्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्यो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥११॥

* Translated by S. J. from the original Bengali published in Magh and Chaitra numbers of ‘Udbodhan’, Calcutta.

नादतो कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।

अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥१५॥

"The subduer of the senses having renounced all actions by discrimination rests happily in the city of the nine gates, neither acting nor causing others to act." V. 13.

"Neither agency nor actions does the Lord create for the world, nor does He bring about the union with the fruit of action. It is the universal ignorance that does it all." V. 14.

"The Omnipresent takes the merit or the demerit of none. Knowledge is enveloped in ignorance; hence do beings get deluded." V. 15.

He said—"Here the word 'Vasi' is meaningful and deserves special attention. When the senses are under control it is possible to prevent the attack of temptations. The only way to the attainment of Self-knowledge is the subjugation of the senses. When all the senses are in full control then and then alone we can experience the inner meaning of the pregnant phrases—"neither acting nor causing others to act..." and "neither agency nor the actions..." Mark the words 'Vasi,' 'Prabhu,' and 'Vibhu' respectively in these three verses. They are almost synonymous and have the same implications. It is not possible to make others understand the truth of them.

"The inner being becomes soothed. Its meaning is understood by him who realises it within. Why do you look at my external afflictions and sufferings? It is as cool as ice within." Another day while explaining the meaning of the Sloka—

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।

पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥

"Therefore, O Bull of the Bharata Race, controlling the senses at the outset, kill it,—the sinful, the

destroyer of knowledge and realisation." III, 41.

He said,—“Here the word 'Adau' is significant. It means 'before the attack,' i.e., before the thoughts of lust, anger, etc., overwhelm us—as soon as they rise in mind or, in short, before commission of sins. Many become aware of the sinfulness of the acts after commission. But that is too late for the monks whose lives are devoted to the vision of Truth. No sooner is the fire of desires kindled in you than it should be extinguished by all means.” Commenting on “Jnana-Vijnana-nasana” he continued:—“Such is the power of lust that it overpowers the wisdom born of realisation, not to speak of ordinary knowledge and conviction.” While reading the Sloka quoted above he laid particular stress on the word, 'Adau' and drove home to us its implications. Explaining the marks of a 'Sthitaprajna' (man of steady wisdom) he exclaimed—"How nice! Don't you like to become one?"

To bring home to us the wonderful power of Mahamaya, the Mysterious Enchantress, he used to give often the example of Rabani: 2

The fishes float in water in joy and then enter it! By exercising a little discretion they can very well go round it and escape the disaster. But that is not to be! They become stupified, run about noisily within the Rabani and are eventually caught." After telling this he sang:—"Such is the illusive power of Mahamaya, (the Mysterious Enchantress) that she has kept us totally forgetful of our real nature by casting her charm over us. Brahma, Vishnu and other gods are deluded by it. How can the world-

(2) Rabani or Ghuni is a contrivance made of bamboo to catch fish. It is like a maze and is widely used in the villages for the same purpose.

lings get over it? When the Ghuni is put in a small stream to catch fish, the fishes enter into it. The inlet and the outlet are wide open but still the fishes cannot go out of it. Caterpillars form the cocoon; they may easily cut it open and come out. But the insects are so inextricably entangled by the illusion of ignorance that they dig their own grave, and die therein."

To illustrate this idea further he told one day the following story: "There is an artifice (contrivance) in this part of the country for catch-

ing birds. A piece of rope is spread parallel with a mud-line on earth and some eatables are kept under the rope. As soon as the bird sits on the rope for food it takes, a somersault and it is not known why just after it is turned upside down it bites the rope strongly. If it lets go the rope it is at once free but it will not do so. Then the fowler comes and catches it. See, how strong is the influence of Maya! Rightly has it been said in the Gita by the Bhagavan—"Wisdom is enveloped by ignorance, so the beings are deluded."

(To be concluded.)

RESUSCITATION OF BODH GAYA TEMPLE

[Bodh Gaya temple has of late been brought before the public notice, as it is the subject of a bill introduced into the Indian Legislative Assembly for transferring the management of the temple from Hindu into Buddhist hands. The question however has not drawn the attention of the Hindus sufficiently. In order to remedy this we give the following re-print from the "Foreword" of the 1st of April, setting forth the case of the Buddhists. For our views on the question, the reader is asked to look into the Notes and Comments Column.]

THE dream of the Buddhist world is on its attainment to reality. The historic battle to regain the Bodh Gaya by the Buddhists—the Buddhist Crusade as we may call it—has at last come to an end. A Bill has been introduced in the Legislative Assembly very recently to make provision for the restoration of the Bodh Gaya Temple and its premises to Buddhists and for the better management of the same.

The object of such a Bill is quite obvious from the Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill, viz.,—

"The Mahabodhi Temple at Buddha Gaya is the most sacred shrine of the Buddhist world, as it stands on the spot

where Lord Buddha attained Supreme Wisdom. It is to the Buddhist what Mecca is to the Muslim, Ajodhya to the Hindu and Jerusalem to the Christian. It is in the hands of a non-Buddhist, the Saivite Mahanth of Buddha Gaya. For many years past the Buddhists have been greatly dissatisfied with his management of the Temple and the Temple Land. They have expressed their strong desire to have them restored to their control. The desire is but natural, and this Bill is intended to make provision for the better management of the Mahabodhi Temple and the Temple Land, for their restoration to the Buddhists of India, Burma and Ceylon without prejudice

to the right of Hindus to worship the Image of Buddha in the Temple and to offer Pinda at the Bodhi Tree to the north of the Temple."

"It is a matter of great satisfaction that the strenuous fight is coming to an end but everyone would be glad at heart, if there would be any possibility of arriving at an amicable settlement between the parties concerned as was expected by the Committee consisting of persons like Mr. Brajkishore Prasad, P. Jayaswal, Mr. Ramodhar Dass Sadhu and Babu Rajendra Prasad as will be evident from the Report of the Bodh Gaya Temple by the Committee appointed by the All-India Congress Committee and the Bihar Provincial Hindu Mahasabha.

It may not be unknown to the readers that under a giant Fig Tree still to be found by the side of this Temple, our Lord Buddha attained his enlightenment. Of course, the Tree had to suffer a bit at the iron hands of several intruders; but amidst tortures and torments the Temple and the Tree are raising their heads high up to the pinnacle of glory.

There is practically no authentic record as to the exact date when this Temple was erected. But from the accounts of Travels which the Chinese travellers have left after them, we have reason to believe that the temple was primarily built by the Great Asoka, which was re-constructed by a Brahman convert to Buddhism on a large scale. At first the Brahman was not a believer in the Law of Buddha and dedicated it to Maheswara (Siva). He afterwards became a believer in Buddhism and dedicated the Temple and the adjoining tank excavated by him in the name of Buddha. In course of time "the Brahman became the great minister of the

king. He devoted all his emoluments to the work of charity."

As time went on, there were numerous additions and alterations done to this Temple from time to time, and several other temples were also built in the vicinity of the old one by one Meghawarna, Buddhist King of Ceylon. This would indicate that the Buddhists were not only in close touch with the place but were actually erecting buildings from time to time.

The Temple appears to have remained in possession of Buddhist monks for at least 1500 years up to the advent of the Mussalmans.

The Buddhist guardianship of the shrine seems to have come to an end in the fourteenth century. The shrine as a Buddhist institution survived Hindu revolutions. Even the Brahmanical Senas respected and supported it. It fell only when the Hindu power fell before the Islamic zeal. The possession of the orthodox Sanyasins, which continues to this day, probably originated during the period of the rehabilitation of Gaya by Hindu crusaders under Rajput warriors.

Since then, the history of Bodh Gaya is shrouded in obscurity for several centuries and no account can be had of the Temple till the year 1811 when the King of Burma visited the place. A few years before that the King of Ava had sent two messengers who with the help of books had identified the holy places and had converted one of the Sannyasis of the Math to Buddhism. This Sannyasi even after he had rejected the orthodox faith was entertained by the Mahanth who also used to "give an allowance to a family of Rajputs which acts as Pujaris to the temple and takes care not only of the various small buildings erected by his

predecessors and of the several trees but offers flowers and water to "Mahamuni" and preserves the image from injury". They had given orthodox names to the images in their charge and considered Mahamuni an incarnation of Vishnu.

Now, a word or two as to how the Temple became the property of Saivite Mahants:—

In 1590, one Gossain Ghamandi Gir, while on a pilgrimage tour, arrived at the place and was so charmed at the serenity of the Temple and its vicinity that he made up his mind to stay there for his religious devotions and accordingly built a small monastery near the Great Temple. He was the founder of the Saivite Monastery of Bodh Gaya and was the first Mahanth as he was called. The fourth Mahanth was Mahanth Lal Gir who obtained by a royal Firman from the Emperor of Delhi the village of Mastipur Taradin. The subsequent grants from various persons greatly increased the property of the Math. The present Mahanth is the 12th in succession from him, and he was installed on 4th February, 1892.

The Saivite Mahants are opposed to Buddhism. The Vaishnavas have admitted the Buddha into their pantheon by making Him the Ninth Avatar of the God Vishnu. The Temple was in ruins until 1877, when the King of Burma obtained the consent of the Government of India to have it repaired. For 2½ years the Burmese workmen were engaged in the work, and as they were not carrying out the work according to the rules of architecture, the Government of India stepped in, and obtained the permission of the King to have the work done under the supervision of engineering experts. The king gladly assented, and the work

was carried on under the direction of General Cunningham and under the supervision of Mr. J. D. Beglar. The work was completed in March 1884.

The Burmese Buddhist monks remained at Buddha Gaya until the commencement of the war with the King of Burma. They left the place when the war was declared. The kingdom of Burma was annexed to the British Indian Empire and the Temple which was the property of the Buddhist king was forgotten.

In 1885, the late Sir Edwin Arnold, the author of "The Light of Asia", visited the Holy Site and found the place abandoned, which made him appeal to the Government of India to have the Temple placed under Buddhist custody. The Temple was then in nobody's hands. The Government instead of summoning a few Buddhist monks from Burma called the Mahants to take charge of the Temple. This was done in 1890.

Matters went on like this till Anagarika Dharmapala, the late Buddhist savant, made his appearance in the battlefield of Bodh Gaya Temple. After returning from the Chicago Congress Mr. Dharmapala visited Gaya. The Maha Bodhi Society was founded in May, and the following July he came to Bodh Gaya and stayed at the rest-house which was built by the Burmese King. It has ever since remained one of the main objects of the Maha Bodhi Society to secure control of the temple for the Buddhists.

While returning from America, Mr. Dharmapala was given an old and beautiful image of Buddha by the High Priest in Japan with a request that he would instal the image in the Bodh Gaya Temple. On his return to India

he wanted to instal the image in the Bodh Gaya Temple and a consequent friction resulted in a protracted and bitter fight in the Criminal Court in which the Mahanth's men were charged with various offences. On appeal the conviction was upheld by the District Judge. When the matter went up to the High Court the conviction was set aside with the remark that the proper forum for a final adjudication of the rights of the parties was a civil court.

The Japanese image, the installation of which had been successfully resisted by the Mahanth's men, was afterwards kept in the rest-house. The Collector of Gaya issued an order calling upon the Maha Bodhi Society to have the Japanese Image removed from the Burmese rest-house; but the order was subsequently cancelled by the then Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, and the Japanese Image was allowed to remain in the rest-house. The Mahanth thereupon petitioned the Government through the British Indian Association to have the Japanese Image removed from the Burmese rest-house. The Government gave a decisive reply thereto, reiterating that the Mahanth was not the owner of the Burmese rest-house. The Image continued in the rest-house for more than ten years, and priest Sumangala and Mr. Dharmapala also used to stay in it.

(This is followed by an account of the unsuccessful attempt of the Japanese Buddhists under the leadership of Mr. Okakura to get possession of the temple)

Now that the matter is before the public, opinion should be formed that the truth may find its usual course. The facts cannot be ignored that originally it was a Buddhist Temple built by Asoka the Great, that the King of Burma undertook its reconstruction,

that there are monasteries in the vicinity built by the Buddhist King of Ceylon, and above all, that the Temple and the Tree are associated with our Lord Buddha. It is indeed a matter of great "satisfaction" that a Saivite Mahanth should stick so firmly to a Temple knowing it full well to be a Buddhist one, but it is only just and equitable from the religious point of view that the management of the Temple should be vested on Buddhists. An arrangement as given below ought to be satisfactory to all parties.

"The Hindus ought not to be excluded from worship, if they wish to perform any, of the image, and they should certainly not be interfered with in any way in offering Pindas where they have been doing it at present. The Buddhists who have always worshipped the image will have their rights secured and placed above the caprice of a single individual of a different faith. The Government may also have its interests guarded against any foreign influences and international complications. As regards the income from the Temple itself, no serious question arises as it is not of much consequence. Some things which are alleged but not proved to be done by Buddhists and others would certainly be open to objection by Hindus. Shoes should certainly not be allowed. Offerings of articles considered objectionable by the Hindus should not be allowed. Some way will also have to be found to satisfy the Buddhists who take strong objection to the Tilak on the forehead as also the vestment and the turban put on the image. Thus with a sympathetic understanding between the Hindus and the Buddhists the place can be converted into a great centre of learning and culture in which both Hindus and Buddhists will

join. The Buddhists are after all an offshoot from the Hindus and modern Hindus represent both Buddhism and Hinduism. A joint place of worship under joint management will not only be in the fitness of things but will create a point of contact fruitful of beneficent consequences to both, and will enable the Hindus all the more and better to recover once again the true spirit of the Buddha whose noble lessons of love, charity, selflessness and 'Ahimsa' require ever so much more to be emphasised and realised. That it

is not a mere idle dream can be realised by those who visit Kushinagore, where Lord Buddha attained Nirvana, which is under the management of a Buddhist priest aided by a Vaishnava, once again developing into a place of pilgrimage for Hindus and Buddhists alike.

With the above remarks of the Committee appointed by the All-India Congress Committee and the Bihar Provincial Hindu Mahasabha let us come to the end of the story of the religious fight between the Hindus and Buddhists.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Bodh Gaya Temple Bill

The Bodh Gaya Temple Bill which will come before the Legislative Assembly in the next session is one of the most remarkable measures that the Indian Legislature has been called upon to consider in recent times. From the account of the temple and the object of the Bill that we have given elsewhere in this issue it will be readily seen by our readers that freed from all camouflage the measure aims at the virtual confiscation of a temple, sacred both to the Hindus and the Buddhists alike, from the hands of the Hindu Mahant who has been in possession of it for several centuries, and the vesting of its management in the hands of a committee consisting almost entirely of Buddhists. We are tempted to ask—Has Bolshevism become the law of the land in India also?

The Buddhists' case has been very well stated in the article we have published elsewhere. They claim the temple for the following reasons: (1) Bodh Gaya being the place where Lord Buddha attained Enlightenment, it is the holiest spot

on earth for the Buddhists. (2) The Temple was originally constructed by some Buddhist King of India and was later on repaired by the King of Burma, also a Buddhist, in the last century. (3) The Temple was in the possession of Buddhists for nearly 1500 years till the Muslim conquest of India. This forms the substance of their positive claim, and in support of it they also allege that the Hindu Mahants got possession of the temple only recently after the Burmese war and that the Mahants are *Saivites* who do not hold Lord Buddha in reverence.

Are these facts, as the Buddhists put it, all true, and if so do they justify the confiscation of the Temple from its present Hindu management? If Bodh Gaya is holy to the Buddhists, it is even so to the Hindus. From time immemorial they have been offering Pinda there, as they do at Vishnupad at Gaya. Just as the Buddhists reverence Lord Buddha as the founder of their religion, the Hindus look upon him as an incarnation of God. The insinuation that the Vaishnavas alone look upon Buddha as an in-

carnation, and that the Mahant being a *Saivite* does not reverence him is nothing but a piece of sophistry. The assumption here is that there is no common Hindu consciousness as such, apart from the sectarian divisions into Saivas and Vaishnavas. Although there are sectarian Hindus for whom the hatred of Siva is a part of their devotion to Vishnu and vice versa, we can state with assurance that the majority of Hindus worship God conceived both as Vishnu and Siva. Especially the followers of Sankaracharya, among whom the Bodh Gaya Mahants are included, cannot be designated exclusively as Saivite or Vaishnavite. They reverence equally all forms of the Deity and worship all incarnations. Those who say otherwise only display their ignorance of the religious mentality of the Hindus.

The fact that the Temple was built by Indian followers of Buddha in the past does not debar the modern Hindu from possessing it; for the Hindu claims to be as much a follower of Buddha as the professed Buddhist does. If the Buddhists have been in possession of the Temple for more than 1500 years in the past, it is pertinent to ask why they left it when the country was overrun by the Muslim invaders. When the spot sacred to the memory of Lord Buddha was abandoned by the professed followers of the Great Teacher, it required some Hindu Sannyasins to come forward and look after this *most sacred spot of the Buddhists* and offer daily worship unto the Lord for several centuries past. And yet the Buddhists find it now convenient to call these Sannyasins 'Saivites' and point out to this wrongly attributed sectarian demarcation as a disqualification for them to manage the Temple of the Lord Buddha. The

Burmese king might have repaired the Temple; but the person who repairs a religious edifice does not get possession of it. Many a Temple is now-a-days repaired by private bodies, but their ownership is not thereby transferred to them. The contention that the Hindu Mahants got control over the Temple only after the Burmese war is utterly unfounded. If the Hindu Mahants had not been there and had not looked after the Temple and conducted the worship there for the past several centuries, the very spot where the Lord Buddha attained Enlightenment would have been forgotten long ago.

The contention that the temple may be confiscated from the Hindu Mahants because the Buddhists were in possession of it some centuries ago, implies indeed a very dangerous principle. Especially the Muslim members who are asked to consider the Bill must be aware of the fact that if this principle is granted, the Hindus can very well introduce bills for the confiscation of several mosques in Benares, Ayodhya and other places.

The question as it stands can be settled only by the legal merits of the claims of both parties. It is not a subject fit for legislation.

The Temper of the Buddhists

It would be interesting to know in this connection what the Buddhists in Buddhist lands think of the claim of the Hindus to get control over such Hindu shrines as are at present under Buddhist management. Last month the Ceylon State Council passed a motion requesting the Governor of Ceylon to take such measures as are required to get the support of the Indian Government for the Bodh Gaya Temple Bill. A Hindu member, while supporting the motion,

expressed the desirability of a reciprocal act on the part of the Buddhists and appealed to them that the Hindu Shrine at Katragama in Ceylon, which is at present under Buddhist management, might be given over to the Hindus. A Buddhist member immediately got up and declared that there was no question of any reciprocity, because there was no parallel between Bodh Gaya Temple and the shrine at Katragama. His only argument in support of this was that the question of reciprocity would arise only in the case of temples, if any, which had been founded, established and endowed by Hindu sovereigns, and which now had passed into other hands.

He further said that there were several temples in Ceylon where Hindus and Buddhists worshipped together. They had done so for centuries and he was perfectly sure that they would do so for many centuries to come with perfect amity and concord.

An obvious question comes to our mind: Why not the Buddhists also be satisfied with mere liberty to worship in a common shrine like that of Bodh Gaya which happens to be under the management of a Hindu Mahant. But unfortunately the Buddhists want to grab in place of practising that spirit of "perfect amity and concord."

In reply to the contention that the Hindus can claim a temple only in case it was built and endowed by Hindu Kings, it is pertinent to point out that our kings in India were never exclusively Hindu or Buddhist, as the modern communally and politically minded Buddhists suppose. A Hindu King, when he became a Buddhist, never ceased to be a Hindu, just as a modern Vaishnava does not cease

to be a Hindu if he develops some leanings towards Saivism. So even if the builder of the temple was a Buddhist, that does not affect the Hindus' claim to the temple. But the political and communal bias of the modern Buddhist, we fear, would never permit him to see the intimate relation between Hinduism and Buddhism in ancient India.

The Hindu Opinion on the question

Unfortunately the Hindu opinion has not yet expressed itself in sufficient volume and force on this question. In the article we have published elsewhere, there occurs a passage from a report of a Congress Enquiry Committee appointed to consider this question. The extract seems to favour the idea of confiscating the temple from Hindu hands and handing it over to the Buddhists. We do not know whether the Congress as a political party is going to support a measure of this kind. If it does, no true Hindu can repose any trust in such a political party.

It is however re-assuring to note that under the auspices of the Hindu Mission a meeting was held to express the opposition of the Hindus to the proposed measure, and that a Committee was formed to organise the Hindu opinion on the question.

Einstein's Views on Religion

Along with many other topics that Prof. Einstein deals with in his recent book "The World As I See It," we are given the views entertained by this distinguished scientist and thinker on religion. According to him, if one purges Judaism of the Prophets and Christianity as Jesus Christ taught it, of all subsequent additions, especially those of the priests, one is left with a teaching which is capable of curing all the social ills of humanity. He believes

neither in the existence of a personal God nor in individual immortality. "Such notions," he declares "are for the fears and absurd egoism of feeble souls." At the same time he maintains that the man of science is essentially religious and believes in a super-human intelligence ordering the universe.

His religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly insignificant reflection. This feeling is the guiding principle of his life and works, in so far as he succeeds in keeping himself from the shackles of selfish desire. It is beyond question closely akin to that which has possessed the religious genius of all ages.

In his ethics Einstein is profoundly opposed to materialism. "I have never", he writes, "looked upon ease and happiness as ends in themselves—such an ethical basis I call more proper for a herd of swine." The true value of a human being, he declares, is to be determined primarily by the measure and the sense in which he has attained to liberation from the self.

It is no doubt true that the opinions of a man of genius in a particular sphere are of no considerable value in matters outside that sphere. Yet at a time when the common man is still under the delusion that science has driven religion to the wall, the opinion of a distinguished scientist that it is not really so is likely to be an eye-opener to many.

A Christian Missionary on Disarmament in Religious Field

Speaking at the Y. M. C. A., Madras, a few days back, Rev. Jay

Holmes Smith, Principal of the Beynon Smith High School, Belgaum, made a vigorous plea for freeing religion from the spirit of competition and communalism that have become characteristic of it in these days. He declared that while one group of people looked upon atheistic rationalism as the saviour of the world, another group firmly believed that religion alone was capable of this work. But the lecturer doubted whether in the mood of rivalry and partisan spirit obtaining in the religious world, one could seriously rely on religion to discharge this function.

It is refreshing to note that a Christian missionary is frank enough to confess, as Rev. Smith did in the course of his speech, that Christians were the worst offenders in this matter of partisan prejudice. Jesus, he declared, was a non-partisan. He never spoke in terms of religion but always in terms of life. Neither he nor his disciples belonged to any specially religious or priestly class. He was constantly thinking and speaking in terms of 'Life.'

The speaker pleaded for tolerance in the field of religion. He pointed out that there were two types of tolerance. The first said, "It is all the same no matter what you believe or even follow in the realm of religion." The person who said that generally meant that all religious ways and beliefs were a matter of equal indifference to him. The second type of tolerance, for which the speaker pleaded, stood for that spirit not because it cared so little, but because it cared so much about that which was supremely worthwhile—the development of personality to the highest degree.

The first of these positions hardly deserves the name of toleration; for the word loses all significance when used to denote the indifferent

attitude of an irreligious mind towards various forms of religious outlook. The second position is the tolerant attitude proper, since it refers to the relation between one religious world-view and another. Although we are not able to understand the speaker's meaning fully from the very brief press report, he seems to favour a position somewhat resembling the Hindu doctrine of Ishtam. The doctrine of Ishtam maintains that every man has his own line of development, and that the presentation of the spiritual truth and the practice of spiritual discipline in the case of different men should therefore vary more or less according to the needs of such development. We do not know whether Rev. Smith is prepared to go so far with the Hindu, when he says that solicitude for the development of personality to the highest degree is the true significance of tolerance. If the solicitude is genuine, it will result not simply in admitting another's right of development in his own way, but in the recognition that his way is as valid and true as one's own, in spite of one's special regard for one's own path.

Another View of Toleration

Writing about "Change in Organised Religion," Mr. R. H. Thouless remarks in the Hibbert Journal of January: "Probably it is the partial loss of.....vivid apprehension of the spiritual world that has caused religious groups to become less marked by any clear-cut externalism. My suggestion is that religious bodies were originally intolerant and strongly coherent social organisations, pursuing an aim which was in definite opposition to the social ends of those around them, whom they intolerantly designated as members of 'the

world.' Progressively through the centuries the situation has changed. There has been a good deal of give and take. The world has largely been converted to Christianity, but the aims pursued by religious organisations have also become largely those they found in the outside world. There is now no sharp distinction between the aims pursued and the mode of life adapted by the people inside and those outside religious organisations (as there is, let us say, between those inside and outside the Communist or Fascist party). So we see the religious organisations more and more taking the character of social groups of our second kind, tolerant but lacking in internal cohesion. In the political and racial antagonisms of the present day on the other hand, we see social phenomena which are not merely similar to those of the religious reformations and persecutions but are truly the product of identically the same social and psychological forces."

It will be interesting to compare the motives of toleration as depicted here with the view of Rev. Jay Holmes Smith mentioned in the previous section. Whereas respect for the growth of personality is the cause of genuine toleration according to Rev. Smith, toleration is here represented as springing from an approximation of ideals between religious groups and people outside them. If this approximation means the flooding of the society as a whole with the religious ideal, religion will indeed have discharged its function with credit. Unfortunately this is not the case. It is more true to say that the religious bodies have been converted to secular ideals than to say that the world has been largely converted to Christianity. Many a religious body seems to have identified

religion with social service, forgetting that the essence of the religious outlook lies elsewhere and that social service done in a particular spirit forms only an expression of it. The toleration referred to by Mr. Thouless has more in common with the indifferent type of tolerance mentioned by Rev. Holmes. A truly religious body will to-day find its ideals more opposed to the pursuits of men in general than at any time before. Immense scope of work therefore lies before such societies. But such work, if it is to be of real spiritual value, should not be prompted by narrow credal motives and directed to an attack on other religious ideals, but should consist in living intensely spiritual lives capable of influencing the forces of impiety around by the sheer force of their spiritual dynamism. A contagious form of holiness in the life of religious men is the crying need of the day.

An Astrological Theory of Sanatana Dharma

In the February issue of *Kalyana Kalpataru* we come across a very ingenious interpretation of the term 'Sanatana Dharma' by a prominent religious leader of the Hindus. It is pointed out that the universal law that everything born must die in consequence of the inexorable Astrological Law that under no circumstance can all the planets in any horoscope be wholly and absolutely auspicious. Even in those rare cases where all other planets occupy entirely satisfactory positions, Rahu and Ketu at any rate cannot both occupy wholly beneficial positions. There is therefore at least one planet in every horoscope which accounts for the disease, decay and death of the individual in question! This is the reason why the greatest Yogis and

Siddhas had finally to leave their bodies, however long they might have prolonged their lives, and even Indrajit, the son of Ravana, had to go the way of all flesh in spite of the superhuman endeavours of his father for the eternal continuance of his life!

Applying this law to religion, the writer says: "Now, this is a Law which applies to all things that have taken birth. Applying this Law to the religions before us, we must again, willy-nilly, take into account the fact that, as all of them (except Sanatana Dharma) were born at a certain particular point of time in the world's history, they too have their respective horoscopes and that they too must have a *Maraka* planet (i.e., one which in the fulness of time must kill them off)! In the case of Sanatana Dharma, however, this Astrological Law cannot possibly apply, for the very simple and sufficient reason that the Sun, the Moon and the other planets were themselves created long after Sanatana Dharma took birth (in the shape of the Vedas) and no planet can, therefore, have any lot, part or even voice in the shaping of the destinies of Sanatana Dharma! And certainly there can be no *Maraka*, (i.e., destructive) planet for Sanatana Dharma!"

However ingenious the argument is, we for our part are not convinced by it. It, however, reassures us of one thing, namely, that untouchability is not as indestructible as this very champion of Sanatana Dharma represents it to be. Surely the untouchable was born after the sun, the moon and the planets, and the rules regulating untouchability cannot therefore be beyond planetary influences. Even if the untouchables and the rules regarding

their degradation had their origin at a moment as auspicious as the time of Indrajit's birth, they cannot escape the devastating influence of the mischievous *Maraka* (destructive) planet, which marred the otherwise splendid horoscope of that valiant son of Ravana. This logical consequence of the astrological interpre-

tation of Sanatana Dharma may indeed come as a shock to many in this country, but it will help to point out to them that many things they call Sanatana (eternal) are not really so. Is the originator of this ingenious interpretation prepared to accept this implication of this astrological theory?

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SRI BHAGAVATAM: By Dewan Bahadur V.K. Ramanujachari, *Kumbhakonam (Madras)*. Price Rs. 6-8.

The book under review is an analysis of the twelve Skandas of the holy Purana in three volumes. The subject-matter has been carefully re-arranged, so as to facilitate an easy understanding of the teachings, scattered in different places in the original. The first volume comprising cantos 1 to 9 and 12 deals with the origin and evolution of the world, with anecdotes of different sages and Avatars and their spiritual talks. The second volume is decidedly the most interesting and important part of the book. It delineates the wonderful life, so full of love and heroism, of the Man-God Sri Krishna, the much-beloved of the Gopees of Vrindavana. While the matter has been abridged, the author has kept the spirit almost intact. A devotee will therefore find the abridgement in no way unrelishable. The third volume gives a synopsis of the Vaishnava Philosophy as inculcated in Canto XI of the Bhagavata. It mainly describes the exhortation of the Lord to Uddhava, asking him to practise austere penances in Badarikasrama and to renounce all attachment and desires for sense objects.

The translation is lucid and faithful to the original while the style is clear and illuminating. The re-grouping has been done without marring the beauty of the original—a fact which testifies to the author's profound learning and the hard labour

he has spent on this work. Srimad Bhagavatam is one of the greatest productions of the spiritual genius of India, and Mr. Ramanujachari who has made such a faithful and spirited abridgement of it available to the English reading public, has, no doubt, done a signal service to the cause of Hinduism. We heartily recommend this work to all spiritual aspirants and lovers of Indian devotional literature.

S. A.

KALYANA KALPATARU (GITA NUMBER): Gita Press, Gorakhpur. Price Rs. 2-8.

We welcome this volume dealing with the teachings and philosophy of Bhagavat Gita. It contains 64 articles by learned scholars and 8 pictures of considerable beauty. A perusal will amply benefit the readers by furnishing them with good materials for thought and meditation. It will kindle in them religious fervour and rouse sincere devotion for the Gospel of strength preached by the Lord. The illustrations are beautiful and the articles instructive and illuminating. The editors have done a real service to the religiously inclined people by bringing together such a large number of learned articles dealing with the various aspects of a Scripture like Gita which has received the spontaneous homage of men of all religions and climes. We hope the English reading public will not be slow in recognising the merits of this precious volume.

S. A.

INDIAN RELIGION AND SURVIVAL, A STUDY: By Mrs. Rhys Davids, D. Litt., M. A. Published by George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., Museum Street, London. Price 3s.-6d.

In this neat little volume the authoress presents the case for survival from the point of view of early Buddhism. She disagrees with the nihilism of the later Madhyamika metaphysics which does away with the subject who survives, and dissolves personality into a Karma-complex, and shows how the chief interest of Buddhism as it was taught by its Founder lay in the man-as-surviving. "That it was, in original Buddhism, a given man or woman who survives, who lives on, after death of the body, is always referred to as a truth to be accepted and understood," writes Mrs. Rhys Davids. Man's present span of life is a "moment 'twixt two eternities". The series of lives is to be regarded as an opportunity for 'becoming' or growth and not as a prolonger of misery. Viewed in this light Buddhism becomes a philosophy of glowing optimism and not a doctrine of gloomy pessimism as it is usually understood to be.

The authoress cautions the reader that her concern in this little book is not with 'last things' but with the Next Step, with Survival. But no survey of survival, however compendious it may be, can afford to neglect a consideration of 'last things'. A series of lives is no doubt an opportunity for

moral growth. But morality is a stepping-stone and not a stopping-place. Even the term 'Nirvana' which is considered to be the end of the Way of Becoming is explained by the authoress not as meaning the *summum bonum*, but as signifying the 'cathartic training in moral growth'. But what is the terminus of this growth or becoming?

Becoming, however, in Upanishadic thought, is figurative. The knower of Brahman, it is said, becomes Brahman. Here the becoming consists in realising that there is no difference between the Self and Brahman. Classical Buddhism which evolved the lofty conception of man as inherently Deity-in-*posse* is, according to the authoress, a development on the Upanishadic idea of man as Deity-in-*esse*. But a student of the Upanishads may not agree with the learned Doctor in her view that the gospel of Man as Becoming That is superior to that of Man as Being That. The latter doctrine is not a static concept; nor does it deny to moral growth or becoming its proper place. What seems rightly to the Advaitin as unmeaning is a conception of a growth into God, unless the term 'growth' be taken in a figurative sense.

Though a critical reader of this well-thought-out and well-written treatise may not see eye to eye with the authoress in regard to all her ideas, we commend this book as an able presentation of the Buddhist view of survival.

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Swami Paramananda in Madras

The inmates of the Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, and the general public of Madras had the rare privilege of the company of Swami Paramananda for two days in the middle of April. The Swami is one of the few surviving disciples of the great Swami Vivekananda. At the age of twenty he was sent to America as a preacher of Vedanta, and for the past thirty years he has been actively working in that part of the world, preaching as well as embodying in

his own life the great ideals of Indian religion and philosophy. To the readers of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature the Swami is quite familiar as the author of many inspiring books as the Path of Devotion, Concentration and Meditation, Daily Thoughts and Prayers, etc.

The Swami arrived in Madras en route to America on Saturday the 20th of April, accompanied by two of his disciples, Sisters Satyaprana and Gayatri Devi. The former is an

American lady who has devoted her life to the cause of Vedanta from the time of Swami Vivekananda. Though seventy years in age, her love of India prompted her to come over to this country as a worker. For the past two years she was working at the Ananda Ashrama, Dacca, Bengal, an educational institution for girls founded by Swami Paramananda. Sister Gayatri Devi is an Indian lady whom the Swami had taken to America some years ago as a representative of Indian womanhood to speak to, and illustrate before, the American public what the real Indian woman is.

The Swami and his party were given an enthusiastic reception at the Railway Station where many prominent citizens of Madras had assembled. His stay in the city was but brief, lasting as it did only for two days; but even during this short period a very large number of persons in Madras had occasion to come into touch with his sweet and inspiring personality, through interviews, public talks and lectures. He visited the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home and gave a talk to its inmates. The 21st of April being the Easter Sunday, the Swami held a well-attended Sun-rise Service, as he is accustomed to do every year in his Ashrama at La Crescenta where large numbers of people gather from far and near to hear the Swami on the occasion. After the chanting of a Vedic hymn by Srimati Gayatri Devi, the Swami gave a talk on the universal significance of Easter. He pointed out that when viewed from a non-sectarian point of view Easter was not a festival of the Christians alone; for Easter symbolised man's yearning for immortality. Easter marked the sudden springing into life of all vegetation at the touch of Vasanta (Spring) from their apparent death during the dreary cold of winter. Man, the Swami pointed out, was not the perishable body he thought himself to be, but the Child of Immortality whom the fire could not burn, the water wet or the wind dry up. Through the power of love, purity, self-sacrifice and devotion, man could realise this immortal

nature of his and thereby overcome death. After the singing of the Swami's beautiful song "It is dawn, etc." by himself and Srimati Gayatri Devi, the Service came to a close. In the course of the day many important personages of Madras had interviews with the Swami.

In the evening the Swami addressed a big meeting in the Math hall on "India and the World." Before commencing his speech the Swami introduced the two Sisters to the audience and asked them to speak a few words. Sister Satyaprana spoke about the useful work that the Dacca Ananda Ashrama had been doing for the women of India through a system of instruction that combined in itself the literary, industrial and spiritual training of the student. In introducing Sister Gayatri Devi, the Swami remarked that when he was once asked to speak to a big American audience in repudiation of Miss Mayo's *Mother India* he had refused to do so on the ground that his activities should always be on constructive lines, but a few years after, when he had completed his training of Sister Gayatri Devi, he placed her before the American public saying, "Here is my refutation of Miss Mayo." The Sister then delivered a very instructive speech on her experiences in America. She pointed out that her American life had brought home to her mind how limited and restricted was the field of activity open for women in India, even in the case of those having school and college education. In America, on the other hand, she got opportunities of contact with many people, and that had the wonderful effect of broadening her outlook on life. She therefore felt convinced that Indian womanhood could not grow to its full stature unless it had the benefit of this liberalising influence of wider contacts and experiences. She then pointed out that India had to learn many things from the West, and that the West in turn did really need some of India's ideals. A combination of the best ideals of the East and the West was the real need of the day, and she pointed out that in Swami Paramananda's Ananda Ashrama of

California, this ideal had been realised to a great extent. There men and women of all nationalities lived a common, consecrated life of humble service and deep spirituality. There the Sister saw the ideals of India transplanted, as it were, to a foreign soil where they were thriving vigorously at the touch of the immense vitality and practicality of the Western mind. Institutions thus combining the ideals of India and the energetic and practical spirit of the West formed the real need of all countries of the world at the present day.

After the Sister had concluded, the Swami addressed the audience. He first paid a tribute to Madras which he looked upon as the cradle of his spiritual life; for it was there that his life was moulded under the spiritual tutelage of the great Sannyasin, the late Swami Ramakrishnananda. He then proceeded to give a vivid description of the present condition of the West from the knowledge he had gained not from books and newspapers but from the actual experience of thirty years. He had seen Europe in the days of her power and prosperity before the War; and he had seen her bleeding, mutilated and crippled after the War. So also he had seen America when she was maddened by the wave of prosperity which continued to sweep her shores even after the collapse of Europe; and he had seen her after the onset of the present-day trade depression and financial crisis which had ruined her industries and reduced countless among her wealthiest citizens into paupers. Men in the West had been trying all the

remedies that human power and intelligence could devise, but none of these methods seemed to bring them an inch nearer the solution of their problems. Even diplomats, the Swami said, had now begun to pray secretly, realising that man's cunning and cleverness were incapable of drawing them out of the morass in which they found themselves to-day. What had India to offer to such a world? In science, industries, education, administration, etc., India was very backward and had nothing to teach the West. If India had to give anything to the West, it was only in the spiritual field. But was India now fit for this spiritual ministration. There was no use telling the people of the West that our ancestors were wonderful people and that they had great spiritual realisations. The West was practical-minded and never tolerated mere talk unsubstantiated by action. They wanted India that was living, not India that was dead. But unfortunately modern India was spiritually lethargic; Indians seemed to be losing faith in their ideals, and as a consequence there was an absence of force of character which only a deep spiritual life could give. Some people said that India's ills were due to poverty; but more than material poverty was spiritual bankruptcy. The Swami therefore exhorted his countrymen to live according to their high ideals in place of merely talking about them. The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. V. C. Rangaswamy.

The Swami and his party left Madras that very evening for Colombo where they were to catch the boat for America.

(7)

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THE

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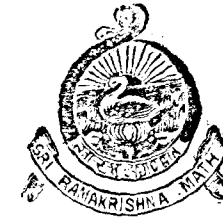
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Let me tell you, strength is what we want, and the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the Atman."

—Swami Vivekananda

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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HINDU ETHICS

॥ ॐ ॥

धर्मस्य विधयो नैको ये वै प्रोक्ता महर्षिभिः

स्वं स्वं विज्ञानमाश्रित्य दमस्तेषां परायणं ॥

दमस्तेजो वर्द्धयति पवित्रं च दमः परम् ।

विषाम्ना तेजसा युक्तः पुङ्गवो विन्दते महत् ॥

सुखं दान्तः प्रस्वपिति सुखं च प्रतिबुध्यते ।

सुखं पश्यति लोकांश्च मनश्चास्य प्रसीदति ॥

The rules of duty that have been uttered by the Great Rishis (sages) each relying upon his own wisdom, are many. The highest among them all is Self-restraint.

Self-restraint enhances energy. Self-restraint is highly sacred. Through Self-restraint a man becomes cleansed of all his sins and endued with energy, and as a consequence, attains to the highest blessedness.

The Self-restrained man sleeps in felicity and awakes in felicity and moves through the world in felicity. His mind is always cheerful.

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By Swami Saradananda

The Master gets into ecstasy while chanting the Mahimna-stotra (a beautiful hymn to Shiva).

ONE day, entering the Shiva Temple the Master began to chant *Mahimna-stotra*, the famous hymn to Shiva. Gradually when he came to the following stanza he lost himself entirely in its sublime thought:

असितगिरिसमं स्यात्कज्जलं सिंधुपात्रे,
सुरतस्वरशाखा लेखनी पत्रमुर्वी ।
लिखति यदि गृहीत्वा शारदा सर्वकालं,
तदपि तव गुणनामीश परं न याति ॥

Let Saraswati, the goddess of learning, be herself the writer; let her have at her disposal ink-heaps of Himalayan heights dissolved in a vessel as deep as the ocean; let her use for her pen a branch of the wish-yielding celestial tree; and let her write on a paper as wide as the surface of the earth. Even the Goddess of Learning writing with all these accessories for eternity, cannot, O Great God, exhaust Thy glories!

While the Master was chanting this stanza, a vivid realisation in his heart of hearts of the great glory of Shiva overwhelmed him completely. He entirely forgot the hymn, its Sanskrit language, and its orderly way of chanting, and went on repeating at the top of his voice, "O Great God! How can I speak of Thy glories!" Simultaneously with this, copious tears rolled down

his cheeks, wetting his breast and the garments and reaching down to the floor. The wailing noise, the half-choked utterings and the unusual behaviour made all the temple-employees run from all quarters to the scene of occurrence. Finding the Master in that condition some felt struck with wonder and waited to see where it would terminate. And it is needless to mention that some others began to make fun of him and pass such remarks as the following: "Indeed, it is nothing but the eccentricity of the junior Bhattacharya. I thought it might be something else. To-day the degree of madness is somewhat greater"; or "May he not ultimately jump upon the shoulder of Shiva. It is better to drag him away by the hand from this place," and so on.

But the Master was totally devoid of external consciousness. His mind, then, absorbed in the realisation of Shiva's glory, was soaring far beyond this world of matter, where its dirty words and thoughts would never reach. Hence how could he know of the attitudes of his spectators, or their funny remarks?

Mathuranath happened to be present in the Temple on that day. He too hastened to the spot when he heard that the disturbance was on account of the junior Bhattacharya.

The temple-employees moved aside with great respect to make way for their master. Mathuranath felt simply charmed the moment he saw the Master in that condition; and when one of the employees suggested that the Master should be forcibly dragged away from there, he replied with great annoyance, "None save he who has no fear of death should proceed to touch the Bhattacharya." At this the employees became very much cowed down and did not venture to say anything more. After a while, the Master returned to his normal consciousness and finding Mathuranath present there along with the temple-employees, became frightened like a child and asked Mathuranath whether he had done anything wrong by losing all control over himself. Mathuranath prostrated at his feet and replied, "No Father! You had been chanting a hymn, and I was standing here lest somebody should disturb you without understanding your attitude."

An example of quick progress in spirituality in the company of the Master.

Recollecting the days of his spiritual practices, the Master once told us: "During that period those who used to come here would have their devotion roused up very quickly in my company. Two devotees used to come from Baranagore. They belonged to a low caste, that of fishermen or something like that, but very good souls. They had much faith in me and would come here almost every day.

One day while we were sitting in the *Panchavati* (the place with five particular trees which was Master's favourite retreat for spiritual practices), one of them got into a state of ecstasy. I found him with his breast flushed red; the eyes took the crimson hue, and were shedding copious tears; hardly he was able to speak or maintain his balance, as if under the influence of two bottles of wine. That state would not leave him by any means. Being much terrified I told the Mother, 'O Mother! What hast Thou done? People will say I have cast some spell on him. He has got his parents and other relatives in his house; and he has to go there before long.' With this prayer I passed my hand over his breast, whereupon he became somewhat composed and went home."

Mathuranath's vision of the Master as both Shiva and Shakti in one.

We have heard from the Master how Mathuranath too had once risen to a similarly super-normal state as a result of the blessed company of the Master, whereby his faith and devotion were increased thousand-fold. One day the Master, absorbed in himself, as he often used to be, was pacing to and fro in the corridor running east-west, at the north-east corner of his room. Mathuranath was then sitting alone in a room in the building, situated between the Temple and the *panchavati*, which is still referred to by the temple-employees as the owner's residence.

From his seat Mathuranath could have a clear view of the place where the Master was strolling about, the distance being quite negligible. Hence Mathuranath was occasionally noticing the Master walking in that mood and again thinking of his estate affairs and settling his future plan of work. The Master was quite unaware that he was being thus observed by Mathuranath. And even if he knew of it, there was hardly any reason for either of them to have any concern with the other, there being a world of difference between them as regards their family, their social status and in every other respect. Or, rather, had not the Master been wholly pre-occupied with his thought of God and indifferent to his environment on that account, he would have noticed Mathuranath's presence, and feeling much abashed probably withdrawn himself from there. For, a poor insignificant priest as he was, what else could he do but shrink away with awe in the presence of Mathuranath who was possessed of wealth, honour and learning, and in a sense was the sole owner of the Temple along with the entire property of the Rani? Moreover, it was only on account of his being in the good books of Mathuranath that the Master was not driven away from the Temple, although people knew him to be idiotic, insane, and indifferent towards formal purity

and would not hesitate to ridicule him whenever there was an opportunity. But what actually happened was quite strange and unthinkable. Mathuranath came running in high haste, and prostrating himself before the Master and clasping his feet, began to weep bitterly.

"I told him", said the Master proceeding with the narration, "What are you doing? You are the master of the place and a son-in-law of Rani Rasmani. What will the people say if they find you behaving in such unbecoming manner? Be composed. Stand up." But hardly he paid any heed to these words. After some time, when he cooled down, he disclosed that he had a wonderful vision which he described as follows, with his eyes shedding copious tears: 'While you had been walking up and down, I saw clearly that when you had been approaching me, it was not you but the Mother who presides over this Temple, and while going away with your back towards me it was none else but Shiva Himself. At first I took it to be an optical illusion. Hence I rubbed my eyes and looked again, but had just the same vision again. This happened as many times as I attempted to correct myself.' When I said, I knew nothing of what he saw, he would not be convinced at all."

WHAT WE STAND FOR

Siva and Seva and its Relation to Egoism and Altruism

WE propose to deal in this essay with the ideals that inspire the Ramakrishna - Vivekananda Movement. These have been pithily expressed in the words 'Siva and Seva' and in the motto of the Ramakrishna Order: *Atmano Mokshartham Jagadhitaya Cha*. (For the salvation of oneself and the welfare of the world.) Siva stands metaphysically for God and ethically for renunciation and the salvation of the individual, while Seva stands for the service of man and the well-being of the society. Man finds himself faced by a two-fold duty in this world—one towards himself as an individual and the other towards the society in which he lives and from which he draws his physical and cultural sustenance. The claims of both these types of duties manifest themselves in secular life as egoism and altruism, egoism always demanding the preservation and aggrandisement of the self and altruism insisting equally on the necessity of sacrificing the self in the interests of the herd. The conflict between these two forces is felt in the life of every one, and especially so in that of a person whose ethical and spiritual sense has reached higher developments. In social life these very same contending ideas are seen to stand ranged against each other as the various forms of indi-

vidualism and socialism. Much of modern political philosophy relates to the claims and counter-claims of these two ideas to mould the social and political destinies of the world.

In regard to religion also the theory of conflict between these two ideas has been applied. Many a modern critic of religion has contended that religion with its insistence on the salvation of the individual and the promotion of his interests in a life after death is plainly a manifestation of the principle of egoism and as such stands directly opposed to modern secularism which places society above the individual and interprets the 'good life' as implying only the maximum of the necessities of life, like food, education, leisure, amusements, etc., for all, with no reference at all to a fancied spiritual perfection of the individual and his well-being in an after-life. Religions may be opposed to modernism in its purely secular and world-bound conception of the 'good life,' but that their message of the salvation of the individual is purely egoistic is a criticism that contradicts facts. For in every great religion the love and service of one's fellow beings occupy an important place in the scheme for the salvation of the individual. In fact, in every religion the duty towards God and the duty towards man are wrought up into a single system of spiritualised ethics

in the light of the theology they uphold. The ideal of Siva and Seva which forms the guiding principle of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement is such an attempt at harmonising the spiritual and social interests of man in the light of the Vedantic world-view. While other religions effect the synthesis of these two claims on man by declaring service of fellow beings to be the most effective way of pleasing God, the Vedantic ideal finds the service of man as identical with the worship of God, without however in the least compromising its spiritual outlook with the purely secular notions of humanism or philanthropy.

Our Creed

We shall now deal separately with the two aspects of this ideal of Siva and Seva in greater detail. If the life of Sri Ramakrishna has any message to give to the world, it is the uncompromising declaration of the supremacy of a Divine Intelligence over the apparently non-intelligent and mechanical world-process. The firmness of his conviction in regard to this fact and the way in which he lived his life in complete agreement with this conviction are the only reasons that made him a noted personage in his own life-time and subsequently the centre of a spiritual movement of great significance. The ideal of Siva refers to this central fact of Sri Ramakrishna's life—to a world-view that is wholly spiritual in its outlook and to a life that has the realisation of God as its highest aim. The philosophical and ethical

implications of this world-view have been elaborated by Sri Ramakrishna in the teachings he has left behind, and these form the creed of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement. While these teachings are above every form of narrowness associated with creeds, they give expression to certain universal ideas which, if accepted, will kill sectarianism without in the least endangering the existence of any sect. The following is a brief statement of these ideas:

Reality is in essence a Principle of Intelligence. It is this one Intelligent Principle that is variously known as God, Allah, Buddha, Shiva, Vishnu, Brahman, etc. in the different religions of the world. It is both personal and impersonal, with attributes and without attributes. Impersonal does not mean less than personal but without the limitations of personality. While it transcends every form of relation in its absolute nature, it is none-the-less intimately related to the world of living and non-living beings as their cause, support and substratum. In this aspect the Intelligent Principle is spoken of as He or She, as Father or Mother of the universe. Both the Jivas and the Jagt (living and non-living beings) are the manifestations of this Father-Mother God. He is alike the source of what is pleasing and terrific in Nature. For the devotee, however, He is the God of Love, the pains and terrors of life being only the devices He employs to draw His careless and forgetful children to His feet. He

is present in every being but is very near to a devoted heart in a special sense. He hears the prayers that well up from it and responds to them in His infinite mercy. As the Impersonal, He can be approached through knowledge, and as the Personal through love. But the path of love and self-surrender is easier and more natural, and on one who treads this path He confers also the fruit of knowledge—the sense of identification with the Absolute. In the path of love He may be looked upon as Father, Mother, Friend, Child, Lover, or in any other intimate form of human relationship. According to the devotee's attitude He manifests Himself in various forms of beauty and holiness to his purified vision. A special form of Divine mercy is the Incarnation. From time to time He embodies Himself as a human being of great holiness and spiritual power in order to show unto mankind the way of holy and righteous living. All the founders of the great religions who have opened new paths of spiritual life to men of different ages and climes are such special divine manifestations. To worship them and meditate on their life and personality form one of the most effective means of spiritual upliftment. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna is such an Incarnation of the Divine for the guidance of man in this age (Yuga Avatar), and in his teachings are to be found the solutions of the problems of morality and religion suited to the needs of our times.

The human personality is intimately related to the Cosmic Intelligence; for it is a manifestation of that Intelligence through the limitations of matter. Every soul is therefore potentially divine and the goal of life is to manifest this indwelling divinity by controlling Nature within and without. Every form of activity in life can aid this process, provided the proper attitude of mind is brought to bear upon it. Religion embodies the methods evolved by mankind for the attainment of the life's goal. As such it is the expression of the highest aspirations of mankind. Religion does not consist in mere intellectual assent to dogmas or creeds, but in the realisation or the actualisation of the great spiritual truths in our consciousness and daily actions. We shall have to do this either by work, worship, psychic control, or philosophy—by one or all these. The special conditions of our age however require that men should cultivate all these and thus develop their personality on all lines.

Strength is the most essential requirement of spiritual life. For strength is virtue and weakness is sin. Faith is the source of all strength—faith in God and faith in oneself. Self-depreciation by calling oneself a sinner is to be avoided by all means; for sin is not overcome by dwelling on thoughts of sin but by contemplating the inherent divinity of the soul. Sin is but a form of error, and all that is needed to overcome it is sincere repentance and firm determination to avoid it

in the future. Man is no sinner but the child of God—nay, His very Self in his essential nature. An abiding consciousness of this is true faith, the source of all strength and therefore of all virtue.

Spiritual life is impossible without a sound moral basis. The underlying principle of all sound morality is unselfishness. A man cannot be unselfish unless he is imbued with a spirit of renunciation. Renunciation means the giving up of Kama and Kanchana, of passion and greed. The spirit of renunciation manifests in life as purity of character and devoted service of one's fellow beings. The vision of God dawns in a heart in which the spirit of renunciation has reached its maturity. A man lives in vain if he does not gain this realisation or at least makes some progress towards it.

The ideal of Seva or the Vedantic Interpretation of Altruism

We have given above a brief statement of the spiritual ideal and shall now consider the social aspect represented by the term Seva. It is intimately connected with the former and is a practical application of it in relation to social life. The conflict between egoism and altruism to which we have referred before is felt in relation to religious life too, when we come to consider the relative importance of the claims of the ideals of individual salvation and of social welfare on the human being. If inwardness and purification of the mind are the only means of gaining divine

love, the question naturally arises whether man is to neglect his duties to the society in his quest for the bliss of a contemplative life. In the Vedantic metaphysics however the apparent opposition between these two ideals is overcome. The Vedanta looks upon God not as an extra-cosmic being sitting secure in a far-off heaven, but as the Spirit which, while it is immanent in the universe, yet transcends it. He is both the material and efficient cause of the universe, and as such the world with all the living and non-living beings is a manifestation of His being. If this view of God and the world is accepted, contemplative life and social service become complementary and not contradictory factors in the spiritual quest. The God whom the self-controlled one sees within himself in rapt contemplation is not different in essence from the poor, the needy and the oppressed whom we come across in life. This idea is beautifully brought out by implication in the Upanishadic passage: "Thou art man, Thou art woman, Thou art youth, Thou art maiden; Thou art the old man tottering on Thy staff. Thou art born everywhere." If devout meditation can improve one spiritually by making one conscious of the God in man, there is no reason why the service of God as man should not have the same effect, provided, of course, the proper attitude of mind is brought to bear on such service. That attitude consists in the firm conviction that within the apparently

decrepit body and ignorant mind dwells the Lord in all His glory, and that He is in fact the recipient of whatever love and solicitude we show towards our fellow beings. Thus service becomes a veritable act of worship. This aspect of service is beautifully brought out by the Bhagavata when it says: "On this question (*i.e.*, charity and service) wise men, foremost among those that know the worthy recipients, have come to the conclusion that Hari is the only recipient; for the whole world of moving and stationary beings is constituted by Him..... This tree of the universe filled with innumerable crowds of Jivas is a very large one; Hari, being the root thereof, His worship brings satisfaction to all Jivatmas. All these bodies going by the name of men, beasts and birds, Rishis and gods, are created by Him, and it is He who in the form of Jiva dwells in these bodies, and hence called Purusha. O king, the Almighty Lord exhibits Himself with some graded difference in all these beings. Therefore a Purusha (embodied being) is a recipient in the same degree as Paramatman exhibits Himself in or is observed in the particular individual."

The kind of social service that the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement advocates is therefore a form of worship, and as such, much different in spirit from the various types of humanism and charity that modern secularism and other world religions have popularised. In addition to the material symbols of the

Deity that are worshipped every day in temples, a cosmic symbol, veritably the living body of God, is placed before the spiritual aspirant for his heart's adoration, not with flowers, incense and rituals but with the more tangible requirements of life like food, clothing, education, etc. Not only acts that strictly fall within the significance of the term charity, but even all other forms of work, whether they refer to one's private life or to the wider life of the society, may all be converted into spiritual discipline by the transforming influence of the attitude described above.

The Gospel of Seva as Distinguished from Humanism and Charity

The distinction of service in this spirit from what is known as humanism becomes at once evident. Humanism knows only man and society. It is blind in regard to God. Unenlightened by a higher vision, it seeks to imprison the spiritual aspirations of man in a narrow, mundane sphere. Thus while humanism has its centre in man and its circumference in society, this Vedantic ideal has its centre in God and its circumference in humanity. Many of the modern religious movements have a fatal tendency to degenerate into mere social gospels, of which humanism is the most conspicuous example. The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement has no sympathy with such a shift of emphasis, and advocates a particular conception of social service which can never

contaminate the genuine spiritual content of religion.

Charity is another current idea from which the gospel of Seva should be distinguished. People are charitable from many motives. Some are so only with a view to get rid of the trouble from people who clamour for help. Others practise it to gain name and fame, while a few who form the most noble-minded of those actuated by this idea are charitable from a keen sense of the tragedy of human suffering. This last form of charity is certainly a very praiseworthy attitude of mind, but in the ideal of Seva it is not so much this feeling even as the sense of adoration that forms the motive force of action. The attitude of condescension implied in charity of even the highest kind is repugnant to the ideal of Seva. A person who is convinced that the whole universe is a manifestation of the Lord or that an all-knowing and all-powerful Intelligence is guiding the destinies of the world, cannot, in consistency with his philosophy, accommodate in himself the element of self-importance and condescension that the feeling of pity implies. He feels too humble to help any creature who is himself a manifestation of the Lord and whose welfare in the embodied state is in the hands of the Most High. He can only serve and adore, not pity and help. He may also feel himself an humble instrument in the hands of the Lord. In such a view of philanthropy it is not the recipient of a gift that is indebted to the giver of it, for the former has

by accepting the service enabled the latter to perform the worship of the Divine. An act of service becomes a potent force of spiritual upliftment only when it springs from such a mental disposition. The cultivation of this spirit of adoration and instrumentality is the only way to save religious movements from being choked by the social programme attached to them.

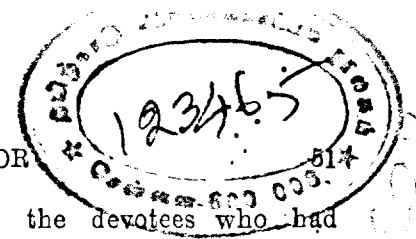
The Origin of the Seva Ideal

The consideration of this last point brings us to the question of the origin of this ideal of service as far as the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement is concerned. It is held by some that Sri Ramakrishna who is the fountain-head of the Movement did not only not advocate such active works of service in the case of spiritual aspirants, but even discouraged some who were engaged in such works, and that it was Swami Vivekananda who later on made this ideal a part and parcel of the Movement. This view seems to gain some plausibility from the fact that in the 'Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna', the most popular work on the Master, we find him admonishing certain individuals who were thinking too much of hospitals and dispensaries, and of doing good to others. But a fuller consideration of Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings would show that the idea behind such conduct on the part of the Master was to wean them away from the arrogant form of charity and to help develop in them the true worshipful spirit of service by making them more indrawn and

contemplative. The Master's criticism of the conduct of such persons should be taken as relevant only so far as those persons are concerned, and not as a general stricture on Seva-Dharma. For in the Master's life we also come across many instances of his positively inculcating on some of his disciples the duty of serving their more unfortunate brethren. There is also the famous incident in his life in connection with his pilgrimage to Benares, which sheds much light on his view regarding this question. The sight of a village of famished people near Deoghar created in him the resolve to stay with them and share their misery rather than continue his journey to the holy place, and it was only after his wealthy disciple Mathur had taken measures to relieve their suffering that the Master could be persuaded to resume his journey. His daily life too was a continuous act of service and ministration to the spiritual needs of the crowds that used to gather round him. To these he spoke of God and things Divine without any consideration of his health and physical comforts, not certainly with a teacher's pride or a humanitarian's condescending pity, but with that sense of humility and sense of adoration characteristic of a saint who sees the indwelling God through all the apparent imperfections of man. What he discouraged was philanthropy of the self-lauding type, not service as a Sadhana. That this was the Master's attitude becomes clear from a very pregnant incident of his life.

One day the devotees who had gathered in his room were talking about the ideal of mercy to creatures. The Master was heard to repeat, 'Show mercy to all creatures'; and then he passed into a deep trance. After he had regained his speech, he declared his views on charity in an inspired mood: 'Kindness to all creatures! Fie upon thee, man! An insignificant being thyself, how canst thou show mercy to God's creatures? Who art thou to show mercy? No, no, it can't be mercy. Rather serve all Jivas—all beings—as Siva—God himself.' These words went deep into the mind of Swami Vivekananda who was among the audience, and when he later on founded the Math and the Mission in the name of the Master, it was these illuminating words that made him include Seva-Dharma as an integral part of their ideal.

Thus the philanthropic activity of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement may be traced to the Master himself—to his positive commandments to do service as worship and to the way in which he exemplified this precept in his own life. And to the immediate disciples of the Master, this great commandment of his became a practical discipline when they gathered round the sick bed of their revered teacher, who was to them nothing less than God in flesh,—to serve him during the long months of suffering he passed through, before his demise. They had seen in this divine man, Divinity in the



throes of suffering, and had through that experience realised how God abides even behind all the apparent imperfections of humanity. Why should they not then adore His

great Cosmic Body consisting of all the living creatures, through whose cries of suffering and agony He calls upon the human soul to spend itself in adoring service?

IN THE COMPANY OF A MAHATMA

(Continued from the last Issue)

TALKING about fate and free-
dom will Swami Turiyananda said one day—"According to the Hindi recension of the Mahabharata once Vyasadeva went to Janamejaya. The king asked him why the battle of Kurukshetra took place in spite of the presence of the wise men like Vyasa and others. As a consequence of this battle the country became emasculated and devoid of heroes. Vyasa did not give him any direct reply then and there. After repeatedly requesting him to refrain from certain things he promised to return at the end of the year at mere remembrance. Afterwards handsome horses arrived as described by Vyasadeva. Oblivious of the prediction and prohibition of Vyasa, the king purchased the horses, and while riding them he killed some Brahmins and as a result of it was laid down with leprosy. Vyasa came at the close of the year in response to his request and found the king quite forgetful of his warning. See how potent is the charm of Illusion!

कर्तुं नेच्छसि यन्मोहात्करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत् ।

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।

'What thou from delusion desirest not to do, thou shalt have to do in spite of thyself.' "So, O Bharata, take refuge in Him with all thy heart."

Swami Turiyananda used to encourage us very much to study the Gita. Once he wrote to me in a letter—"The Gita contains the cream of all

scriptures. It is Sarvasastramayi. Realise your chosen ideal by the study of, and the meditation on, the Gita. It is a matter of deep regret that holy company is so rare. The Bhagavan has himself said in the Gita:—

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ॥

'One, perchance, in thousands of men strives for perfection.' VII. 3."

He said on another occasion: "All minds without an exception run after enjoyment and indulgence. Who wants to renounce the world? The secret desire of all is to get unbroken happiness and no misery. But it does not strike them that no pleasure is possible in this world unalloyed with pain. So strong is the illusion of Maya that she does not allow one to become oneself. Practise meditation on the meaning of the Gita verses. When you read one Sloka, think of its meaning over and over again. Continue this practice always whether you walk or sit, lie down or stand—in all conditions. Then the spirit of the Gita will flash in your mind and that will give you peace and blessedness. It is an undisputed truth that service will bring sweet rewards. Mukti (freedom) is certain if one can attain the state of the Gunateeta (one beyond the three Gunas, Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas) as depicted in the Fourteenth Chapter of the Gita, where the signs of the Gunateeta and the means for attaining that state are very clearly given.

मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।

स गुणान् समतीत्यैतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥

'And he who serves me with an unswerving devotion, goes beyond the Gunas and is fitted for becoming Brahman.' XIV. 26.

Its cause also is set forth there.

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च ।

शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥

'For I am the abode of Brahman, the immortal and the immutable, of everlasting Dharma and Absolute Bliss.' XIV. 27.

So if you can read and repeat well the fourteenth chapter and assimilate its meaning there is no necessity to go through anything else. In the fourteenth chapter the Lord amplifies in various ways the marks of the Sthitaprajna (man of steady wisdom) delineated in the second. In the twelfth chapter too the verses from thirteenth to twentieth describe the state and nature of the devotee who has attained the two states mentioned above. Bhagavan has repeatedly enumerated them to enable one to verify them with one's experiences.

अथ त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्गीते भवद्भक्तिमीम् ।

'O Loving Mother, the destroyer of rebirth, upon Thee, O Bhagavad Gita, I meditate.' It is certain that the Gita can cure the disease of worldliness. I have perused the Gita Rahasya of Tilak; not in Bengali, but the Hindi edition translated by Madhava Sapru. My conviction is that Tilak is not unbiassed in his views. However, there is no doubt that he laboured very hard and has attempted to make it suitable to the modern times. Gita destroys worldliness. It is the heart of the Lord. It is beyond compare. Those who do not comprehend its spirit find fault with Sankara. San-

kara was the incarnation of divine wisdom. It is a grave sin to accuse him.

अधिकारि-विशेषेण शास्त्राण्युक्तान्यशेषतः ।

'The conclusion is that the Scriptures have taught differently to appeal to men of different competence.' The study or repetition of the Gita purifies the heart. One acquires by doing so the ability of complete retention and apprehension. Not only that, supreme peace too is attained.

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।

अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥

'Without doubt, O mighty-armed, the mind is restless and difficult to control; but through practice and renunciation, O son of Kunti, it may be governed,' VI, 35. Reading this out he recited the following verse with great enthusiasm:

उत्सेक उदधेर्यद्रत्नं कुशप्रेणेकविन्दुना ।

मनसो निग्रहस्तद्वत् भवेदपरिखेदतः ॥

"The mind can be controlled by untiring perseverance, equal to that of one engaged in emptying the ocean, drop by drop, with the tip of a straw of Kusa-grass."

Mandukya Karika, III, 41.

Hari Maharaj exhibited marks of extraordinary memory. The Gita, the Chandi and such other Hindu Scriptures were always fresh in his mind and ready at the tip of the tongue. In order to elucidate deep spiritual problems he used to frequently cite appropriate Slokas, and first emphasising the gravity of the subject to be comprehended, he would then explain the problems clearly with their aid. For instance while driving home into us the point that the mind once having fallen from the chosen ideal sinks to the nadir of degradation, he used to quote the following Sloka of Viveka Chudamani:

लक्ष्यच्युतं चेद्यदि चितमीयद्भिर्मुखं सन्निपतेत्-
तस्ततः ।

प्रमादतः प्रच्युतकैलिकन्दुकः सोपानपङ्क्तौ
पतितो यथा यथा ॥ ३२५ ॥

‘If the mind ever so slightly strays from the Ideal and becomes outgoing, then it goes down and down, just as a play-ball inadvertently dropped on the stair-case bounds down from one step to another.’—325.

If the mind is diverted once from inwardness, it rolls down to the lowest state. If one fails to check it at the very outset, one will be ruined.

आशा हि परमं दुःखं नैराश्यं परमं सुखम् ।

यथा संचिद्य कान्ताशां सुखं सुखापि पिबता ॥

‘Hope is the source of misery and riddance of it leads to the highest happiness just as giving up the hope of her lover, Pingala slept happily.’

Swami Turiyananda, while giving an instance of how a man enveloped in ignorance is diverted from his ideal, used to sing the following song of Ramprasad : ‘The poor mind is not to blame for it. O Divine Mother, you are the daughter of a juggler and magician. It dances as you make it dance. Hence the poor mind has no fault. I have now understood the secret—that you are work and worship, vice and virtue. In short, you are everything. O Mother, you are earth and water. You are making those trees which have already borne fruit to bear fruits again. The Lord has said that you are power and devotion. You are also freedom. You are all and again you are in all. The Chandi (the Tantric classic) declares that you are happiness as well as misery. Prasad says that the threads of Kama too are spun by Her. My mad Mother and mad

Father bind the souls by the ropes of Maya and then play with them.’”

Many surgical operations were performed on the body of Hari Maharaj. He did not allow himself to be chloroformed for the same. How did he bear the unbearable pain of the operations of carbuncles on his back? Did he feel no pain or did he bear it quietly and calmly? Once somebody put this question to him in reply to which he said—

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः ।

यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ॥

“Having obtained which, man regards no other acquisition superior to that and wherein established he is not moved even by heavy sorrow,” VI. 22.

He continued—“Do you know this Sloka? ‘By heavy sorrow’ means sorrow caused by fall from a height or wound by weapons, etc. Good and evil are the creations of our mind. If one can fully surrender oneself to the Lord and take shelter at His feet, he will be released from both. The Bhagavan hints this in—
गुणगुणफलैरेवं मोक्षये कर्मवन्धनैः —‘you will be liberated from the merits and demerits of the actions,’”

About Tamasika fortitude (Dhriti) he said one day—“Repentance and self-censure may have some necessity in the early stage but too much of it is not only bad but is a definite impediment to progress. There is no gain at all if you continue it too long. So it should be shunned. Bhagavan says in the Gita—

यथा स्वप्ने भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च ।

न विमुञ्चति दुर्मेया दृतिः सा पार्यं तामसी ॥

That by which a stupid man does not give up sleep, fear, grief, despondency and also overweening conceit, that fortitude, O Partha, is Tamasika.” XVIII, 35.

(To be Continued)

TEMPLES AND LIBRARIES*

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

TO stress the importance of the libraries in the liquidation of our vast illiteracy in a conference like this would be, I am afraid, carrying coal to Newcastle. In fact, hardly a day passes without some reference to the Library Movement either in the press or in the platform. Thanks to the efforts of the Punjab, Bengal and the Madras Library Associations an almost universal library enthusiasm has been created. The several conferences held during the past few months may be taken as an index of the different directions from which it has begun to gather support. Let us hope it has come to stay in our midst.

In spite of this enthusiasm it has to be painfully admitted that the achievements have not been commensurate with the aspirations. Whether tested qualitatively or quantitatively the existing libraries fall far short of the mark. Library service is still denied to 90 per cent of our population. In certain Districts the number of libraries has even decreased in recent years. Ill-staffed, ill-built and ill-equipped, an average Indian Library looks like Stephen's Rocket before the modern locomotive.

That the libraries should be so few in spite of such an extra-ordinary enthusiasm looks at the outset a riddle. Why should there be such a gulf between our aim and our action? The only cause for this slow progress in the creation of libraries is finance. In my opinion,

no problem claims so much attention of this conference as that of finding out the wherewithal to improve old libraries and start fresh ones. The thought of finance immediately carries us to the problem of Taxation. To tax people is a suggestion more easily made than executed. As a student of Economics, I am afraid I would be guilty of callous indifference to the conditions obtaining in our country if I were to suggest any scheme of fresh taxation. Ill-clad, ill-fed, and ill-housed the incapacity of the Indian to pay more taxes is written on his very forehead. In fact even the contribution that he makes to the Government at present is beyond his financial capacity. To suggest a Library Tax over and above this would be a folly if not a sin. Again as Burke would have it, to tax and to please people is not given to men. A library tax might even defeat the very object for which it was levied.

We have therefore to turn our attention to other possible sources of income. When one looks around with a begging bowl, one cannot but be arrested by the fabulous funds of the numerous temples. While the libraries are starving for want of funds, the temples are groaning under the weight of gold. Indeed here is a paradox of plenty and poverty. Who has not heard of the almost miraculous incomes of Palani Subramanya and Thirupathi Venkatachalapathi or again Viswanath of Benares? The temptation

* A paper read before the All-India Library Conference, Lucknow.

therefore to make an appeal for funds to these institutions is almost irresistible. Such co-operation between the temples and the libraries would not only benefit the libraries but also enhance the reputation of the temples. It is needless to point out that most of our temples have lost their ancient glory. In the words of Fergusson, "The Srirangam Temple is practically a bazaar, filled with shops where pilgrims are lodged, fed and fleeced. At Rameswaram and more so at Madura barbarous vulgarity has done its worst and the traveller is only too fully justified in the contempt with which he speaks of these works of great people which have fallen into the hands of such unworthy successors."

The secret of the ancient glory of the temples was that they identified themselves with the cultural activities of the times. The temple halls were the abodes of discussion. Several of them are said to have been seats of universities. To-day those very places are occupied by coffee hotels and tailor shops. When one enters such a temple one is reminded more of the theory of value rather than of the soul and other transcendental entities. It is therefore our paramount duty not only to improve the libraries but also to revive the glories of our ancient temples.

India like the other parts of the world is in a social and intellectual ferment. Old ideas and old institutions are fast disappearing yielding place to fresher ones. We have to realise the truth of the statement that "Muhammad may have left detailed instructions for camel drivers but he had nothing to say about drivers of motor cars." In short we have to change the outlook of our institutions according to the spirit of the times. If the temple authorities do not come forward with their

vast resources for nation-building services, a situation similar to the one in Russia regarding the religious institutions might easily overtake us. The attempt in Russia to-day, as is well known, is not even to change but to eliminate religion altogether. It is only too well known that the Church itself was largely responsible for this disaster. During the period of acute famine soon after the war, the Press in Russia reasonably enough called upon the Church to part with its ornaments and precious stones for the sake of relieving the distress of the masses. This, the narrow-minded priests refused to do. "Perhaps," says Mr. C. S. Braden, author of 'Modern Tendencies in World Religions', "no more serious blunder was committed by the leadership of the Church than this. Here were starving millions of Russia's own people clamouring for food and over against this cry was placed only an ancient canon of the Church." This thoughtless attitude of the Church sowed firmly the seeds of its own destruction.

If in Russia there was physical starvation, in India we are passing through a stage of intellectual starvation. The temples at present are pursuing a policy not very different from the Russian churches sometime back. People legitimately look upon the temples for a help in this hour of need. In India particularly there is greater justification for this expectation. Libraries have been looked upon throughout her history as temples of learning. The Chola and the Hoysala rulers, not to speak of others, had cultural institutions of their own inside the temples.* Diversion of temple

* 1. Dr. S. Krishnaswami Iyengar: South India and her Contribution to Indian Culture.

2. K. V. Subramanya Iyer: Ancient History of the Deccan.

funds towards the libraries is the legitimate thing to do, for if salvation is the right aim of religion, the Library Movement deserves to be called a religion, for on it depends the intellectual, political and the economic salvation of a nation.

Mere diversion of funds alone would not carry us very far. Every temple should try to maintain a library of its own. Indians are proverbial for wasting time. Among the institutions that promote this waste the temple is one. On festival days when there is heavy crowd, thousands of people have to wait for hours together for getting a Darsan. If an hour is given the modest economic value of Re. $\frac{1}{2}$ * even, then the loss arising from this waste would come to some crores. Naturally any scheme for the economic use of these hours must be

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

most welcome. You will agree with me when I say that creation of libraries in temples would eliminate a portion of this economic waste. Temple libraries however must be organized and equipped on distinct lines. Emphasis should be laid on religious and philosophical literature; books on art and architecture and again on the origin and growth of temples have a very legitimate place in such libraries. Again highest reaches of poetry, particularly the lyrics of Nayanars and Alwars of the South and of seers like Tulsidas and Kabirdas and Chaitanya of Upper India should be given a prominent place. I do not think it would be relevant for me in the present paper to discuss the other details of temple libraries. I would consider myself amply rewarded if this paper has stimulated the need for creating fresh avenues of income.

THE NEW DEAL IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

By *Sicami Devatmananda*

OUR modern days are witnessing an acute state of new deals in everything. The time-forces are mercilessly pulverising all old things giving birth to new ones. The most important change has been in the field of human outlook on life. It is not that a rebellious spirit is smashing all doctrines and ideas into pieces, but in response to the need of changed circumstances a new spirit has been born which wants a higher, greater and dynamic understanding. It is the spirit of rational criticism as against the superstitious dogmatism, the mother of bigotry, narrowness and crude heathenism. This spirit has invaded even the Kingdom of God, and it is

potent enough to subvert it. In the fitness of things, therefore, we need a fair and square understanding of this vastly important problem before us.

The popular mind has always been fed with superstitious stories. Truly, the masses can be taught only through parables, in figurative terms. But sooner or later they are reduced to superstitions devoid of their essential part. The Kingdom of God is supposed to be the most vital and dynamic factor that shapes and moulds our destiny. Nay, more, it sweetens and beautifies the path of life. But this very important factor has been so coloured that the questioning mind com-

pletely throws it overboard: it will rather go without any God or Heaven than submit to a superstition that is outworn and which is much more dreaded than loved. Secondly, time-forces demand a new deal in the Kingdom of God that will work, that will revitalise life in the broadest and most universal sense of the term.

The human mind can think only in terms of relation. It is much more so with the mass mind. As regards the conception of God or Heaven, the first stage of our understanding is dualism. It is the most popular form with all religions of all countries. In this stage the imagination finds an abundant scope for exercise, which furnishes the occasion for differences of views. In this dualistic stage God is always conceived of as an extra-cosmic Being, separate and distinct from Nature and the individual souls, and controlling the destinies of all. How often people look up in search of God who is supposed to be far away beyond the clouds, and eagerly wait to see some kind of sign in the skies as a proof of His existence! It is a deep psychological fact, however, that the idea of separateness born of the conception of duality, gives birth to fear, which always colours the religious attitude of the votary towards his God. Under such circumstances religion becomes a matter of fear, and the long-drawn process of religious life develops into a means of escape from punishment and attainment of heavenly rewards. Such a life of groanings may be anything else, but it can never be considered as the Kingdom of Heaven which is supposed to bring unto man peace and happiness, a reign of beatific felicity on earth. From the standpoint of the collective social and national units also, this dualistic

attitude has been the cause of some of the greatest tragedies of life. The most bitter hatred, rancour, persecution and oppression and even war have been caused in the name of this sublime idea. Nevertheless, it is a fact that some of the most exalted characters of the religious history of the world have been the products of the dualistic forms of religion. By dint of the intensity and fervour of their devotion they made the Supreme Deity a veritable treasure of their heart, nay, a part and parcel of their being. But it was not the element of fear that brought the two so close together: it was the cord of sweet and immaculate love that bound the two, the lover and the Beloved into a bipartite unit.

To-day, however, in the inscrutable melting-pot of time all the tribal, sectarian and even national Gods are fast disappearing. In spite of the feverish efforts on the part of the votaries to retain their Gods, they are merging themselves into one Supreme Godhead. It does not mean thereby that He is the sum total of all the individual units: He is the Universal Being. He is no more extra-cosmic: He is, on the other hand, immanent and transcendent. He pervades Space and Time. In other words, He is the Fundamental Substance, the very Being of our being. He is the causeless Cause, in which all are united irrespective of the apparent differences. This is the inevitable conclusion which the enquiry of the logical and scientific mind of a truth-seeker leads to. The end of all knowledge is Unity. Therefore, with the evolution of human understanding, the heterogeneous and confusing mass of ideas and ideals is finally resolved back to a homogenous unit. This supreme fact we are called upon to recognise as the goal of all our aspirations and strivings, religious or otherwise.

It is quite evident thus that our outlook on religious life takes a backward swing: instead of being centrifugal it becomes centripetal. In search of God or Heaven we run helter-skelter. We profess to worship God and live a religious life. But where do we find God? Where do we worship Him? If we worship Him in the void of the sky, an empty space, we are downright atheists. And if we worship Him as stone images and dead symbols, we are veritable idolators. We go to churches and temples in search of God. But is He not present everywhere, even within the sanctuary of our heart? And do we not worship Him as dead images while His living images are around us? What better images of God could we worship than Man himself? But it does not follow that we should worship the image of man as a substitute for stone image. It is not *Humanism*. We have to worship the Living God in His living temple of man. Then and then alone, man will love man and the way to a better state of things will be paved on earth.

It follows, therefore, that religious life is not a long-drawn struggle to escape from perdition. It does not mean again that the Kingdom of Heaven consists in a fanciful hope for a promised land in some distant future. The popular belief is that Everlasting Life is post-mortem. They seem to think that eternity is dissociated from time; so, they

look forward for the Eternal Life after their death. The Kingdom of God, however, is right here, on earth, nay, it is within us.

Furthermore, it conclusively proves that the different religions will have no more special claims to the universality of their Gods and creeds, and exclusive rights and privileges to salvation. All rancour, hatred and base competition in the name of the Most Holy will cease for ever. We will learn *tolerance* and grow broad and large-hearted enough to *accept* all religions as so many different paths leading to the same goal.

Recognising thus the Basic Unity and Divinity of all, man will learn how to love his fellow-being, his brother, his neighbour, nay, his enemy even. This is not a new-fangled doctrine or deal in the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the old, old teaching of all the Great Masters of all ages. It is the Eternal Law that the time-forces are pressing hard upon us to recognise and exemplify in our lives for ushering in a better state of things. This is the New Deal in which alone the Kingdom of God will be realised on earth, when the children of the Heavenly Father, like so many pilgrims will join their hands, and singing the Glory of the Most High march on in the pilgrimage of Life and thereby produce a divine symphony out of the polyphony of the various races, creeds and colours.

GANDHI'S HARIJAN CAMPAIGN

AND ITS RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

By Jerome G. D'Souza, S. J.

THE Indian national movement which began about sixty years ago has never been a purely political movement. No doubt a great part of its strength comes from the natural desire to rid India of the stigma of subjection to a foreign nation, to increase the wealth of the country and relieve the misery of the masses by economic independence. But an important element in the growth of nationalism was also the desire to preserve intact, in all its essentials, Indian culture and religion. Indian civilization is inseparable from the Hindu religion, as inseparable as Catholicism was from mediæval civilization. It penetrates the daily life and practices of an orthodox Hindu family to a degree that people in the West do not always realize. It has inspired and given its distinguishing mark to Indian social and political organization, to Indian art—architecture, painting, music and literature. It was felt that the continuance of a foreign domination meant a threat to this civilization and religion. That is why, from the beginning, Indian nationalists have thought, and almost always openly said, that India's political struggle with England was only an aspect of the wider cultural conflict between India and the West. "When India becomes English, she dies," said Swami Vivekananda, referring to this underlying conflict.

This feature of Indian nationalism was faithfully reflected in the spirit and the pronouncements of its earliest and most powerful spokesman, the Indian

National Congress. * * * * If this was true of the early days of the Congress, it became truer still as the party developed and organised itself. The reformed Hindu sects which had risen before or along with the national movement, were strongly tinged with Christian religious ideas; their loyalty to India and Hinduism, strong as it was, went with uncompromising condemnation of the social abuses of Hinduism and even the abandonment of certain traditional Hindu doctrines. But to this stage of reform inspired by Christian ideas, there succeeded what J. N. Farquhar, author of the classical history of *Modern Religious Movements in India*, calls a "full defence of the old beliefs." * * * This unforeseen development had its inevitable repercussion on Congress politics. The more extreme elements gradually gained the upper hand. Their triumph was completed when Bal Gangadhar Tilak superseded Gopal Krishna Ghokale as leader after the Surat Congress in 1902. Ghokale was one of the ablest of modern Indian politicians who based his nationalism on political and economical grounds. Tilak was, like Ghokale, a Maratha Brahman, a learned Sanskritist, most orthodox in belief and practice, a passionate polemic who brought into politics an intense loyalty to his religion. Social reform after Tilak assumed less and less importance in the Congress platform. The accession of Annie Besant to Congress ranks, strengthened still more the impression that Congress politics had a strong sectarian tinge. For by the spirit and

the tone of her writings she had everywhere inspired strong dislike of Christian missionary effort in India, and fostered, what another like-minded Irish woman, Miss Margaret Noble ("Sister Nivedita") had proudly described as "aggressive Hinduism."

The emergence of Mr. Gandhi, and his gradual domination of the Congress seemed to justify all the fears of non-Hindus and make the most powerful organ of Indian nationalism the avowed champion of Hindu ideas. Mr. Gandhi, at first sight, at any rate, seems to be the very incarnation of the traditional spirit of India, and of the revolt not so much against English rule as against European civilization. He has always called himself a "Sanatani Hindu", a believer in the "Varnashrama Dharma", that is to say a member of the "Eternal" religion and an upholder of caste, though not of untouchability. * * * Of the features which Mr. Gandhi habitually associates with the "Civilization of the West", or rather confounds with it, we must choose two of the most salient,—capitalist industrialism, and the appeal to arms for the solution of international problems. Against these and their attendant evils, the intensity of his hatred can scarcely be conceived. There are certain other ideas dear to him. I think we must all recognize in him a sympathy for the oppressed and a passion for social justice which have made of him a great social reformer. But pacifism and opposition to machine-made industry are fundamental in his creed. He has sought political power and captured the Congress in the hope that the grant of autonomy would enable him to found a State in accordance with his social ideals. * * * To attain that autonomy a fairly united demand from all the sections of India

was indispensable. Mr. Gandhi's consummate skill as a political tactician was displayed in the manner he produced, on two successive occasions, a semblance of unity. The first was in 1921 when the Khilafat agitation among Indian Moslems was at its height. Mr. Gandhi very cleverly espoused the Moslem cause, and thereby gained almost unanimous adhesion of the Moslem League to the Congress Program. * * * But there was another source of disunion which Mr. Gandhi had not foreseen, and which paralyzed him utterly. The "Untouchables", those age-long victims of the cruel Hindu social system, refused to throw in their lot with the "caste Hindus"; and in the person of their spokesman, Dr. Ambedkhar, demanded communal safeguards as uncompromisingly as the Moslems. In vain Mr. Gandhi passionately protested that Dr. Ambedkhar did not represent the views of the majority of the Harijans.* In vain he recalled all the proofs of his own undoubted love for them and the marks of confidence he had received from them. Certainly the Harijans felt that their cause was safe as long as Gandhi was master of the Congress. But they had no faith in the orthodox Hindus who formed the bulk of Mr. Gandhi's supporters. So Dr. Ambedkhar stuck to his demands of reserved seats and separate electorates for his people. No compromise seemed likely. The Conference broke up after entrusting to the Prime Minister the task of solving the communal tangle. But Mr. Gandhi announced that if the final award sought to perpetuate the division between orthodox Hindus and untouchables he would oppose it to the utmost of his strength, and if necessary

* Harijans: people of God, a term invented by Mr. Gandhi to describe the Untouchables.

lay down his life for the cause of what he conceived to be "Hindu unity".

A few months after Mr. Gandhi was imprisoned, the Prime Minister's communal award was announced. It provided, as had been foreseen, separate electorates for the Harijans. Mr. Gandhi announced that if Government stuck to this provision and the country—high castes and Harijans—accepted it, he would in protest go on hunger-strike, and fast unto death. In fact, within a few days Mr. Gandhi was at death's door. Once again his unique hold over his countrymen was demonstrated. Orthodox and Untouchable hastily deliberated together, came to an agreement, decided to drop the question of separate electorates, and got their decision approved by the Prime Minister. Mr. Gandhi lived again.

When the excitement of this had died down, and Mr. Gandhi had recovered forces sufficiently, he started another long fast, one of "purification", the prelude to a new campaign. He survived this fast too; and then having promised the Government that during the space of a year he would not talk "politics", that is, not preach civil disobedience, he obtained liberation from prison. Then followed another of those great campaigns with all the features which marked Mr. Gandhi's previous campaigns—the Khilafat and Rowlatt Act campaigns, the Prohibition campaign, the Khadi campaign. * * * A campaign of the usual kind, it was said, but with one capital difference. Mr. Gandhi's new movement and the support he gives to the Anti-Untouchability and Temple Entry Bills have raised a storm of opposition from the conservative sections of Hindus. Wherever he went, side by side with the cheers, there were counter demonstrations organized by the orthodox

party, black flag processions and meetings where the Sanatanists, or followers of Sanathana Dharma, the Eternal Religion, denounced Mr. Gandhi as an enemy of Hinduism, and described the Temple Entry Bill as unjustifiable interference in religious matters by a Government pledged to neutrality. At a town named Deoghar the Sanatanists' fury against the Mahatma was so great that they threw stones at his car and injured one of the occupants, though Mr. Gandhi himself escaped unhurt. There is not the slightest doubt that the conservative Hindus are alarmed. They have not been content with staging black flag demonstrations before Mr. Gandhi, they have started an India-wide campaign, have enlisted the sympathies of powerful groups, especially among the landed aristocracy, and set up an elaborate organisation with branches in every important town. Hundreds of conservative orthodox Hindus, formerly staunch supporters of the Congress, and adherents of Mr. Gandhi in his former campaigns, are now active workers in the Sanatanist cause. They have a rapidly developing press both in English and Vernaculars. They hold meetings, conferences and congresses where their discourses almost invariably follow two lines: denunciation of Mr. Gandhi as the adversary of genuine Hinduism, glorification of the "Eternal and Universal Religion" of which caste and untouchability are essential features.

Nothing is so curious as the dramatic turn of events by which Mr. Gandhi is made the object of precisely those denunciations which he himself has most consistently hurled against Europeans: destroyers of the spirituality of India, imbued with materialistic ideas, secularizing influence, etc. Mr. Gandhi's strong statements against the

abuses of Hinduism, or denials of certain traditional Hindu beliefs, are cited as proofs of his being a Hindu only in name. In one conference a speaker undertook to prove that the Mahatma was really a Christian! One of Mr. Gandhi's most prominent adversaries, Swami Bharathi Krishna Tirtha, the Sankaracharya of Puri, that is the head of one of the greatest Hindu Mutts or monasteries in India, on one occasion brought together a number of statements attributed to Mr. Gandhi, which taken literally and divorced from their context, make Mr. Gandhi look anything but a genuine Hindu. Here are some of the offending sentences: "The Mahabharata (the great Hindu Epic, and one of the sacred books of the Hindus) is a mass of rubbish from beginning to end"; "I do not regard Sri Krishna as an Avatar (incarnation) but as an ordinary man". "It is a belief for fools and not for educated men that God dwells in temples"; "I am a breaker of idols"; "I consider a scavenger better than a Brahman", and so on (*Madras Mail*, February 20, 1934).

This "Swami" is typical of many Hindu religious leaders who were staunch congressmen and non-co-operators as long as they hoped that Congress, under Mr. Gandhi's leadership, would establish Hindu rule in India. But under the menace of this new movement they have developed a surprising loyalty to the British Raj, and speak of His Majesty the King Emperor in terms of touching devotion. Mr. M. K. Acharya, another redoubtable Sanatanist, speaks of this campaign and the new Bills as an attempt by Mr. Gandhi to win "a cheap feather for his cap". "Shall India's Dharmic culture live or die?" He asks. "Are the laws of spiritual life and the rules of reli-

gious worship to be settled by the votes of secular rate-payers?" And speaking of Mr. Gandhi: "I, too, once took Gandhi for a genuine Mahatma. I was misled by his stern denunciation of the slave mentality in others. I was misled by his seeming call to Soul force. I was misled by his much advertised Charka and loin-cloth. I followed him for a time. But very soon, at close quarters, I discovered that my idol had only feet of clay. Gandhi does not know what true Soul force is, though he trades on its labels day and night. That is how he commits Himalayan blunders. . . . May the Lord forgive Gandhi and help him to perceive the true laws of spiritual evolution" (*Madras Mail*, January 7, 1933).

Among the "true laws of spiritual evolution," the division of Hindu society into five classes, four high castes and the fifth or Panchama caste of Untouchables, is according to these Sanatanists, one of the most essential. Every conceivable argument "scientific" and "theological" is brought forward. "Untouchability is a ruling rudimentary virtue of nature found in the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, and is not in any way peculiar to humanity," says the Swadharma Swarajya Sangha, in a communication to the Madras Government, protesting against the Temple Entry Bill. (*Madras Mail*, February 28, 1934). The Sankaracharya of Puri to whom allusion has already been made, goes further and speaks of "unapproachability," and that on the strictest scientific grounds. "Scientists and social reformers in Europe and America", he said in an address at a public meeting in Madras, "recognized and made provision for the existence of castes....Poisons had been discovered in human beings by modern scientists, where it was no

individual but tribal poison and had to be taken into account not merely for purposes of marriage, nor merely for purposes of association in social functions, but even for purposes of approachability" (*The Hindu*, December 20, 1934). But the strongest of all arguments is of course based on the Hindu belief in Karma and rebirth. This was admirably expressed in a memorandum submitted to the Viceroy on March 17, 1933, by a deputation of orthodox Hindus, headed by a non-Brahman Prince, the Rajah of Kollengode. "In the opinion of orthodox Hindus, birth is no matter of chance. Every man born must discharge all Karmic obligations before he can attain salvation. Hence the untouchables are people who on account of their Karma in past lives are born in communities, families, and professions so unclean as to be regarded as untouchables by caste Hindus. They may not be turned from their sinful way by any external agency or by any secular legislation." (*Madras Mail*, March 18, 1933).

What attitude does Mr. Gandhi adopt in the face of this opposition? The loss of friends and disciples, painful as it must be, does not move him. He has experienced such vicissitudes often enough and survived them. Neither does the assertion that Untouchability is essential to Hinduism, though it affects him more, deter him from the course he has adopted. No doubt, Mr. Gandhi claims and believes himself to be a good Hindu. But in truth his religious and social ideas are derived from all sorts of heterogeneous sources: from Hinduism of course, but also from Jainism and Buddhism, from Christianity to a very large extent, from European writers like Ruskin and Tolstoy. Towards traditional Hindu beliefs his attitude is that of a Ration-

alist, ready to submit everything to his private judgment, decidedly opposed to accepting anything on authority. Some have even described him as a Deist fired by the humanitarian ideal. However that might be, while most Hindu beliefs are to his mind only probably true, or at best have a symbolical value, he is absolutely convinced that untouchability is a monstrous iniquity, a sin which has brought down upon India all her sufferings as rightful chastisement from God. He is therefore sure that it is not an essential part of Hinduism. But if it should be proved that it is, he has said again and again, then let Hinduism perish.

What will the outcome of this struggle be? Will the formidable forces arrayed against Mr. Gandhi carry the day? They have great resources in money and social influence. The fundamental conservatism of the Hindu people is in their favour. They are also skilful in the art of political manoeuvring. Nevertheless, they are fighting against the current. They are pitted against a man most dangerous as adversary, whose hold over vast masses of Indians is still unshaken. The number of those who believe that a reformed Hinduism, cleansed of all its social abuses and superstitious extravagances, is possible and desirable, is growing every day. Nay, hundreds of educated men, captured by the ideal of national unity, and desirous of only the material greatness of India, are in an ugly mood towards the very idea of religion, which in India is the most fruitful source of division. Communist and atheistic propaganda are most active, and are meeting with success. Many educated men, while abstaining from loud declarations of unbelief, are frankly materialistic. The following account of a "civil" marriage, celebrated at Kumbakonam,

one of the strongholds of orthodox Hinduism, is typical of the new spirit abroad. "This was the first marriage of the kind", says the newspaper report (*Madras Mail*, August 22, 1933). "The services of a Brahman priest were dispensed with. The ceremony was over in a few minutes, but for two hours afterwards speeches were made attacking all religions in general, and Hinduism in particular and asking people not to follow religious tenets and practices." Manifestly in such an atmosphere the intransigent orthodoxy of the Sanatanists will not flourish.

It remains to sum up briefly the immediate effects of Mr. Gandhi's campaign on the Indian situation, chiefly from the religious point of view.

The first effect of course was to increase still more the dissensions in the Indian camp, to add one more to the list of Indian sects and parties. But the capital result is the breaking up of the alliance between orthodox Hinduism and the Congress Party, alliance more or less avowed since the days of Tilak. At one blow Mr. Gandhi has "betrayed" those who had placed their dearest hopes in him, who had almost certainly hoped that he would play their game and leave them to reap the victory. He has made once again social reform an essential part of the Congress program. Many observers in Europe feared that the granting of autonomy to India would mean the establishment of a reactionary Hindu State. Many conservatives in England were sincerely opposed to Indian self-government because they were persuaded that Congress was run by a few intriguing Brahmins and that once they were given power these people would, in Lord Lloyd's vivid phrase, "let in the jungle" and undo the work of 150 years of European education.

Two years ago this was a real danger; even to day it would be rash to say that it is entirely past; but it is decidedly less real than formerly. No doubt Congress has lost a good deal of its power. But Indian nationalism is not a force that will die out. What Congress has lost to-day it will regain to-morrow. And if it should ever gain political control of India it will probably do nothing to establish a Hindu theocracy.

As regards the effects of the movement on the prospects of the conversion of India to Christianity, it would be too optimistic to expect nothing but good from it. Orthodox Hinduism is not a persecuting religion; and though it would not have favored Christianity it would have tolerated missionary work, specially among the untouchables. But the present tendency of the Congress, if it goes the whole way of down-right secularism, as is not impossible, might end in the persecution of all religions. Moreover, Mr. Gandhi himself remains opposed definitely to conversion work by missionaries. Nevertheless, the broad fact remains that the uplift of the Harijans weakens the whole system of caste in India, and a weakening of caste will certainly render conversion easier to the higher classes. For the difficulty they encounter in accepting Christianity is not so much in the necessity of belief as in the immense cruelty of the social ostracism which that belief involves. "Orthodoxy" in Hindu India does not mean rigidity of belief, but absolute fidelity to the prescriptions and prohibitions of caste. Even now any high-caste Indian may hold whatever idea he likes about Christ and the Christian revelation, and openly proclaim his belief, provided he does not worship, or at least exclusively worship, in

Christian churches, and does not eat and drink with Christians. But if caste should be thoroughly shaken and social barriers lowered, a time may come when a Hindu will be allowed to follow integral Christian belief and practice without being driven out of the family and caste. From that time the progress of Church in India will in all probability be most rapid. If Mr. Gandhi's Harijan campaign hastens that era, in spite of the prestige he has given to Hinduism, in spite of his oft-

repeated determination to save Hindu spirituality from materialism, history will pronounce him one of the greatest destructive forces launched against Hinduism. Hence the far-reaching importance of this his latest campaign. And in so far as it weakens one of the chief obstacles to the conversion of Hindus, all Catholics may wish him a hearty "God-speed".*

* We draw the attention of the reader to the "Notes and Comments" column for our remarks on the points raised in this article.

A SONG FROM RAIDASA

(TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL HINDI)

By R. C. Tandan.

(Raidasa, the devotee, was a *chamar* or cobbler by caste. He is said to have lived to the age of one hundred and twenty years. He flourished in the latter part of the fifteenth and the first part of the sixteenth century. He attained to sainthood and was also a disciple of Ramana-*nanda*.)

How can I forsake now the utterance of Thy Name?

Thou art, O Lord, as the Sandal-wood, and I am like water : Thine odour permeates every particle of my body.

O Lord, Thou art like a dense Forest, while I am like a peacock.

I fix my gaze on Thee, even as the *chakora** fixes its gaze on the moon.

O Lord, Thou art like a Lamp, and I am like a wick, which burns out its flame day and night

Thou art, O Lord, like a Pearl, and I am just a thread that strings it.

We mix together as gold mixes with borax.

Thou art the Master, O Lord, and I am Thy servant.

Such is the devotion which Raidasa offers Thee.

* *Chakora*, a bird of the partridge family, in fable said to subsist on moon-beams.

WHAT THE EAST CAN TEACH THE WEST*

By Swami Siddheswarananda

WESTERN thought is of late becoming increasingly sensitive to Eastern spiritual ideals. It is but a significant step forward in that scheme of re-adjustment which is almost a biological necessity if nations are to live. Man cannot live by bread alone, and a world that has neglected the spiritual realities demands at some time or other a deeper valuation of life. The numerous publications on eastern religions and philosophy from various European publishing houses—Messrs. Rider & Co., sharing not a few of the popular editions, give sufficient indications of this changed outlook. The literature of this order can be grouped under two distinctive types. There are those who prophesy that eastern philosophic thought and literature would create a revolution in the occidental mental life, more effective and lasting than the one that witnessed the period of the Renaissance. There are again others who are afraid of this invasion of the East. These are out to disillusion their kinsmen from placing any faith in decadent coloured races, much less to expect any spiritual help from them. Persons of this ilk are also finding enterprising publishers to help their propaganda. But the expedients of life are more exacting than feeding prejudices.

Europe is on the brink of a volcano. Dr. Jung, the reputed psychologist, in his book "The Modern Man in Search of a Soul," gives a significant warning. The mis-

chievous dictum "in time of peace prepare for war" and thus convert humanity into cannon-fodder, cannot dope the world long. The civilisation of a soul-life must sooner or later gain dominion, for as the poet has said :

Who can reflect, unmoved, upon the round

Of smooth and solemnised complacencies

By which in Christian lands, from age to age,

Profession mocks performance—Earth is sick,

And Heaven is weary, of the hollow words

Which states and kingdoms utter when they talk of truth and justice.

This state of affairs has unnerved many a mind, and 'the danger itself is fostering the reasoning power.' For sincere seekers of Truth are out to find at any cost the Peace of the Soul.

Paul Brunton whose previous book, "A Search in Secret India" we have already reviewed in this Journal, is really one such votary of Truth. The East, he believes,—because he has really come into direct contact with true spiritual living, holds still the palm in understanding the glory of the soul. He came under the spiritual sway of one who conveyed to him something of the truth of the soul, taught him how "to inspect the folds of the mind", to discover the

*The Secret Path : By Paul Brunton. Published by Rider & Co., Ltd., London. Price 5 sh.

priceless crest-jewel of discrimination. In this book under review Paul Brunton has given a technique of self-analysis which he learned from Sri Ramana Maharshi whom he describes as the Great Man from the East. Mr. Brunton has tried "to tackle this difficult investigation of life in an impartial love of Truth for its own sake and not in order to confirm or refute any particular theory," and so he affirms that his treatise is a bare "transcript from life." In the chapter on "Man—Science's Greatest Riddle," the author is trying to say that science has brought only comfort and not civilisation. "In this age of reason," he says, "the scientist is the Pope of to-day and sits in the Vatican of world authority. We receive his learned revelations in a spirit of religious awe. We trust his pontifical pronouncements as nearly all Europe trusted the creeds and dogmas of the Church." But true to his western training the author does not depreciate the *scientific method*. In a course in Atma Vichara, a true scientific method will always have the sanction of Vedanta. In India this process is very old, for Sankara gives the essence of scientific method when he speaks of an "*investigation* into their (sense-objects) real nature" for an understanding of the Self, which is Truth. In the chapter on the "Mysterious Over-self" Mr. Brunton speaks of the spiritual reality behind every appearance. In the succeeding chapter he gives us a method to practise mental quiet and the technique of self-analysis—which he found in India. But in his chapter on "The Awakening of Intuition" he is not able to rise up to the

method of enquiry he had planned when he set out to experiment. The method of Atma Vichara is primarily metaphysical and not barely psychological. Mr. Brunton speaks of the yielding up of "all thoughts to intuitive feeling." But intuitive feeling is as much an object of perception as the many others which he has noticed and discarded as unreal in taking an inventory of the human personality. So to arrive at true understanding, which is Jnana, a real investigation of even the contents of the Anandamaya-kosha, which is the basis of Mr. Brunton's intuitive feeling, has to be mercilessly carried out. And in that final understanding which is to be arrived at by the method of negation—Neti Neti—all that has been discarded as fugitive and unreal, takes on transcendental values and appears in their true nature as Brahman. Then feeling, feeler and the felt are all understood as one indivisible entity with no variation in their values. It is on this strand alone one can understand and realise the significance of the verb "to be."

In the succeeding chapters, Brunton addresses his western readers and tells them how to live life more efficiently through the secret path he has discovered. We are here reminded of what Swami Vivekananda spoke in the matter of approaching the West to instruct her in spiritual problems. The West is intensely practical and any path, esoteric or otherwise, must help her to be more so. If the wisdom of the East holds any real promise in this line, Europe is certainly prepared to hear and profit by it. Is the East prepared to play her part?

THE SWETASWATARA UPANISHAD

By Swami Thyagisananda

Introduction

THE Swetaswatara Upanishad is a short Upanishad consisting of only 113 verses divided into six chapters. It belongs to the Krishna Yajurveda. It gets its name from the Sage Swetaswatara, who is said to have taught it to his disciples (*Vide* verse 21 of Chap. 6). The word Swetaswatara does not seem to be the original name of the Rishi but only an honorific title. According to Sankarananda the word means one who has controlled his senses (Sweta 'pure' plus Aswa—Indriyas or senses). According to others it means a pure mule or a male calf (Sweta plus Aswatara). In ancient days it was quite common to add the words Rishabha, Pungava, etc., as a mark of respect, as in words like Munipungava, Rajarshabha, etc. Either way the word signifies the greatness of the teacher.

It is not one of the more ancient Upanishads, which are generally considered to be the major ones, and which form the basis of the enquiry in the Brahmasutras. These Sutras do not allude to the Swetaswatara even once, but many of its verses are quoted by the commentators in support of their doctrines. This shows what an important position of authority it held in the eyes of the great Bhashyakaras, notwithstanding its comparatively later origin.

It does not advocate any particular system of orthodox philosophy, as elaborated in the Darsanas or in their Bhashyas. It contains passages which are allied in thought to the Dwaita, the Vishishtadwaita, the Advaita and other branches of Vedanta. Samkhya and Yoga ideas find a prominent place in certain verses. It lays equal emphasis on Jnana, Bhakti and other paths of spiritual life. The various aspects of God-head find their natural place in it and adjust themselves to each other without any conflict. If, in certain passages, it is Vedic in language and conception, in others it is also Puranic in expression and presentation. In fact, it would seem to be an attempt of a great synthetic mind to reconcile the various conflicting views, philosophical and religious, which were current at the time of its composition. It reminds us of a similar, but a more popular, attempt in this direction, made by Bhagavan Sri Krishna in the Gita. The modern student will therefore do well to approach the study of this work in the same broad and reverent spirit in which he approaches the study of the Gita, unfettered by any conventions and prejudices.

The Peace Invocation

१. ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदम् पूर्णं पूर्णमुदच्यते ।

पूर्णं पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

पूर्णं full अदः that पूर्णं full इदं this पूर्णं from the full पूर्णं the full उदच्यते has come out पूर्णस्य of the full पूर्णं the full आदाय having taken पूर्णं the full एव alone अवशिष्यते remains.

Om. All those that are invisible are filled by Brahman, all those that are visible are also fully permeated by Brahman. The whole universe has come out of the whole Brahman. Brahman is still full although the whole universe has come out of it.

२. भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः ।

भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजताः ।

स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवाँसस्तनूभिः

व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥

देवाः O Gods कर्णेभिः with our ears भद्रं auspicious शृणुयामः may (we) hear यजताः O worshipful ones अक्षिभिः with our eyes भद्रं auspicious पश्येम may we see देवहितं allotted by Gods यत् what आयुः life स्थिरैः strong अङ्गैः with limbs तनूभिः with the body तुष्टुवाँसः (we) who pray व्यशेम may (we) live.

With our ears may we hear what is auspicious, O Gods! With our eyes may we see what is auspicious, O ye worshipful ones! May we who sing praises (to ye), enjoy the life allotted to us by the Gods with strong limbs and body.

३. सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहे ।

तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु । सा विद्विषावहे ॥

ओं शान्तिः । शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

सह together नौ us both अवतु protect सह together नौ us both भुनक्तु nourish सह together वीर्यं with great energy करवावहे may work तेजस्वि vigorous नौ to us both अधीतम् study अस्तु may be सा not विद्विषावहे may hate each other.

May Brahman protect us both together. May He nourish us both together. May we both work together with great energy. May our study be vigorous and effective. May we not hate each other.

Om Peace! Peace! Peace!

NOTES:—It is usual, before beginning the study of any Upanishad, to repeat certain Vedic verses, and to end it with the peace invocation. The verses employed are generally common to those Upanishads which belong to the same Sakha of the Veda.

It seems primarily meant to create in the student the proper mental attitude necessary for the study of abstract metaphysical problems. The qualifications for the aspirant for Brahma-jñanam are emphasised by all the Bhashyakaras, based on the authority of the Srutis themselves. A clear conception of the goal (Viveka), freedom from the distractions of the world (Vairagya), a disciplined life of devotion and self-control (Shadguna-sampathi), a burning desire for the realisation of the truth (Mumukshutvam) and the help of a proper Guru are considered essential for all aspirants. The Svetasvatara itself mentions some of these qualifications in the last verses of the sixth chapter. Compare also the 24th verse of the 2nd chapter of the Kathopanishad नाविरतो दुश्चरितात् &c. Cf. also शान्ता दान्त उपरतस्तितिः &c.

The verses repeated as peace invocation before the study of this Upanishad are particularly appropriate as, in a way, it ensures the proper qualifications in the student. The first verse makes sure of the goal of all Upanishadic study, the goal of perfection—the Infinite, the Absolute. The second ensures freedom from worldly distractions, and a life of discipline with the grace of the Gods. The third emphasises the necessity of the Guru, and the cultivation of proper relations between him and the disciple. The repetition of the word 'Santhi' three times is to ensure freedom from all the three kinds of worldly ills, physical, mental and spiritual.

CHAPTER I

हरिः ओ ब्रह्मवादिनो वदन्ति ।

किं कारणं ब्रह्म कुतः स्म जाताः

जीवाम केन क्व च संप्रतिष्ठा ।

अधिष्ठिताः केन सुखेतेषु

वर्तमहे ब्रह्मविदो व्यवस्थाम् ॥

ब्रह्मवादिनः=students of Brahman. वदन्ति=discuss. किम्=what कारणम्=cause ब्रह्म=Brahman कुतः=whence, or why जाताःस्मः=we are born केन=due to what. जीवामः=we live. क्व=where. च=and संप्रतिष्ठा=final rest. केन=by whom or what अधिष्ठिताः=controlled सुखेतेषु=in happiness and misery वर्तमहे=we abide ब्रह्मविदः=knowers of Brahman व्यवस्थाम्=law.

Students of Brahman¹ discuss² (among themselves):—What is the cause Brahman?³ Whence are we born?⁴ Why do we live?⁵ Where is our final rest?⁶ Under whose orders are we, who know the Brahman, subjected to the law of happiness and misery?

NOTES:—The Upanishad begins with an account of a discussion carried on by some students of the Veda with regard to the ultimate problems of philosophy and religion.

1. The word Brahman may mean either the Absolute or the Vedas. In this verse we take it in the latter sense. ब्रह्मवादिनः therefore refers to persons who have finished a formal study of the Vedas during their Brahmacharya period, and who have been repeating it daily during their Swadhyaya and Brahmayaajna. It is these people that, in time, came to be troubled by various doubts relating to the truths contained in the Vedas. They have just finished their Shravanam, (hearing) and have become fit to enter their next stage of Mananam (thinking).

2. The word वदन्ति literally means speak, but here it means speaking out their doubts in their attempt to clear them with the help of others.

3. The first doubt deals with the problem of causation. It is interpreted in various ways by various commentators, the same commentator himself often suggesting alternative interpretations. To us, it

seems, the doubt analyses itself as follows: What is the nature of causation? Is it necessary that everything should have a cause? If so, what is the final cause of this universe? Can it be Brahman? How can the Absolute Brahman, unrelated to anything else, the one without a second, be the cause of anything? If at all it could be the cause, what is the nature of this Causal Brahman? Is it the material cause or the efficient cause or both? Or can it be that some other entity such as time, nature, etc., is the first cause, and not Brahman? All these seem to be condensed in the first question raised.

4. The next question is with regard to the mystery of creation. Why should the universe come into existence, if at all it is a thing created? How can the imperfect come out of the perfect, the finite out of the infinite? If it is not created, why should it appear to be an effect, and why should everything in this universe seem under the necessity of having an origin? If man in his real nature is Brahman itself, why should there be so much variety in this world? Why should it forsake its supreme bliss and take on this individual aspect? This seems to be the substance of the second doubt.

5. The third doubt is with regard to the mystery of life itself. 'Why should there be life at all?'—has perplexed the most acute brains. What is life? How does it come into existence? What is it that sustains it? Is it independent or dependant on something else? If so, on what? Are we masters of our own lives? If so, why should we be so anxious to preserve it and prolong it beyond the grave? These questions naturally suggest themselves to thoughtful minds and demand an answer.

6. The fourth doubt deals with the mystery of death. No man is completely sure of his future. What is death? Is it a permanent cessation of life and activities? Does the individual ever cease to be once for all? Does he continue to live in another form in another world? Does he come back again to this world in a new body? Is he, at any time, to have eternal existence, free from life, as we understand it, or is the individual soul to merge itself in Brahman and become one with it?

7. The last doubt deals with the problem of evil. Why should there be suffering in this world? If man is free and is master of himself, would he willingly choose the life of suffering? How can the existence of suffering be explained under a merciful Providence? Are there proper methods of escape from this, and if so, why does not man have recourse to these methods and be free, especially those who know these methods from a study of the Scriptures?

The next verse points out briefly the nature of Mananam by the 'Nethi, Nethi' method or the process of elimination.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

A Highly Significant Event

IT is very significant that in the last session of the Hindu Maha Sabha, the Rev. Ottama Bhikku was elected as the President. It is a recognition of the fact that the term Hindu has a connotation much wider than what is applied to it in these days. It has been the custom to describe a Hindu as a follower of the Vedas without however insisting that any one going under that description should have necessarily studied any section of the Vedas, or even heard of the existence of such a collection of sacred literature. Rev. Ottama, however, belongs to a faith that does not look upon the Vedas as revealed books or even pay lip-allegiance to them, as in the case of many of the modern Hindu sects. What then is the significance of this action on the part of a great socio-religious assembly of the Hindus?

To our mind this action seems to be the result of a great awakening and expansion of the Hindu consciousness. It is a recognition of the fact that the boundaries of Hinduism are not sacerdotal but cultural. Any individual or nation may be described as Hindu, if his or its outlook on life has received the impress characteristic of Indian thought, whether orthodox or heterodox. For, these two streams of Indian thought as much resemble each other in regard to the fundamentals of practical life as they differ in matters of philosophical and theological subtleties. And wherever Indian religion of any description has gone, it has produced an outlook on life that is characteristically Indian.

For a long time past, however, the Hindu has been blind to the achievements of his culture in distant lands. During the past several centuries the forces working in the Hindu consciousness seem to have been more centripetal than centrifugal in their direction. The tendency seems to have been to shrink into the narrow limits of one's caste, community or sect in place of expanding into the broader limits of culture. The election of the Rev. Bhikku Ottama to the Presidentship of Hindu Mahasabha signifies the abandoning of the narrow outlook and the adoption of the broader one. For Buddhism is only an expression of Indian culture, and wherever Buddhism has spread, not only have the people received to a smaller or greater extent the peculiar attitude on life characteristic of India, but they have been profoundly influenced even by the purely secular aspect of Indian culture. Hinduism can therefore very well conceive its spiritual boundaries as extending much beyond the Indian contingent into all the lands where the religion of the Buddha is the people's faith—into Ceylon, Burma, Siam, China and Japan. The election of a Burmese monk as the President of the Mahasabha may therefore be looked upon as the beginning of a great Pan-Hindu Movement for the cultural unification of that part of Asia which has been influenced by Indian thought.

Buddhists are Hindus

This view receives support from the presidential address of the Rev. Ottama Bhikku, wherein he points out the intimate relation between Hinduism and Buddhism and the

common cultural basis of both. He says: "For the edification of those who perversely seek to justify the separation of India from Burma on the ground of difference in Hindu and Buddhist culture, let me, as an humble follower of Lord Buddha's teachings, who claims to have made some comparative study of the philosophical as well as practical concepts of Hinduism and Buddhism, state from this platform that Lord Buddha was a Hindu of Hindus. Buddha never rejected Hinduism; rather he broadened its base. He gave it a new life and a new interpretation. The people of Burma who adore Lord Buddha as the Master of their hearts and follow his teachings and look upon India where he was born and where he preached his gospel as their holy land,—are all Hindus. Looked at from this point of view, I consider the proposed separation of Burma from India as a deliberate step towards the dismemberment of the great Hindu Nation and a grave menace to the ancient Aryan culture which has existed in India through long, long ages extending over millennium after millennium."

Apart from its political implications, these memorable words of the Rev. Ottama Bhikku should go home to the hearts of the Buddhists and the Hindus alike and remind them of the intimate relation between their faiths in the heydays of India when political passions and sacerdotal animosities had not yet begun to create cleavages of interests in their mind. During the time of Buddha and of the great emperors like Asoka, Samudragupta, Harshavardhana, etc., there was no antagonism between these two expressions of India's religious genius. The king, whether he was formally the follower of the Vedas or of the Buddha, patronised both

the faiths alike as the two branches of the same Arya Dharma. If the modern Asiatic countries, both Buddhist and Hindu, realise this fact, then will they gain a substantial basis for inaugurating a great pan-Hindu cultural movement. The political conditions in Asia to-day may not favour this; but thanks to the modern methods of communication, such an idea is sure to gain strength as time goes on, and materialise too as an actual force in Asia's cultural life when political conditions become more propitious for the same. But before this is accomplished the Hindu culture has to become self-conscious.

Cultural affinity and Bodh Gaya Temple Bill

We must also point out in this connection that the present-day agitation on the part of the Buddhists to confiscate the Bodh Gaya Temple from its present Hindu management springs from a total incapacity on their part to recognise their essential kinship with the Hindus. If they had felt that the Hindus are as much the followers of the Lord Buddha as they themselves, they would never have thought of replacing the present management of the Temple with a committee consisting almost exclusively of Buddhists. One can very well understand and appreciate the desire of the Buddhists to improve the Temple and its site and to have some voice, say, in an advisory capacity, in the management of it. It is said that an attempt to bring about a settlement of this kind before was rejected by the Buddhists. Their present effort, however to drive away the existing legal manager of the Temple, who has as much right as themselves to occupy that position from the religious point of view also, can be described

only as a very reprehensible manifestation of communal prejudice.

The attitude adopted by the Hindu Mahasabha in this matter is highly judicious. It has undertaken to bring about an amicable settlement between the two parties, in case the Buddhists drop the legislative measure. In fact the question would not have assumed the present unpleasant turn, had the Buddhists under the leadership of the late Anagarika Dharmapala refrained from introducing a crusading spirit into the agitation. It is pointed out that the Mahant has been showing an increasing tendency to be unsympathetic towards the interests of Buddhist pilgrims, but this, if true, is only the natural reaction to the fighting spirit and the anti-Hindu outlook of the Buddhist leaders who first started the struggle. An amicable settlement can be arrived at only under the following conditions: The Buddhists on their part will have to recognise that the Hindus are also the followers of the Lord Buddha in the same way as they themselves are, and that therefore it is unjustifiable on their part to attempt at confiscating the Temple from the Hindu Mahant who is in rightful possession of it at present. They should make the proper administration of the Temple and not its possession their aim. An advisory committee consisting of Buddhists and an equal number of Hindus sympathetic towards their aspirations is quite enough to achieve this purpose. The Hindu Mahant on his part must recognise that the Shrine is an object of veneration not for the Hindus alone, but for that large section of Asiatic population called Buddhists also, and that nothing should therefore be allowed to take place there that goes against the religious sentiment of the latter.

He must also recognise that it is quite natural and just for the Buddhists to desire that the Temple is managed efficiently and that an atmosphere of purity and sanctity is maintained in the place where the Lord Buddha attained enlightenment. If both the parties assume this conciliatory attitude, we are sure that the efforts of the Hindu Mahasabha to bring about an amicable settlement will be quite successful.

Temples and Libraries

We wish to draw the attention of our readers to Prof. Srikantan's illuminating article on Temples and Libraries. Every enlightened Hindu will agree with the Professor that the Hindu temples should become centres for the diffusion of culture, as they used to be when they were living institutions in the country. And his suggestion that the temples can fulfil their function to a great extent by starting their own libraries will also meet with general approval. But the proposition that part of the temple funds should be diverted to finance the general Library Movement over which the temples have no control, is a proposition to which Hindus as a rule cannot agree, unless the same rule is applied to similar institutions of other religions also.

Gandhiji's Harijan Campaign

Gandhi's Harijan campaign by Jerome G. D'Souza S. J. is a reprint from the Catholic World of February 1935. It is not written exactly from our point of view, yet we place it before our readers because it gives a very clear description and shrewd analysis of the social and religious forces that are acting on the growth of Indian nationalism to-day. According to D'Souza's diagnosis, the effect of Gandhiji's Harijan Movement will be the liberation of the Indian

national Movement from the influence of Hindu orthodoxy. If the national movement in India will thereby become more truly national and representative of all communities in this country, every true lover of India will only be too glad of such a change. But apart from this political result, there is a purely social or religious consequence of the movement which D'Souza perceives but thinks it convenient to overlook. That is the unification of Hinduism by the gradual breakdown of the barriers that have produced so many internecine differences, and rendered Hinduism devoid of a feeling of self-consciousness. Many a Christian critic of Hinduism does not believe in such a possibility, but the modern Hindu does.

But the most interesting point in D'Souza's article is his view regarding the effect of the Harijan movement on conversions into Christianity. He seems to think that the loosening of the hold of caste on the higher strata of Hindu society will remove a chief impediment in the way of gaining converts from their ranks. Perhaps he is right in this view to some extent. But he forgets that just as this may favour the conversion of a few, it equally favours the re-conversion of a much bigger class. The unwillingness of the conservative Hindus to give a place in their society to those who have been re-converted to Hinduism has been the greatest obstacle in the way of workers in that line. If the Harijan Movement will liberalise the Hindu mind by its corrosive influence on caste consciousness, the gains of the Hindu society as a whole will be much greater than the losses that D'Souza predicts on this account. We do not in the least think, as D'Souza does, that on account of the Harijan

Movement history will pronounce Gandhiji to be one of the greatest destructive forces launched against Hinduism. It is only the Sanatanist who identifies the essence of Hinduism with caste and the Non-Hindu who learns Hinduism from him and remains completely ignorant of its deep spiritual core that can feel convinced of such consequences.

Why is Religion Superior to Science ?

In a translation of an article by Alfred Loisy on the positive achievements of Christianity, appearing in the January issue of the Hibbert Journal, we come across the following passage setting forth the reason for the triumph of Christianity in its early days over the Greek science of the same period. He says: "The scientists—those of them who lament the triumph of Christianity as won at the expense of Greek science and philosophy, at the expense also of human progress—do not perceive that the Christian ideal, being of a nature wholly religious and moral, won this triumph for Christianity in virtue of the loftier humanity implicit in the Gospel and the Church. They do not perceive that the vital nerve, or the real main-spring of human society is not science, but the spirit of devoted love; nor do they see that Christianity which established that principle by applying it to the whole of mankind, proclaimed thereby a law of humanity as far superior to all the religions of antiquity as it was to all the speculations and the science of Hellenism."

We do not acknowledge the superiority of Christianity to all the religions of the past in this respect, but it is indeed true that the real superiority of religion over science and its claim on the human conscience consists in the spirit of love in

which it is rooted. This in fact is the essence of all religions, not of Christianity alone. In the modern world the power and influence of religion as a spiritual force are waning perhaps because religions have shifted their interest from this central fact of their being and are emphasising more and more on narrow creeds and communal considerations.

The Outlook of a Scientist

We have given above an extract which shows how a religious man evaluates religion and science. There is no wonder in his evaluating the religious appeal as the superior. We shall give below the view of a scientist on the same question. Sir Arthur Keith, the veteran English scientist, says in the "Literary Guide" in the course of his reply to the critics of Darwinism:

"Further, if I am asked, how did the universe come into existence? and how did life come on earth? and how did the vast scheme of things in which 'design' and 'purpose' are everywhere apparent, come into existence? and what is the ultimate design?—as a man of science I have to answer, I do not know. But men of science do not despair of finding out. And men, like myself, who are involved in the search can exist encompassed by the blank wall of negation. For search is the form which our religion takes. We are free from the oppression of superstitious fear. This perhaps, is our chief gain. But what of the millions who have to spend their days in toil, who feel the unfairness of the fate meted out to them, who suffer in mind and in body, who crave for comfort and for an assured salvation—how will the negation of the scientist suit them? It will not suit them. They demand a certainty, and science, at

best, can offer only a probability. The man of science, then, has only cold comfort to offer. He must follow the way of truth as revealed in Nature; he has no choice if he is true to his ideal..... I have never recommended rationalism as a way of life to any one who can or could accept the salvation offered so freely by Christian and Mohammedan preachers and prophets. Rationalism is the way of life for the strong and the self-reliant. It is a refuge for all students of that larger Bible which is represented by the vast book of Nature. It brings a serenity into life unknown to those who depend on a purely scriptural interpretation of the universe."

Science for the self-reliant and religion for the weakling—is in brief the substance of Sir Arthur's statement. Self-reliance no doubt is a great virtue, but it becomes foolhardiness when one continues to be self-reliant in spite of knowing for certain that it is not going to save one. That self-reliance which pooh-poohes certainty and glorifies life in a world of probability seems, in our opinion, to verge on this perverse manifestation of this great quality. Nor need one ridicule the religious man's quest after certainty as something characteristic of weakness; for however crude it may be in many cases, it is indicative of a moral earnestness unknown to the scientist who finds serenity in a world of probabilities.

As an Unbiased Englishman sees things Indian

An Englishman named Charles Trevar, professing to have intimate knowledge of India and to be unbiased by any political prejudice, writes some very beautiful things about India in Pearson's in an article entitled "What is the truth

about India?" Some sample passages will show the extent of his impartiality.

About Hinduism, he says: "The Hindu religion itself is far too elaborate to go into here. It is a maze of rites, worship, beliefs, traditions and mythologies sanctioned by the ancient sacred books of the Brahmins, who overrule everything with a monopoly of priesthood."

"In this religion there are three supreme gods, but from them, emanating as incarnations, manifestations, symbols, wives or attendants, are something like 300,000,000 minor gods. It is a religious chaos. Grotesque invention, boundless credulity, and ritual that is often repulsive, combine in forming a fantastic polytheism; countless shrines and temples, household gods, universal gods, local gods, demons, demi-gods and gods who delight in human victims.....; and one of the supreme gods has passed into the bodies of the lion, the boar, the fish and the tortoise."

"Yet, on the other hand, the Hindu religion expresses a very lofty mysticism in some of its forms. But until recently it also includes some exceedingly revolting elements which the British have at last managed to eliminate. Among these

was the sacred rite of burning a living widow upon her late husband's funeral pyre."

Only a sentence about "a lofty mysticism" and even that followed by a qualification immediately, while sentence after sentence on demi-gods supreme-gods, revolting rites and the rest of them! Indeed a very good ideal of an unbiassed writer!

Shots turned into Flowers

The same unbiassed writer says about the Indian masses: "The gullibility of the masses may be realised from the following actual example, though many will find it difficult to believe; yet it is true. As report was spread among them, following Gandhi's interview with the Viceroy that, as Gandhi approached, the Viceroy suddenly produced a revolver, which he placed at Gandhi's head. He pulled the trigger, and a shower of flowers fell about Gandhi's person. In dismay the Viceroy drew a dagger from his pocket. As he plunged it into Gandhi's heart it turned to milk."

This "unbiassed writer" writing from such a long distance has heard this "true story." We do not know how many people in this country have heard it. We for our part have not.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THUS SPOKE GURU NANAK: Compiled by Sir Jogendra Singh. Published by the Oxford University Press, Post Box No. 31, Bombay, pp. 113. Price Rs. 2.

This is a collection of the sayings of Guru Nanak compiled by Sir Jogendra Singh. It was prefixed with a foreword by Sir Edward Maclagan, the previous Governor of the Punjab. The sayings are compiled under different headings such as "Nanak's views on God," "The

Power of God's name," "Love for God," "The Inevitability of Death," "True knowledge of God," etc., etc. At the end of the book is added a prayer composed by a disciple of Guru Nanak. As stated in the foreword and also in the translator's preface the book is addressed to the general reader, and pains have been taken to see that the sayings are couched in as simple a language and as attractive a form as possible.

History tells us that with Guru Nanak begins one of the earliest attempts to bring together the two apparently divergent religions, namely, Hinduism and Islam, which destiny has thrown together in the land of India to fight out a solution of their mutual differences and discord. This element of toleration is fully reflected in all the sayings compiled. The religion of the Sikhs is claimed to be a practical one with a universal appeal. The absence of any metaphysics in the sayings contributes to their universal appeal. That Guru Nanak's appeal is to the ordinary man and that his main motive is to regulate his life according to simple and pious standards is evidenced by the fact that fear of God is made the motive power for religious life as is seen from several of the sayings, one of which on page 26 runs thus: "Nanak, they who have the fear of God in their hearts have also love." Even though the later day development of martial spirit among the Sikhs was the contribution of Guru Govind Singh, we see from a study of the sayings of Nanak, as also from the late Governor's Foreword that for several of his excellent qualities such as loyalty, endurance, disregard of physical danger and a quiet trust in his own form of faith, he (the Sikh) is in no small degree indebted to his first Guru (Nanak).

We recommend the book to all as a religious classic from which they can draw the nourishment required for their spiritual growth.

TRAINING FOR YOGA: By Arthur S. Gillman. Published by Rider and Co., 34, Paternoster Row, London, E. C. 4. Price Sh. 3-6.

The increasing interest of the Western people in the eastern Yogic disciplines is perhaps one of the characteristic features of modern times. Messrs. Rider & Co. have done much service in popularising this science by means of handy books and articles in their "London Forum". This book of Arthur S. Gilman, published by the company, is intended for beginners in the practice of Yoga.

After speaking of the universal life force which permeates all creation and which can be contacted by man by raising the level of his consciousness, the author gives a number of exercises for the acquisition and reinforcement of vitality under the headings (a) conservation and relaxation (b) breathing and (c) muscular exercises. These exercises are useful in vitalising a devitalised system. The other topics dealt with are suggestion, concentration, bathing, food, and the sex problem. The book ends with a chapter on happiness as an accompaniment of higher evolution. It is to be understood that in the practice of the mental exercises given in the book a thorough honesty of purpose is expected of the student, which implies that he has already tried to develop on the road to self-analysis and attained a condition of being fully aware of all the thoughts that lurk in the nooks and corners of the mind. The chapter on sex problem should be carefully read and digested before expecting any success in the practice of the other exercises. The chapter on happiness is also important, where the author distinguishes between happiness and pleasure. Happiness is a sense of serenity, a perfect agreement with one's environment.

RAMAKRISHNA - VIVEKANANDA JIVANALOKE (IN BENGALI): By Swami Nirlepananda. Published from Udbodhan Office, Bagh Bazaar, Calcutta, Price 14 as. Pages 255.

The author is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order. He had the good fortune of coming in close contact with some of the great disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. This fascinating book records his impressions and the reminiscences about them in a very telling manner. His appreciation of their genius and influence on modern life will surely prove much helpful for the clear solution of many a problem of the day. The style is simple and elegant. Readers will find it a source of great joy to go through this book which is as interesting as a novel. The sale proceeds of the work will go to the fund for the maintenance of the Sadhus.

The price is cheap and get-up is also good. We heartily recommend this book to all devotees who find true delight in perusing the life of great men.

IF TRUTH AT LAST BE TOLD (FOR ADULTS ONLY): By A. H. Jaisinghani, Ganesh & Co., Madras.

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RAVI VARMA (A MONOGRAPH): By K. P. Padmanabhan Tampi, B.A. Published by Kripa & Co., Trivandrum. Price Annas 8, 1934.

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