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THE VEDANTA KESARI

April - 1936

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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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[No. 12

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The following is the message of Srimat Swami Akhandanandaji Maharaj, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, at the inauguration of the Ramakrishna Birth-Centenary Celebrations on the 24th February, 1936 :

The dawn of the New Age is breaking over the world—the blessed day that will illumine our hearts with the glory of its effulgence is at hand.

Knowingly or unknowingly man is moving along the path of salvation inspired by the Master's message of the harmony of all religions and by his unique realisation of the essential oneness of Karma (action), Jnana (knowledge), Bhakti (supreme devotion) and Yoga (psychic control). The day is not far off when all lands and seas shall witness the establishment of a universal kingdom of peace, and when in loving response to the call of the Master, all nations and peoples, in one glorious confederation joining, shall sing with jubilant acclaim, yea, with no heat of strife and no passion of controversy, the Master's message—"As many faiths, so many paths." Then the full meridian light of the Master's advent will light up this world of ours and that song will ring from end to end, and the sons and daughters of men will stand side by side under the banner of the New Age in spiritual comradeship.

May the citizens of the world on this blessed day understand the meaning of the Master's coming and be hallowed ! This and this alone is my fervent prayer.

Peace, Peace, Peace unto all !

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Sivananda

[A striking event illustrating even the apparently common acts of Sri Ramakrishna were often full of deep significance is narrated below.]

The Master always opens his heart to Mathuranath and seeks his advice.

S Mathuranath had nothing to hide from the 'Father,' so also the 'Father' would, at all times save the periods of ecstasy, look upon Mathur in the same way as a child does upon its mother or one friend upon another, laying bare his heart completely to him without any reserve, and consulting his views and cordially accepting his advice on all matters. We have already stated the verdict of our scriptures with regard to the condition of one who has risen to the highest step of spiritual knowledge,—that such a person appears to the public at large to be either crazy, or slovenly, or childish. This is not all. Sankara, the great world-teacher, has also stated in unambiguous language that such people ever remain absorbed in spiritual bliss derived from self-knowledge, without being distracted by external circumstances, no matter whether they are placed in the midst of what the world considers its greatest joy—the luxuries of an imperial palace, or whether they have to live a mendicant's life, subsisting on meagre alms, and dressing only in a single strip of loin-cloth.

कचिन्मूढो विद्वान् कचिदपि महाराजविभवः
कचिद्भ्रान्तःसौम्यः कचिदजगराचारकलितः।
कचित्पात्रीभूतः कचिदवमतः काप्यविदित-
श्रत्येवं प्राज्ञः सततपरमानन्दसुखितः ॥

—Viveka-chudamani.

"A liberated soul moves about now as an idiot, now as a scholar, or again

as possessed of princely wealth. He appears to be sometimes a lunatic, and at other times perhaps quiet, steady and intelligent. Like a python* he may sometimes totally refrain from begging his food and other indispensable necessities. He may be highly honoured in some places and in others insulted, or again may remain quite unknown. But in every state he is unshaken and ever absorbed in supreme bliss."

When this has been said with regard to the souls that have attained liberation in this life, what wonder is there if the great incarnations of God likewise ever remain undistracted and behave like a child? Therefore there is nothing peculiar in the description we have given above of the behaviour of the Master towards Mathuranath. But it was the good fortune of Mathuranath to have been able to spend a pretty long period in such close association with the Master.

How the Master was mindful of Mathuranath's welfare.

How sweet indeed was the relation between the Master and Mathuranath! The Master, during the period of his spiritual practices, and in later life also, would at once inform Mathuranath of his requirements whenever he found himself in need of anything. The visions or feelings that were experienced by the Master in the states of ecstasy or at other

*The python is supposed to lie motionless at one spot and live upon such food alone as chance may bring to its very mouth.

times were recounted to Mathuranath, and his views on them were eagerly sought. The Master was always particular to see that Mathuranath's money was usefully spent, that the property dedicated to the service of God was being actually utilised for that purpose and that monks, strangers and poor people were being fed with the offerings, so that great religious merit may accrue therefrom to Mathuranath. We have heard of numerous illustrations of the Master's close attention to all matters of like nature. Even long after the demise of the pious Rani Rasmani and Mathuranath, when we had all gathered round the Master, we noticed similar instances occasionally, one of which may not be out of place here.

The Master personally asks for the temple-offerings on a special day of worship.

There was an arrangement since Mathuranath's time that after the noon worship one tray of cooked things and another of fruits and sweets from the daily offerings should be regularly sent to the Master for his own use as well as for those who might be with him. Besides this, on festive occasions particularly, a portion of the special offerings was also to be sent to the Master.

Now every year on a particular auspicious day in the rainy season, there used to be a festival on a small scale in the temple. In accordance with the usual practice, various fruits were offered to the Divine Mother on this occasion, after the special worship. The concert was playing. Swami Yogananda and a few other devotees were with the Master.

Different kinds of ecstasy normally appearing in the Master on different auspicious days.

On particularly auspicious days the Master used to have ecstasies, the forms of which would always be relevant to the particular day of their appearance. On Vaishnava festivals he used to be in Vaishnava attitudes, while on the special days for Shakti-worship his attitudes would have special reference to the Shakti or the Mother of the Universe. As for instance, during the Durga Puja Celebration, and specially at the juncture of the eighth and the ninth lunar days, or on the occasion of the worship of Kali (an aspect of the Divine Mother like Durga) the Master would be filled with thoughts of the Divine Mother, and as a consequence all his physical movements would be suspended and even his person would sometimes take the same pose as that of the particular Deity in whom his mind was absorbed. But on the birthdays of Sri Krishna and similar other occasions, the eight-fold physical changes such as tremor of the body, the standing of the hairs on their ends and other signs associated with them would appear as a result of his being filled with the thoughts of Sri Krishna and Sri Radha. Moreover, these ecstasies would come so very naturally to him that they did not at all appear to be the results of any particular effort. Rather, it was often noticed that even though on a particularly holy day the Master might be wholly absorbed in discussing various topics with us, remaining quite forgetful of the special sanctity of the day, all of a sudden his mind would recoil from all external things and enter into an ecstasy relevant to the occasion, as if compelled to do so

by some other force. Many a time we experienced instances of this nature during the Master's residence at Shyampukur in Calcutta. While engaged in conversation with Dr. Mahendralal Sarkar and other devotees crowding his room, the Master once suddenly entered into an ecstasy just at the meeting point of the eighth and ninth days of the lunar month, which is considered a very auspicious moment in the Durga Puja celebration. Who could then guess by observing his countenance, beaming with a divine smile, which was in striking contrast to his usual pale look caused by the fatal disease, that he was the same person, or that he was at all suffering from any kind of illness?

Similarly, on this particular festive day of the rainy season referred to before, the master was falling into ecstatic moods now and then. At times like a boy of five he was dancing and singing the praise of the Divine Mother in great delight. All present were gazing steadily at his face, being charmed by its heavenly beauty, and themselves too enjoying various spiritual experiences that were caused by the holy association with this man-god. The worship terminated almost towards the close of the night and people had little time to rest before day-break.

When it was about eight or nine o'clock in the morning the Master noticed that the portion of the offerings of last night, which was to come to his room according to the practice of the temple, had not been brought. He called Ramlal, his nephew and priest of the Kali temple, into his room and inquired about the cause of the delay. But the latter replied that all the offerings had been sent to the

manager's office as usual, and the shares of different persons were being distributed from there according to the regular practice. He could not say why the Master's share had not come as yet. This made the Master all the more anxious and impatient. He began to inquire about it of every person he met, and continued for sometime to harp on this one theme. After waiting fruitlessly for a short while in this manner, the Master put on his slippers and went personally to the manager inquiring, "Well, why has not the share for that room (pointing to his own room) been sent as yet? Is it due to oversight? It is very bad that such a long-standing custom should now be stopped through oversight." The manager felt somewhat ashamed and replied, "Have not the things gone to your room as yet? Very bad, indeed! I am sending them immediately."

Swami Yogananda's thoughts on the Master's demanding his share of offerings in this manner.

Swami Yogananda who was present in the Master's room on this occasion was then a mere boy. Born of a respectable family, he was not a little proud of his high pedigree and did not look upon the manager and the other employees and priests of the Kali temple as worthy of respect due to human beings, although he had dedicated himself at the feet of the Master on account of the latter's deep love and freely-bestowed mercy. Moreover, his house was almost adjacent to the temple garden. Hence it was very convenient for him to come to the Master every day. And how could he at all help coming there? The wonderful attraction of the Master would drag him perforce to

the temple at the usual hour. But simply because he held the Master in great regard, could he condescend to behave courteously towards the people of the temple? Therefore, when the Master became impatient for his share of the offerings, Swami Yogananda could not refrain from making the remark: "What does it matter, sir, if the things have not come? Are they so very important? None of these things agrees with you, and you do not take them at all. What harm is there then if they do not send these?" But when the Master did not pay any heed to the remark and after a short while went personally to the manager to inquire about the matter, Yogin (Swami Yogananda) began to think within himself, "What a great wonder it is! Why does the Master become so very anxious for such paltry things as these fruits and sweets? Why does he behave in this manner to-day—he whom we have never seen losing his patience on any account?" Failing to discover any other reason for this unusual behaviour of the Master, he came to the following conclusion: "Now I have understood," thought he, "none can escape his hereditary influence, be he the Master or any other person of great eminence. The Master is born in a family of priests who are for generations in the habit of collecting such petty articles of food as are offered to the Deity. Now this

hereditary habit must be in him at least in a small degree. It is nothing but this that causes this unusual behaviour of the Master. Otherwise, why is he so anxious for them, even though he himself cannot use any of them? It is nothing but the family trait."

The Master adduces the reason for his anxiety.

By the time Swami Yogananda had arrived at the above conclusion, the Master returned and told him, "Do you know why I am so very particular about these things? Rani Rasmani had given away all this property to the temple so that after the service of the Deity the offerings might be distributed among monks and devotees. The portion of offerings received here is taken only by devotees who come for God-realisation, and thereby the object of the Rani's gift is fulfilled.

"But what use is made of the things that are taken by those people (the priests and other employees of the temple)? They sell away the rice and make money out of it. Some of them have got their prostitutes who are fed with these fruits and sweets. That is how these things are used. I fight so much so that the motive behind this gift of Rani Rasmani may be fulfilled at least partially." Swami Yogananda was surprised to hear that there was so much hidden meaning even behind this simple act of the Master.

THE GOSPEL OF ENERGISM

[The following paragraphs are reflections on the recent English translation of Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak's great Marathi work—"Sri Bhagavadgita-rahasya or Karma-yoga-sastra, Vol. I, translated by B. S. Sukthankar, and published by Tilak Bros., Lokamanya Tilak Mandir, 568, Narayan Peth, Poona City; price (in India) Rs. 6. The translation and the get-up are excellent.]

The opposition between work and knowledge.

NO feature of Indian thought is likely to perplex the modern mind to the same extent as the very lively controversy that has raged in this country round the place of work in spiritual striving and perfection. The literature on this subject, perhaps the most important contribution of India to world's ethical thought, is as vast in extent as it is complicated in nature. Many a modern thinker may view a greater portion of this age-long controversy as a waste and a misdirection of intellectual energy, but that the issue is still a live and significant one to the Indian intellect is evident from the fact that no less a man than the late Lokamanya B. G. Tilak thought it a fitting theme for his masterly work—the Gita-rahasya, on which the following paragraphs constitute some stray reflections.

It is worthy of note that the occasion for this masterpiece of Indian philosophic thought, as in the case of many a great work in the history of Indian philosophy in the past, is the writings of Acharya Sankara—that most provocative of Indian thinkers whom neither his friends nor foes can afford to neglect. More than 1,000 years ago Sankara wrote his commentary on the Bhagavad Gita whose main purpose, as is plain even to a casual reader, was to revive the drooping spirit of the heroic Arjuna, and make him participate in the

Kurukshetra war in preference to his proposed philosophic abandonment of action. From the very nature of its setting and the trend of its discourses the Gita seems to resolve the contradiction that Arjuna finds between a life of inwardness and a life of action, by the theory that no embodied being can divorce from one another the threefold faculty of his personality,—*viz.*, feeling, willing and thinking,—and that the most efficient and natural form of spiritual discipline, suited to the needs of men in general, must therefore take cognisance of all these three faculties and effect the harmony of Bhakti, Karma and Gnana or Devotion, Action and Knowledge, which are based respectively on the three aspects of personality mentioned above. To Sankara, however, such a combination or Samuchchaya of Gnana and Karma as the highest means for spiritual realisation is unthinkable. For him Reality is in essence subject-objectless, and the polarity of subject and object can at best be described only as an appearance which is negated on the dawn of illumination. What obstructs the cognition of the subject-objectless nature of Reality is ignorance (Avidya), a form of metaphysical error which is at the root of our illusory perception of duality. Error can be overcome only by its opposite, right knowledge, which consists in the recognition of the identity of the individual self with the Universal Self.

This is purely a matter of cognition or Gnana, and work has no direct function in it. The trend of this knowledge is to obliterate the distinction between the triad of the knower, knowledge and the object known or between the actor, action and the object acted upon. On the other hand all action done either with desire or without desire, emphasises these distinctions. Hence according to Sankara there is an inherent opposition between action and the discipline of knowledge which reveals the changeless and subject-objectless nature of Reality. At one stage of his development, the spiritual aspirant is therefore required to give up all action and engage himself exclusively in hearing of, thinking about and meditating on the unity of the individual self with the universal Self. Without this, nescience is never overcome. Action, however, plays no direct part in overcoming nescience. At best it endows the mind with the necessary purity required for the successful practice of the discipline of knowledge. Once this purity is gained action is to be renounced, especially seeing that there is an opposition between it and the higher stages of spiritual development. According to Sankara therefore the various stages of spiritual awakening consist in: (1) the purification of mind by disinterested action, (2) the first dawn of knowledge, (3) the renunciation of all actions, and (4) the state of being established in Brahman.

If this is the philosophical and ethical implication of Vedanta, the Gita, as an authoritative work on the subject, must support this doctrine. Especially must this be so because Bhagavan Sri Krishna, the author of the Gita, calls himself the knower of

the Vedas and the author of the Vedanta. Hence according to Sankara the apparent intermingling of action and knowledge in the spiritual scheme of the Gita must have some other significance. Really there is no such intermingling. For the Gita has in view two different grades of aspirants—on the one hand the beginners who have not yet gained purity of mind and whose duty therefore consists in action, and on the other the adepts who are required to abandon all actions. The Gita being a message mainly delivered for the benefit of Arjuna who was fit only for action, it may contain many passages enjoining action; but in view of the distinction between types of aspirants, such passages need not in any way be taken as supporting the combination of action and knowledge. As for the examples of the few sages who are reputed to have persisted in the duty of action even after illumination, the explanation offered is, that as their caste did not entitle them to adopt the life of Sannyasa, it will be setting a bad example to people if they took to that order and renounced action. Moreover in the case of such perfectly illumined sages, it is improper to say they must act or must not act. It can only be said that they may or may not act guided by their Prarabdha; but such work is mere mechanical action, and being devoid of the sense of ego and agency, it is not to be called action at all. Such is the main trend of Sankara's interpretation of the Gita.

Tilak's view : there is no such opposition.

We have made this brief review of Sankara's interpretation of the great scripture, because, as we have said

before, this monumental work of Tilak is a criticism of Sankara in some important respects. On the question of metaphysics, namely, the relation between Brahman and the Universe, Tilak is at one with Sankara. He maintains with that great philosopher that according to the Bhagavad Gita the world of change is only a super-imposition on Brahman, as the snake is on a rope in an illusory perception. But he totally disagrees with Sankara on the point that this philosophy necessarily implies the ethics of Karmasannyasa (abandonment of action), and much more on the interpretation of the Gita as preaching such a doctrine to be the crown of ethical life. To avoid misconception it must be stated at the outset that Tilak has no quarrel with the fourth Ashrama, if it means wearing the ochre robe, leading a celibate life, or living outside towns. He admits that such a mode of life is often more favourable for practising the ethical ideal of service to society which the Gita upholds. His antagonism is really towards that outlook on life which says that man, whether it be in the state of a Sadhaka (aspirant) or in that of a Siddha (perfected one), should sit quiet, giving up worldly activities of every kind, including unselfish service of society. He does not, however, deny that the Gita admits the existence of even such a mode of spiritual life. In the Upanishads this ideal of Actionlessness looms large while that of Energism or disinterested action, which is also recognised as an independent path, is given a less important position. The Gita, however, reverses the position, and while admitting the existence of the path of worklessness, concentrates its attention mainly on

the ethics of Energism. The important point to be noted is that in Tilak's view, the Upanishads and the Gita recognise both these paths of Actionlessness and Energism as quite independent and self-sufficient methods of discipline suited to the needs of two types of aspirants. But the Upanishads specialise in Actionlessness, and the Gita mainly develops the ethics of Energism. Tilak maintains that in doing this the Gita does not contradict the Upanishadic view, but only fulfils the necessary function of elaborating the full implication of the Upanishads in respect of some doctrines existing in a germinal form in them. The direct meaning of the Gita need not therefore be abandoned in favour of far-fetched implications with a view to show its harmony with the Upanishads. The harmony will be quite patent when the Gita's declaration of the independence of the two paths is adequately recognised. The trouble arises only when one attempts, as Sankara does, to relegate the ethics of Energism to a subordinate position as forming merely a preparation for renunciation of actions; and to this Tilak vehemently protests. In the pre-realisation state, action no doubt goes to purify the mind, but there is no stage in spiritual life when the Gita requires the aspirant of the path of Energism to give up action. No doubt it is Gnana or Knowledge alone that gives illumination; but Karma or action is in no way incompatible with it. The real incompatibility is between Gnana and works done with desire, not between Gnana and desireless action. Not only does the Gita find no opposition between knowledge and desireless action, but on the other hand

looks upon the harmonious combination of both, as the better and the more desirable of these two independent paths—that of Actionlessness and that of Energism. It is for this reason that Arjuna is repeatedly asked to adopt the path of Energism—not because he is an inferior type of aspirant as some contend. Arjuna too understands the teaching of the Gita in this light. Arjuna's doubt in the beginning is whether the life of Actionlessness or of Energism is preferable, and after hearing the whole discourse and getting himself disillusioned, he declares triumphantly—I shall do according to your words. And it is in recognition of its specialisation in the doctrine of Energism that the Gita styles itself as Yoga-sastra, the word Yoga signifying according to the Gita 'equanimity' and 'skill in action.' Tilak also points out that the Gita itself gives reasons for its view that the path of Energism is superior. From the point of view of the individual's salvation both the paths may be equal in value, but Karma Yoga has got the distinct superiority that its significance extends to the world at large also. According to the Gita Gospel of Energism, the enlightened man must necessarily act. The follower of the path of Actionlessness does not act, because he has no desires of his own. The Gita asks the enlightened Karma Yogi to act for the very same reason. Because he has no object of his own to gain, he is best qualified to act unselfishly and disinterestedly. What the ignorant man does from a sense of bondage, the wise man does from a sense of freedom and large-heartedness. He must act, also because he is the best agent for the conservation of Society—Lokasangraha. If all

such persons were to withdraw from action, the world will be left desolate without any moral and spiritual guidance. For the wise men are not only the eyes but the preceptors of society as well. Without their living example the world will not understand even what is meant by acting desirelessly. The Gospel of Energism as facilitating this great purpose is looked upon by the Gita as superior to Actionlessness—Karmayogo visishyate.

The ethics of Energism is the highest ideal of conduct according to the Bhagavata religion of which the Bhagavad Gita is an important exposition. On the other hand the ethics of Actionlessness is the highest ideal of the Smarta conception of life. The Gita recognises the latter path, but gives preference to the former, since it involves the principle of renunciation, the central ideal of Sannyasa-marga, and serves also the additional purpose of Lokasangraha. It is also natural that the Gita which forms the Upanishad of the Mahabharata, the encyclopaedic work on Dharma, should devote itself specially to the path of Energism and not to Actionlessness.

An estimate : the two methods.

In the above paragraphs we have tried to disentangle the main trend of Tilak's interpretation from the scholarly discussions of philosophical and ethical problems with which the book abounds. Now which of the two is correct—Sankara or Tilak? is the question that will naturally arise in the reader's mind. One feels rather nervous to sit in judgment over such master-minds and the products of their mature genius. Yet, we suppose, after reading these works, no one can help

forming an impression regarding their comparative merits, and it is no disrespect to these great personages if one gives expression to such impressions in a spirit of reverence and humility. A person who first studies the Gita text intelligently and then tries to understand Sankara and Tilak, cannot but feel that there is somewhere a twist in the thought of both, which is not in agreement with the original, and that they therefore fail to convince him while exacting the full measure of his admiration for the great scholarship and dialectical skill displayed in them. To a large extent one may be impressed by the ethical ideal that Tilak holds forth, but yet one feels there is a serious defect somewhere in the argument, which consequently leaves one unconvinced. We shall try to ascertain the reason for this in the remaining portion of this essay.

Just as Tilak points to the existence of two parallel traditions of ethical life—the ideal of Actionlessness and the ideal of Energism—so also there have been in existence in this country two main currents of Vedantic thought and two methods of spiritual discipline corresponding to them. There are on the one hand Upanishadic passages which are Nirguna and Nishprapancha in tone—i.e., describe the Supreme as a qualitiess and impersonal absolute and the universe as non-existent (acosmism). The discipline prescribed for this realisation is described as the 'Neti' 'Neti' method, which consists in denying all manifestations as illusory or non-existent until the consciousness reaches a subject-objectless state which though indescribable is yet blissful. On the other hand there are passages in the Upanishads which

describe the Supreme as qualitatif, a Personality endowed with all auspicious attributes, and the Universe as a real manifestation of this Deity. These passages are therefore Saguna and Saprancha in their trend. The spiritual discipline based upon this world-view does not consist in negation but in the recognition that all manifestation comes from Him and is included in His being. In contrast to the 'Neti' 'Niti' method, this is sometimes described as the 'Iti' 'Iti' method. The first is the Gnana Marga and the second is the Bhakti Marga. Now it has been the ambition of every commentator on the Upanishads to reconcile these two kinds of passages, and the usual method followed has been the subordination of one set of passages to the other set. Of these attempts at reconciliation, Sankara's interpretation is one of the most brilliant, and has been one of the most influential too in Indian philosophic thought. The purpose of his commentaries has been to assert uncompromisingly the supremacy of the Attributeless Absolute, granting at the same time the theistic implications of the Saguna passages. This he has achieved by the clever device of admitting a God and Universe as long as the state of ignorance persists, but which, being only an illusion and a super-imposition on the Absolute, disappear on the dawn of knowledge. Devotion to God and service of the world are good as far as they go, i.e., help the purification of the mind, but after that they are of no use and have to be discarded as illusions, since the process of Gnana lays the axe at the root of even these conceptions.

While this reconciliation of Sankara has been satisfactory to those whose intellectual outlook favours acosmism

and an Attributeless Absolute, theists have never accepted it as a reconciliation at all. They feel that any reconciliation through an illusory God and Universe is only adding insult to injury. The various schools of Theism have laid emphasis on the Saguna and Saprancha passages of the Upanishads and have attempted reconciliation in their own way by subordinating the passages of the other type to them. To raise the question as to which of them is the ultimate truth is quite fruitless. Both these may be described as two readings of an experience, and since they both serve the intellectual and ethical needs of two different types of aspirants, they may be given an equally honoured place among the various philosophical systems.

The real weakness of Tilak's contention

Now coming to the Bhagavad Gita, just as a disinterested reader, as Tilak contends, will recognise Energism to be its main teaching, so also he will perceive that the Gita world-view always centres round a loving and lovable God. God or Purushottama, no doubt, is the one existence, but the souls and insentient matter constitute his higher (Para) and lower (Apara) Prakriti. That His Prakriti (Nature) is an illusion is hardly to be met with in the Gita. On the other hand in the spiritual experience that the disciple is vouchsafed in the Visvarupadarsana, the whole cosmos and its activities are revealed as integral with the Lord. The souls are His Amsa (parts), and in that sense they also are He. They may gain perfect union with Him, may enter into Him, as Gita puts it. But that does not in any way make the

world or the Jiva illusory, nor is it stated that this merger in God makes Him a myth.

The Gita ethics of Energism is a legitimate consequence of this world-view. Energism and the doctrine of an illusory God and universe cannot co-exist, and when Sankara discovers a contradiction between them, he is essentially right. However much one may differ from Sankara's interpretation of the Gita, to find fault with his logic is quite futile. The metaphysics and ethics of Sankara are fully consistent. If he is to be challenged, it can be done only from the point of view of textual interpretation. The weakness of Tilak's great work lies in the fact that he joins with Sankara in cutting at the root of the tree of the universe, but while Sankara will allow the tree to fall down, Tilak wants to keep it erect still. For, to call the world an illusion, and then to speak of Lokasangraha is to speak somewhat unintelligible language. Once you understand the illusory nature of an object, you no longer take it seriously. Nor will you think of perpetuating it, especially when you find it misguides many and brings them to grief. As Sankara remarks, once a person discovers the mirage to be only a desert, he will never think of quenching his thirst from its waters. Lokasangraha therefore is out of the question when it is granted that the world is illusory. Once you have got a glimpse of its illusory nature, give it up and all its activities and engage yourself fully in recognising the reality behind the illusions, otherwise you may again be captivated by the illusion. This is Karmasannyasa. Of course, mechanical action may continue, but how can mere mechanical action be called

Lokasangraha. For, that conception involves the idea that there is a world and that there are some social values to be conserved. To speak of conserving these when they no longer exist, is again to speak unintelligible language.

While dealing with the place of devotion in the Gita, Tilak himself perceives the difficulty of reconciling that ideal with the conception of the Attributeless Brahman. He plainly states in this connection that when with the dawn of knowledge the trinity of the worshipper, the worshipped and the worship is at an end, and the identity of the Jiva with Brahman is ultimately realised, then there is no further place for what we ordinarily call devotion. Unfortunately Tilak does not realise that this is the very reason why Sankara finds incompatibility between Karma (action) and Gnana (knowledge) and insists upon Karma-sannyasa as the duty of those on whom knowledge has dawned. In Tilak's attempt to show that there is no opposition between Gnana and desireless Karma, he has not adequately refuted Sankara's contention in favour of such opposition from the subject-objectless nature of Advaitic realisation and from the inward-going tendency of the Gnana discipline as contrasted with the outward-going tendency of all action. The only important argument he advances against this position is as follows: Sankara's Advaita admits that some wise men *may* act if their Prarabdha necessitates it. If some may thus act, why not say all *must* act, seeing that the possibility of contamination arising from action is already denied in the case of the wise man. This capacity of the wise man to be aloof even while acting is interpreted by Tilak as the

absence of opposition between Karma and Gnana. But on the premises of the Mayavada School of Advaita, such action can only be mechanical, springing as it does, from the momentum of past deeds. It is difficult to understand how such action can in any sense be described as Lokasangraha (preservation of the world order), seeing that the word implies on the part of the actor a conscious attitude towards the world, a purposive will behind his action and either an egoistic feeling that he is working for the good of the world or an awareness that the mighty Cosmic Will or Power is making him a mere instrument of its purposive activities. In the system of the Mayavadin none of these necessary ideas connected with Lokasangraha can have any place ultimately. But the Gita does accept the ideal of Lokasangraha, and this it reconciles with the conception of spiritual perfection and attenuation of the ego, by its theory that the perfect man becomes an *instrument in the hand of God*—not, it must be noted, in the hands of mere Prarabdha. Nimittamatram bhava Savyasachin, "Be thou but an instrument"—is its characteristic ideal of the spiritualised action of the perfect man. But once we accept this ideal of the Gita, we pass from Advaita of the Mayavada type to Advaita with a more vigorous and vital strain of theistic thought.

The weakness of Tilak's Gita-rahasya therefore springs from his having divorced the essentially theistic world-view of the Gita from its ethics of Energism, and having attempted to unite the latter with an incompatible philosophic partner, namely, Mayavada. Sankara, as we have said before, is very consistent in having

coupled the ethics of Naishkarmya (actionlessness) with his doctrine of Maya, and hence his interpretation of the Gita has a structural unity and strength, although many will be inclined to view his theory on the whole as not having sufficient ground in the text of the Gita. Tilak's faithfulness to Sankara's metaphysics while remaining hostile to his ethics, leaves one with the impression that he has travelled half way and stopped somewhere in the middle of the road, that he has given the true ethical import of the Gita but not provided it with a philosophical background consistent with that import and sanctioned by the text.

To avoid misconception, we must in conclusion give a word of explanation for calling the Gita world-view essentially theistic. An ardent follower of Sankara may pounce upon us indignantly for saying that the Advaita of the Mayavada type is not elaborated in the text of the Gita. Our reply to this attitude is that no reason for such resentment will be found to exist, if we look upon the world-views and codes of conduct presented by scriptures not as so many infallible dogmas but as theological and ethical constructions suited to the needs of aspirants treading different types of spiritual discipline. We have mentioned in an earlier section of this essay that there are two distinct methods of such discipline—the negative ('Neti' 'Neti') and the positive ('Iti' 'Iti') methods. A world-view depicting the whole sphere of dual existence as illusory is essential for the negative method, and most of the Upanishads and Sankara's system of thought give the theoretical back-

ground for this kind of discipline. The positive method however requires a world-view that is both theistic and realistic; for, this discipline consists chiefly in the practice of Bhakti and of work as an aid to it. Both these are impossible, at least to many men, without accepting the reality of a loving and lovable God, and of a world order the service of which is identical with the service of God. The Gita and the other Bhakti scriptures have elaborated a world-view suited to this system of spiritual discipline. The goal of both the systems is the same, namely, the manifestation of the divinity in man, but just as their methods differ, so may their world-views too. If we look at the problem from this stand-point, no necessity arises for proving through subtleties of interpretation that the Maya theory and the ethics of Naishkarmya form a part and parcel of the teachings of the Gita.

Because Tilak did not recognise this fact, his monumental work suffers from a structural disharmony, although it occupies a foremost place among the creations of modern Indian genius. While it adequately conveys the spirit of Energism characteristic of the Gita, it is without the sustaining force and warmth of a devotional outlook and of a theistic and dynamic world-view which form the necessary counterpart of the ethics of Energism. For this more complete and synthetic interpretation of the Gita, for the philosophical theory that can sustain the ethical ideal that Tilak insists upon, one has to turn from Tilak's great work on the Gita to the remarkable writing on it by another great living thinker of modern India.

THE VEDANTIC LEAVEN IN CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT OF THE WEST

By Prof. K. S. Ghosh, M.A.

[The claim of Vedanta to be a universal gospel of life can be maintained only if it embodies principles and lines of thought that strike the human mind in its natural development. Every claim to uniqueness or speciality in the case of a revelation seems to contradict its aspiration to universality. The following article of Mr. K. S. Ghosh, Professor of Philosophy, Hazaribagh College, shows how some of the fundamental principles of Vedanta like its methodology of inwardness, its analysis of personality into Koshas and its new development of an activist ethics all find correspondence in the systems of progressive thinkers of the West. The line of study suggested by Professor Ghosh is a fascinating one, and it will be good if others take up the question for a thorough discussion.]

I

WILLIAM James has somewhere said that a subject of cognition is to be found wherever its object is. A physicist similarly may claim that a tiny atom is co-extensive with the field of its attraction. This is assuredly true of a creative Ideal like the Vedanta. It is pervasive like the atmosphere and as such transcends all geographical limits, all narrow bounds of race or clime.

The Vedantic leaven seems to have leavened up a great mass of religious idealism of the West. The contact between Vedanta and Western thought has sometimes been traced beyond Pythagoras. History perhaps will never completely disclose how far the ancient mystery-cults in the Egyptian and Greek soils and their cognate speculations were influenced by the visions of the Upanishadic Rishis. We are not now, however concerned with ancient history but simply with some modern phases of thought. The Vedantic commentators may seem to differ as to the ontology of Vedanta but there is a remarkable agreement between them as to its methodology. It is to one or two aspects of the

Vedantic methodology that I shall confine myself in this essay.

Coleridge rightly maintains that Truth always suffers from its definition. Nothing great can be shut up in a conceptual scheme. Vedanta is no exception to the rule. If the emancipation of its methodology is attempted at all, it should be given the most catholic and comprehensive interpretation. The canon of Vedantic interpretation may roughly be summed up in the following words—*The clue to the beyond is to be found within.* It is the one principle that has led to the salvaging of modern Philosophy of Religion. This alone enables an inquirer after the truth of religion to chalk out a path between suffocating agnosticism on the one hand and a crass realism on the other. A study of religion will forget this principle to its peril.

Deussen in his great work on the philosophy of the Upanishads significantly remarks: "If ever a general solution is reached of the great riddle which presents itself to the philosopher in the nature of things, all the more clearly the further our knowledge extends, the key can only

be found there alone where the secret of nature lies open to us from within, that is to say, in our innermost self. It was here that for the first time the original thinkers of the Upanishads, to their immortal honour, found it when they recognised our Atman, our inmost individual being, as the Brahman, the inmost being of Universal Nature and of all her phenomena."

This transition from the 'Within' to the 'Beyond' is the method of Vedanta. This may be called the Transcendental Method. One may try however to get an insight into the 'Within' from the 'Beyond.' This is the empirical method—the method of science. Science has achieved wonders in the phenomenal field but has so far failed to give us an insight into the heart of Reality. Its brilliant achievements are but scratchings at the periphery of Being. The secret of existence remains sealed to the empirical method. Can the other method help us? Morton Prince, the great American psychologist, seeks to offer an answer to the question in the following way: We see the cosmic process only, neither its beginning nor its end. To an ordinary mind the world appears to be discontinuous. It is a theatre of action and reaction of bodies in one unending space and time. The science of chemistry then dissolves the body into tiny atoms which are supposed to be indestructible. Then comes the theory of ether which envisages the physical world as a continuous ocean of an imponderable fluid. But this continuity is broken up again when we are told that an atom is a miniature world in itself, in which electric charges go round a nucleus after the fashion of planets round the sun. Here continuity

seems to be broken up. Again the wave-mechanics, we are told, re-establish continuity with the hypothesis that each electron is a bunch of waves. This may again be superseded by a physics of discontinuity. Thus the pendulum of physics swings between continuity and discontinuity, and this seems to be an unending process. The pathway to Reality does not therefore seem to be in this direction. Can we find any light within? When we look in all seriousness within us, a new world is revealed to us—it is the world of eternal values—of the ideals of the True, the Good and the Beautiful. The self-disclosure of the soul, this intimation of the spirit to itself, gives us an insight into the heart of Reality. The conviction grows in us that Nature is no longer foreign to us—it is the revelation of the Spirit; it is the time vesture of Eternity. This assurance is the one foundation on which religion and morality can stand. "For in truth the real essence of every religious belief," says Paulsen "is the assurance that the true nature of Reality reveals itself in that which I love and reverence as the highest and best; it is the certainty that the good and perfect, towards which the deepest yearning of my will is directed, forms the origin and the goal of all things." Yes, from the Within to the Beyond, from the inner to the outer—there is no other way to the temple of Truth. "Perhaps if we look into our own selves," says Emile Boutroux, the great French thinker, "if we seek a Beyond, no longer without, but within, we shall have more chance of success than we had during our search for an outer Beyond in the world of the senses, of the imagination, and of spatial measure." May

I not claim that the Rishis knew the secret of this success and exclaimed, "The Self, smaller than the small, greater than the great is hidden in the heart of this embodied being. He who is free from desire, sees, with his grief gone, the Lord and his Majesty through the grace of the Ordainer."¹

II.

I crave the indulgence of the reader to pursue another line of thought. The doctrine of the Koshas or sheaths in the Upanishads is to all students of Vedanta well-known. Some Indian commentators of the Vedanta rightly interpret the doctrine in the language of modern science. The Annamaya, the Pranamaya, the Manomaya, the Vignanamaya and the Anandamaya Koshas may be said to represent the different layers of self and, for the matter of that, of Reality. The Vedantic method of realisation of Truth is one of progressive transcendence. When we leave behind the Annamaya Kosha, we reach the Manomaya Kosha, on leaving this behind, we come in touch with the Pranamaya Kosha, and so on. Interpreted in the language of modern science, it may be said that when the Reality is conceived as *material*, it is studied by the physical group of sciences. But this is the lowest vision that we can have of Reality which next reveals itself as *Life*; it is then treated of by the biological group of sciences. At the next higher level Reality appears as *mind*; it is then the turn of the psychological group of sciences to study it. But

when we rise higher up still in the scale of vision, the universe appears to us as the field for the realisation of Vignana or self-consciousness or Spirit. It is then the turn of the metaphysical group of sciences to come to grip with it. Here the tether of science comes to an end. Reality from this point seems to be beyond the sounding line of the sciences and philosophy. In order to reach the Anandamaya Kosha, i.e., the heart of Reality, we are required to leave behind us sciences and philosophy and take to the method of spiritual realisation or the mystic method which alone leads us to our goal. The author of the Brahmasutras is emphatic on the point when he says: Nityopalabधि Svarupatvat and again Svayamjyoti Svarupatvat (Brahmasutra I. 3. 22).

It is gratifying to note that this very fruitful method of spiritual quest has been adopted to some extent by so many thinkers of note in the West also. When Prof. J. S. Haldane's remarkable Gifford Lectures on Sciences and Philosophy, delivered in the University of Glasgow in 1927-28, first came into my hands, it appeared to me to be a most remarkable justification of the Vedantic position put forward by a renowned scientific philosopher of Great Britain. In the preface to this work, he pays a handsome tribute to his great brother the late Lord Haldane in the following words: "I was still a medical student at the time, after an Arts course during which, owing mainly to my brother's influence, my chief interest was in philosophy." I need not remind the readers of this Vedantic journal that the late Lord Haldane was a great admirer of Hindu thought; and the massive structure of

Absolute Idealism which he has formulated affords a close parallel to the Vedanta. I have often felt that Prof. J. S. Haldane's 'The Sciences and Philosophy' may be taken to be a very able and well-reasoned confirmation of the Vedantic stand-point and deserves more than a passing notice. It requires a separate treatment, so I do not deal with it any further here. I shall instead refer to another outstanding Christian thinker, Bishop D'arcy, who reproduces in a work the argument of the Vedantic Koshas in an admirable way. The Bishop appeared to me to establish the being of God by a method which I have elsewhere characterised as the method of concretion. This may briefly be elucidated as follows: The sciences can be arranged according to the principle of *concretion*. Mathematics is the most abstract of the sciences; in it we are merely concerned with a group of abstract ideas. When we pass on to physics, we find it is more concrete than the science of mathematics. Here we are not simply concerned with mere quantity but require the further categories of matter and motion. But the world of physics is still inert and dead; it is devoid of colour, taste or smell. When we pass on to chemistry, we find it to be more concrete than that of physics. Here over, and above the categories of matter and motion, we require the concepts of composition and decomposition. We find the world of chemistry to be full of colour, taste and smell. But it is dead and inert. When from chemistry we pass on to biology, we are face to face with a living world. Therefore the world of biology is more concrete than the

world of physics and chemistry. But this world of biology though alive is unconscious. When we pass on from this science to psychology, the world again gains in concreteness; it is not simply alive but conscious. It is a theatre of the play and interplay of conscious subjects. This world corresponds to Manomaya Kosha—but a stage higher up we find the world of Vignanamaya Kosha which is studied by the philosophic group of sciences. In this world we get the stirrings of the Spirit, i.e., the self-conscious subject which is more than bare mind. Though the Bishop does not refer to the Anandamaya Kosha, it appears plain that the gist of the argument is that as we leave behind one abstract science after another, we get a fuller and fuller vision of the reality of the universe; ultimately it appears to be the expression of the Absolute Spirit or God. This argument may well be called the argument from the principle of concretion, and it is evident that this is an attempt at application, though unconscious, of the Vedantic doctrine of the Koshas for the elucidation of the truth of the universe.

III.

This paper will be incomplete if a reference to the great modern idealistic systems of the West is altogether left out. These bear the unmistakable impress of the great German thinkers, Fichte, Kant and Hegel. Schopenhauer is an illustrious follower of Kant and paid a great compliment to the Upanishads with which he came into contact through a Latin translation of a Persian rendering of those sacred books. Deussen was moved by his great master to have a profound appreciation of Indian thought. "Here we have to do with the Upani-

¹ अणोरणीयान् महतो महीयान्

आत्मा शुद्धायां निहितोऽस्य जन्तोः ।

तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको

बाहुःप्रसादान्महिमानमीशम् ॥

shads," says Deussen "and the world-wide historical significance of these documents cannot, in our judgment, be more clearly indicated than by showing how the deep fundamental conception of Plato and Kant was precisely that which already formed the basis of Upanishad teaching." Yes, Plato and Kant—these two sum up the idealistic thought of the West. To study the correspondence between the Vedantic thought and the idealistic systems of the West will be the pre-occupation of generations of students yet unborn.

I shall, however, just refer to a ripple of this ocean of study before I close. It has not been widely recognised that the neo-Vedantism of the great Swami Vivekananda affords a striking parallel to the Idealism of the Italian thinker Gentile. Over and above contemplation, the Swamiji puts a wholesome emphasis on *action*. The neo-Idealism of Italy differentiates itself from the Hegelian and neo-Hegelian systems by its emphasis not so much on thought as on activity. Gentile's great work on 'Mind as a

Pure Act' comes quite close to the teachings of our Swamiji. The subject, according to Gentile, creates its own object by a pure act—the world of experience then is an expression of the activity of spirits. All the individual spirits that apparently seem to be separate and distinct are but the different manifestations of the one Transcendental Self, who evolves the diverse spirits with their worlds by one undivided act. This is quite congenial to the spirit of Advaita Vedanta. We do not know the theology of Gentile yet. His *activistic* Idealism is apparently *non-theistic*, but not necessarily *non-spiritual*; since activity is the highest expression of spirit that we know of. This is also the special contribution of Swami Vivekananda to Advaita Vedanta. Over and above the pure thought of the classical Vedantists, Swamiji puts an emphasis on activity—not the mere epistemological activity postulated by the Italian thinker—, but ethical activity or Nishkamakarma, and this elevates the neo-Vedantism of Vivekananda to a higher plane.

SPIRITUAL BASIS OF INTERNATIONALISM

By Swami Avyaktananda

[Swami Avyaktananda is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order, and is the Founder and Minister of the Vedanta Society of London. Besides being proficient in religion and philosophy, he is also a keen student of social sciences. In the following article, which is a summary of a lecture delivered by him under the auspices of the Friends of India Society, London, the Swami shows how Vedanta is the rationale of the social philosophy advocated by humanism and internationalism.]

THE spirit of internationalism which is growing now in Europe is a result of modern science and humanism. It is not based upon Christianity or any other religion. Christianity is undoubtedly a great force, but unfortunately its implica-

tions are not yet fully realised by the Western nations. It was Tolstoy who fully grasped some of the deeper implications of Christianity and formulated a scheme of life, broadbased upon Christian principles. But his idealism has not been proper-

ly appreciated in any country. He preached an internationalism solely based on Christian idealism. But the current conception of internationalism has no direct connection with any spiritual idealism.

ECONOMIC NATIONALISM

Science has knit together all races of mankind. Railway, steamship, aeroplane, radio, etc. have become the mediums for rapid interchange of ideas, manners and customs. It is amazing to find how universal standards, as regards morality, customs and manners are in a process of growth. No nation is now able to live in a water-tight compartment. The logic of history is compelling every nation to come out and compare notes with other nations. We are painfully conscious that modern political and economic nationalism is not allowing this universalising process to reach its culmination. But modern politico-economic problems, especially the economic depression, show that no national problem can be handled, far less solved, if only the case of a particular nation is taken into consideration. Public finance, credit system and export-import trade of one country have become inseparably connected with those of other countries. This economic internationalism has a direct bearing upon the political life of every nation. Politics and economics are now intertwined. If the economic self-determination of one country is now impossible without the due consideration of that of another country, how can the political self-determination of one country be possible without the due consideration of that of another country? But the emergence of this politico-economic internationalism is mainly due to the

exigencies of circumstances. The idealism that would make this internationalism a living reality is still in the minds of small groups and has not yet come to the forefront of the politico-economic life of mankind.

STOICISM AND HUMANISM

The thinkers of the West have evolved a constructive idealism which, though not essentially spiritual in character, has the potency to make human life happier than it is to-day. This idealism is able to give modern internationalism a definite form; but it must discover its rationale before it can function properly in human life. It preaches humanisation of life which means that every individual, irrespective of colour or creed, must be elevated to the highest stature of physical, intellectual, moral and aesthetic development. This humanism has a long and brilliant history. It has been interpreted from the legal, political, economic and social standpoints in the course of the historical evolution of Europe. The philosophic basis of this humanism was given by stoicism.

The *Jus Naturale* of stoicism says that there is Reason or Law immanent in men and things, and that the correct outlook on men and things is to be formed in the light of this Immanent Reason. It is this Immanent Reason which can alone give us the right conception of equity and justice. We know how stoicism revolutionised Roman Jurisprudence and *Jus Naturale* became transformed into *Jus Gentium*, the primary basis of international law in the West. This *Jus Naturale* was given a fresh interpretation by Rousseau who preached the gospel of the abstract man free from all conventions. Thus, behind the ideas of liberty, equality and frater-

nity of the French Revolution is found the stoicism of ancient Greece. But in France these ideas played their roles mainly in the political sphere. The social and the economic issues were not so explicit during the French Revolution. The economic interpretation of humanism was given by Marx who preached an economic internationalism based upon his dialectical materialism. The social interpretation came from Comte who denied God and installed humanity in His place.

EUROPEAN CIVILISATION

It seems that the European civilisation, which is primarily Greco-Roman in character, has been seeking an internationalism based on stoicism. The Christian idealism has given only an indirect contribution to the growth and development of modern European civilisation. Throughout the Middle Ages, Christianity had been undoubtedly a vital force, and there had been some thinkers who conceived of an internationalism on the basis of the Catholic Church. But after the Middle Ages a new phase of the Greco-Roman civilisation slowly came into being. We find four landmarks in this new phase of modern European civilisation: (1) the Renaissance, (2) the French Revolution, (3) the Revolution of 1848 and (4) the Russian Revolution of 1917. The Renaissance gave a humanistic outlook on life and preached the civil liberty of the people. The French Revolution stood for equal rights for all. The Revolution of 1848 spread the idealism of the French Revolution far and wide. The idealism of the French Revolution has been universalised by the Russian Revolution, and what was implied in the French Revolution has

become explicit. We are not concerned here with the revolutionary method, followed in Russia, but the pure form of idealism behind the Soviet system. The conception of the classless society for which Russia is striving, is based on pure humanism. All forward movements of the modern world show how humanism is trying to form an international outlook, and seeking to bestow equal rights and privileges upon all, irrespective of colour or creed.

SELF-DETERMINATION

Internationalism is a myth without "collective security," and "collective security" has to be ensured within every nation as well as outside it. Without self-determining nations as units, no international life can be built up. Internationalism, as preached by the purest humanism, demands the freedom of every nation; that is to say, a group of people having a common fate, fashioned by the historical and cultural forces, must be free to choose its own way of self-expression. This is the meaning of "collective security," so far as the international life of modern mankind is concerned. Secondly, there must be "collective security" within every nation. That is to say, no social, economic or political policy should be initiated for any sectional interest. Everything within a nation must be planned. But planned society, planned polity or planned economy is impossible unless and until the vested interests have been done away with. As true internationalism presupposes self-determining nations as units, so true nationalism implies self-determining individuals as units. It is impossible to have genuine internationalism or genuine nationalism

unless and until all spiritual, intellectual and material resources have been thrown open to all. But why should we have such humanistic idealism at all, and how can it be expressed in modern human life in the path of least resistance?

THE VEDANTA

Here we come to the rationale of internationalism and humanism. It is a metaphysical problem, and metaphysics has a very bad name in these days. Why should we be at all humanistic? Why should we give up self-aggrandisement and seek the welfare of humanity at large? Why is the ideal of human solidarity inspiring the best minds of the world? What is the *raison d'être* of this humanism? The Vedanta philosophy of India gives a positive answer to all these questions. The answer is also found in Christianity but it is not generally recognised in the West. The answer of the Vedanta is that one Reality has become manifold, and that every individual is at one with that Reality. This oneness can be felt by the refined intellect, another name of which is intuition. Sometimes this sense of spiritual oneness comes to us unconsciously, without any deliberate attempt, when our mind becomes purer and purer. Every philosopher or thinker who preached humanism or internationalism had some glimpse of this spiritual oneness though he might not have taken it to be spiritual. The vague experience of the Reality gave him the urge to conceive of an equitable society and to strive for its realisation. The conception of the spiritual oneness of mankind is implied in stoicism, in Rousseau, Marx and Comte. But it is not explicit. The implication of

Christianity has to be re-discovered in the light of Neo-platonism and Vedanta. The clearest interpretation of the Reality, at once transcendent and immanent, static and dynamic, is found in Vedanta. In India this ideal oneness was mainly applied in the spiritual plane. But the awakened India aims at working out this ideal in actual life and for evolving a new social order on the basis of internationalism. In the West the vague conception of this oneness has developed wonderful systems of thought and brought about revolutionary changes in the politico-socio-economic life of Europe.

EAST AND WEST

For the legitimate fulfilment of modern internationalism there must be a happy blending of Eastern spirituality and Western humanism. The clear conception will show us the right way of achievement. There are two ways open to modern humanity, the revolutionary way, and the evolutionary way. We give up the revolutionary way because it denies the sanctity and divinity of man, which should form the real basis of internationalism. Every kind of violence has a tremendous reaction upon society which resorts to it, though there may be apparent success in the attempt. The way open to the saner sections of mankind is the evolutionary way. It has to be followed with courage of conviction and the clearest conception of the world-order we want to evolve. While an internationally minded individual should be bold enough to call a spade a spade, he should make up his mind to bring about root and branch reform in the world, not through any coercion but through spiritual persuasion and self-

suffering. When the spiritual oneness of mankind becomes a reality in one's mind, and the divinity of all a living creed, there cannot be any other logical way of self-expression for evolving a better social order for mankind.

The fate of modern civilisation depends on a powerful spiritually minded minority. It is not number that counts in the long run. It is a happy sign that in almost all countries there have been sincere groups, feeling the thrill of universal humanity in them. They are going to create the conscience of the future. Though insignificant in number they will gather strength day by day in spite of the kaleidoscopic changes in

the politico-socio-economic life of modern mankind. Strengthening and co-ordinating such groups along spiritual lines should be our very first attempt. The political situation of the world has left no other alternative now. Let these groups realise fully that collective humanity is the face of God, that there is divinity in every man and that every individual has the right to raise himself to the acme of spiritual, moral, intellectual and physical development. Every existing social system is against any spiritual consummation. But the way of root-and-branch reform has to be prepared by creating a strong public opinion on spiritual lines. Only spiritual men can now give humanity a lead. So let us "Be and make!"

SAINT RAMDAS

By D. V. Athalye

[Mr. D. V. Athalye is a noted writer of Western India, and his two volumes on Swami Vivekananda enjoy a wide popularity. His present writing on the famous Maharashtra saint, Ramdas, the Guru of Shivaji, brings into prominence an ideal character in whom profound spirituality and worldly efficiency found a harmonious meeting ground. A saint of this type will no doubt have a great appeal to the modern mind.]

S AINT Ramdas (1608-1681) has fitly been called the Vivekananda of modern Maharashtra. Like the Swami, he devoted his life to make Hinduism broadbottomed and Hindu society aggressive. Like the Swami, he devoted his life to the organisation of a propagandist institution. Like the Swami, he freely mixed with the secular leaders of his time. It was the good fortune of saint Ramdas (as well as of Swami Vivekananda) to have lived and accomplished his life's work at a time when in the land of his birth, love of religion and love of the country were mutually though imperceptibly influencing each other. His romantic life, militant personali-

ty and vitalising message deserve to be studied by all.

He was born in 1608. His boyhood was spent in pleasant and happy surroundings, and there was nothing in those surroundings to embitter his mind or cast a shadow of melancholy over it. But being a man born with a mission, his spiritual consciousness was awakened quite early, and he loved to steal away from the company of his mother and elder brother to a neighbouring grove and there spend hours in day-dreams. What they were, none knew and none knows. But they were not dreams that were reconcilable to a humdrum family life. His determination to

lead a celibate life brought him into conflict with his family. His mother was equally determined to tie him down to the world and worldly life and knowing Narayan's (that was his early name) thoughts on the subject, sought to effect her purpose by resort to stratagem. One day when Narayan was in a specially loving mood, she asked him whether he would not obey his mother. "What a question!" said the unsuspecting boy-saint, "Mother dear, I would do anything for you." His mother said, "My boy, I know how dutiful and loving you are. Call it my request or my command, but pray don't say 'no' to anything I say and do until the priests utter the words 'Savadhana' in your marriage." Narayan kept quiet but he kept his counsel too, and as soon as the priests had uttered the words 'Savadhana' at the end of the first benedictory verse on the occasion of the marriage ceremony, he left his bride ere yet she was his wedded wife and fled away to practise austere Tapasya. Never since the days of Buddha, has the Goddess of renunciation chosen so poetic a moment for the deliverance of the devotee.

Narayan's parents, grand parents and great grandparents were all worshippers of Sri Rama, the ideal king, son, husband and warrior, and Narayan too continued the family tradition. That accounts for his second name 'Ramdas'—the servant of Rama. The great saint Tukaram has referred to Ramdas as the Avatar of Hanuman, the devoted servant and Bhakta of Sri Rama. It was therefore in the fitness of things that having left his home, he should have repaired to Panchavati (Nasik) hallowed by the memories of Sri Rama for practising penance.

For twelve long years Ramdas practised penance at Panchavati. Before sunrise he would bathe in the holy waters of the Godavari and from that time till noon, he would stand in waist-deep water chanting the sacred names of God. The afternoons and evenings were spent in meditation, reading and prayer. It seems as if he had no struggles, no difficulties. He was equal to any kind of Tapasya. At the close of these years of spiritual discipline, he was blest with the vision of Sri Rama himself and His mandate for the uplift of the people.

Before Ramdas settled down to his life's work, he moved all over India for twelve years. He visited places of pilgrimage and worship. He met saints and prophets. He heard and saw all that was worth hearing and seeing. What he heard and saw, deepened his conviction that unless a fresh effort was made on a new plan to arrest the growth of the denationalising and despiritualising tendencies, the future was dark indeed for all true lovers of Hinduism.

Both Ramdas and Shivaji started their life's work in about 1645. Shivaji's object in seeking to establish an independent kingdom was not merely to protect his ancestral Jahagir, but also to secure the land of his birth against religious encroachments on the part of the Mahomedan conquerors. Ramdas, from his own point of view too, saw this danger to Hinduism and gave thirty-six years of his life to the awakening of Hindus, the regeneration of Maharashtra, and the formation of an organisation which would continue to keep the flag flowing from generation to generation.

Even before Ramdas was born, Maharashtra had a kind of elastic

religious organisation. The headquarters of the devotional, pious, god-fearing people belonging to this organisation is Pandharpur with its temple of Vithoba (*alias* Krishna) where twice every year they flock in thousands. Quite a beautiful and inspiring mythology has grown round God Vithoba and his devotees, and the prestige of the names of Jnaneshwar, Ekanath or Tukaram is one that is not to be despised. Yet Ramdas saw the need of starting quite a new organisation whose discipline in his days must have been more rigorous, whose outlook in his times must have been more nationalistic and suited for its followers to work hand in hand with contemporary national leaders.

In the enunciation of the ideal Ramdas never wavered. His views on almost all the salient points of philosophy and religion were identical with those of saints like Ekanath or Tukaram. He had accepted the traditional spirit of pessimism as the right basis for Vairagya (renunciation). Where however he differed from most of the Maratha saints was that he was prepared to accept any number of intermediate ideals for the average man. He did not exalt *the ideal* of ideals at the expense of lesser but (to the average man) more necessary ideals. Honour, fame, social respect or position were ideals which not only met with his approval but applause also. His great ambition seems to be to draw men out of that inglorious rut of inertia, apathy, want of ambition, which discourages and discounts all honest effort. "Take up some ideal, however small and modest, but concentrate all your energies on its consummation,"—this seems to be his message to the average man. He did

not shun the average man and woman. On the contrary, his one aim was to raise the average moral height of people and inspire them to the performance of great deeds.

Emerson has dilated on the difficulties which a highly sensitive and a highly spiritual man meets with in his journey in the world. The greater the moral and spiritual height of a person, the greater the number of difficulties in his way. To live successfully in the world, a man must be something of the world and his moral height itself is a great handicap to him in dealing with those crooks and sharks who are but too many in this world. Saint Ramdas showed great skill and self-confidence in dealing with the world. He was of opinion that the wicked man must find something in the saint of which he would stand in mortal dread. The religious man, who has made the uplifting of the world his business, must know how to deal with persons of all types and must always triumph over those with whom he has to enter in contest. This he can do if he is true to his ideals, if he towers over the world in the number of great and heroic qualities, and if he has mastered the art of how to behave with people. It is exactly of this art that most religious men are neglectful, and the consequence of this neglect is that in their tussle with the world, they come off second-best. Saint Ramdas in his *Dasbodha* has repeatedly laid emphasis on this point. He has devoted several chapters to the description of what this Chaturya (tact and cleverness) is like. "Do not be one-sided," he says, "probe deep into the hearts of others. Study the working of other people's minds. Identify yourself with the thoughts and feelings of

other persons. Understand the hearts of others before you seek to win them. Deal differently with different kinds of people. Above all never forget to give men what they want. If you anticipate other people's wishes, if you serve them heart and soul, they will stand by you through thick and thin." Rarely, if ever, do we come across a saint with such a practical cast of mind. Both by precept and example Saint Ramdas has shown us that idealism and worldly wisdom are not necessarily irreconcilable.

Though a romantic lover of nature and open spaces, Saint Ramdas lived in and for society. Though a lover of solitude, he allowed himself to be surrounded by people, whose uplift was the cherished ambition of his life. Though he had the very spirit of freedom in him, he chained himself down to an organisation which accomplished great deeds during his life-time. He was a master organiser. He had not only the magnetism of genius and personality which attracts and binds together men, but also that spirit of discipline and love of details which are of paramount need in training men. The way he dealt with people was wonderful. Had he not been a saint, he would have become a great politician. There are those who regard him as a politician disguised as a religious man.

It was inevitable that Ramdas with his national outlook and Shivaji with his religious fervour should meet. When exactly they met has not been fixed by historical research. Some say that they first met in 1649, others hold that they could not have met earlier than 1672. Tradition tells us that Shivaji had approached Saint Tukaram for religious guidance and that Tukaram suggested that Ramdas

was the fittest man to guide him. It is believed that Ramdas introduced himself to the great king by means of a letter and mildly chided him for having neglected to come to him in the midst of his military preoccupations. Ramdas was a veritable lion tamer, and the great king of whom even Emperor Aurangzeb stood in mortal dread was as meek and submissive as a lamb before him. Once Ramdas went to beg alms of Shivaji. Shivaji made a Sanad (gift) of his kingdom and delivered it to the saint. "What shall we do with this?" said Ramdas, "keep, O king, the kingdom for yourself and as a token of our overlordship change the colour of your flag and make it Bhagwa (Gerua)." Since then the colour of the Maratha flag has always been Bhagwa, which is our favourite monastic colour.

Ramdas was essentially a patriot-saint. He hailed with joy the tide of national fortune that swept over Maharashtra especially during the latter part of Shivaji's career. In words of fervid patriotism and with heart swelling with pride he has described how the accession of freedom brought peace and plenty to Ananda-vana-bhuvana (The garden of Joy) i.e. to Maharashtra, and how all the machinations of Aurangzeb failed. Though the last year of his life (1681) must have brought clouds of anxiety to his mind owing to the misrule of Sambhaji, yet on the whole his life witnessed the successful establishment of self-government under the capable leadership of Shivaji. The optimistic tone that we find in all his writings is in no small measure due to this circumstance. His message deserves to be studied by those who seek to utilise the latent spiritual energy of our race to the material well-being and advancement of society.

THE FUTURE OF INDIAN METAPHYSICS

By Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

[Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Sastri, retired District and Sessions Judge, is a noted writer and speaker on religion and philosophy. In the following paragraphs he pleads for a re-vivification of Indian metaphysics by contact with modern thought, but at the same time warns that it should not thereby abandon its allegiance to the great ideal of God-realisation which has always been the goal of metaphysics in India.]

IT is often said that philosophy is "innocent but useless trifling, hair-splitting distinctions and controversies on matters concerning which knowledge is impossible." But metaphysics is not a mere effort of fancy unrelated to life. It is not a Utopian construction or a squaring of the circle but is profoundly valuable to life. Every man must continually add to his experience of life and must constantly or at least now and then try to verify his experience and arrive at his own estimate of the meaning and value of life in the light of the Reality which underlies and transcends appearance. No one can avoid thinking about the how and the why and the wherefore of life; about where he has come from and what he is and where he goes; and about his relation to the Universe and the Cause and Source of all. Art and science have each its own relative values. But it is in metaphysics that we meet the inter-relations of values and the trans-valuation of values. In it alone we attain a union of the self and non-self and have a realisation of the true infiniteness of the seemingly finite self and the seemingly finite non-self in Infinite transcendental Reality.

Ethics, logic, psychology, etc., deal with specific problems relating to conduct, ratiocination, and the nature of mind. But it is in metaphysics that we find an interpretation of

the totality of mind and matter and the significance of Time, Space, Matter and Causality, and the reality of Being or the thing-in-itself as an entity beyond the manifoldness of mind and matter. It deals with the reality of Being and the being of Reality. Mind and matter are within us and about us. Mind has no extension and matter has no consciousness. But the spirit of man reaches out towards something beyond mind and matter and feels at home in a realisation of the Infinite, to use an expressive phrase of Rabindranath Tagore. Physics relates to the empirical standpoint dealing with things as reflected in the mind. But metaphysics aims at finding out things as they are from the transcendental standpoint. But the transcendental point of view is as much a reality of experience as the empirical point of view.

The various solutions given by metaphysics in regard to the riddle of the world have been classified and docketed under the names—Pluralism, Dualism, Qualified Dualism, Monism, Pantheism, Theism, Agnosticism, Naturalism, Scepticism, Materialism, Subjective Idealism, Sensationalism, Nihilism, etc. It is not necessary to weigh in the scale pan of the mind which solution is nearest to the truth. Nor is it possible to do so. As Mr. A. K. Rogers says, "No philosophical theory that has been

or is likely to be propounded is, we may venture to say, self-evident, or fitted to carry conviction at once to every mind." Each man must harmonise and verify the totality of his experiences so that he may realise the meaning and value of existence. It must also be possible to arrive at a standpoint wherein all valid verifications of experience in the past and in the present will be in harmony, as Reality is not and cannot be self-contradictory. As Dr. Deussen says well: "The nature of things,—as it reveals itself to the searching eye, immeasurable around, and unfathomable within us,—is one and at harmony with itself. Therefore truth also, as the reflection of that which is in the mirror of the human mind, must be for all times and countries one and the same, and whatever the great teachers of mankind in ancient and modern times have gathered from the immediate contemplation of nature and revealed in the form either of religion or philosophy, that must (apart from errors, which as a rule touch only what is specific and incidental) be essentially concordant, however varied may be the outward hues and forms it has received from the civilisations and traditions of different ages."

The future of Indian metaphysics is a most fascinating subject. We cannot afford to shut ourselves in a metaphysical cocoon oblivious of the march of metaphysical ideas elsewhere in the world. Such a method will end only in shutting out God's light and air, and result in effete-ness and decay and death of our metaphysical intellect. While we must certainly preserve our heritage and perfect it and maintain our place as the leader of the metaphysical

thought of the world, we must be attentive to the evolution of values in metaphysics elsewhere in the world. A metaphysics which does not watch the growth ideas and ideals all over the world and which does not criticise them in its own light will soon go to the scrapheap. Already infinite harm has been done by each school of philosophic and religious thought in India making a mystery of itself and communicating it only to its own adherents. Each school is rejoicing over its empty victories over absent foes. Its thunders and curses, calling down Heaven's wrath on rival schools with a ferocity that makes itself ridiculous by its inanity, have led to our metaphysical degradation.

We have therefore to study with care the course of thought elsewhere in the world. This should be done not for the purpose of starting a campaign of universal refutation but for the purpose of knowing the course of universal thought and intensifying our own metaphysical self-consciousness. As Richard Falckenberg says: "Metaphysical principles are less easily verified from experience than physical hypothesis, but also less easily refuted. Systems of philosophy, therefore, are not so dependent on our progressive knowledge of facts as the theories of natural science, and change less quickly; notwithstanding their mutual conflicts, and in spite of the talk about discarded standpoints, they possess in a measure the permanence of classical works of art, *they retain for all time a certain relative validity.*" This is the right and humble spirit in which the work must be done, because metaphysicians of all times and climes have a nasty habit

of assuming omniscience. They

"Assume the god,

Affect to nod

And seem to shake the
spheres."

The weight of the world-riddle is not lighter to-day than it was till now, and the Goddess of Truth has veils yet unremoved. Let us study in this spirit the heroes of ancient and modern philosophy in the East and the West—Plato and Aristotle, the Christian philosophers and mystics, the Islamite philosophers and mystics, Descartes, Spinoza, Bacon and Hobbes and Locke and Berkeley and Hume and the Scottish School, Leibniz and Kant and Fichte and Schelling and Hegel and Schopenhauer and Lotze, Comte, Mill and Spencer and Green and Bradley and Bosanquet, Bergson, James and Croce.

To the Greek thinkers the universe was a harmonious work of art calling forth awe and admiration. They humanised Nature and God. Plato and Aristotle called philosophy the 'child of wonder. Christian thought divinised man and nature. Modern thought has been aiming at seeing Truth as it is, free from intrusive and obtrusive humanisation and divinisation. It is bold, iconoclastic, naturalistic, even agnostic. When Bacon vindicated induction and the Renaissance substituted the classical literature for Christian theology, a new spirit entered the West. Erdmann said well, "Modern philosophy is Protestantism in the sphere of the thinking spirit." Philosophy has in modern times refused to be the handmaid of theology. Nay, like Henry V, it has taken the crown from the head of religion and seeks to wear it impudently and before its time and fitness. Modern philosophy has been undoubtedly influ-

enced deeply by the new forces of nationalism and democracy and science. It does not seek to fly away from life but yearns to be a vital factor in general culture and to influence life.

The great problems of modern metaphysics in the West must be studied by Indian metaphysicians so that India might assimilate whatever is worth attention therein for the purpose of intensifying and sublimating her own wonderful metaphysical consciousness. Modern philosophers in the West do not speak with a single voice. Neo-realism, neo-idealism, positivism, pragmatism creative evolution, and other catch-words are the battle-cries of the present era. Einstein's theory of relativity has introduced new elements of complication and has been related to philosophy by the late Lord Haldane. The philosophising of modern science has been carried on with brilliant power by Bertrand Russell, A. S. Eddington and A. R. Whitehead. But the West is yet to know that science is not the entirety of truth and that physical nature is not the entirety of being.

While studying the systems of thought elsewhere in the world and especially the modern reconstructions of experience, Indian Metaphysics has to keep unimpaired its high idealistic and transcendental note. The mechanical theory of the universe has neither truth nor joy in it. No mechanism has self-awareness or knows its own beauty or work before or after. The soul is real and the universe is God's handiwork and full of His being. The materialistic outlook magnifies the body; its aesthetic outlook is flat and earthly and low; its ethics are grovelling and mean;

its psychology either denies the spirit of man or binds it by iron chains to the earth; and it has no faith in the reality and glory of God or His creation and governance of the world or the freedom and immortality and bliss of the soul. It is, in short, an affirmation of egoism. But real bliss is in the transcendence of egoism—be it in sleep or in the contemplation of beauty in nature, in human forms, in art or in the realisation of God. In artistic joy the deliverance from egoism is partial and temporary but in God-realisation the deliverance from egoism is full and eternal. India has always unwaveringly affirmed the highest truths of metaphysics. She must be loyal to such affirmation not only for her welfare but also for the welfare of the world. Hence she must preserve and perfect her spiritual vision without becoming at the same time a

mere dreary introvert. Only then she can save the world from its sordidness and sorrows. In fact the West has to turn to her for the deliverance of her soul from the fetters of mechanism and materialism and empiricism and nihilism. Dr. Deussen says: "In India the influence of this perverted and perverse spirit of our age has not yet overthrown in religion and philosophy, the good traditions of the great ancient time." How can India fit herself to perfect her metaphysics and lead the world aright unto God? She has always been loyal to Veda (Scripture) and Deva (God) and she must intensify her loyalty and pray for Grace. The glory of Veda and Deva is in the Bhagavad Gita. India must walk in the light of the Gita—because the highest metaphysics is the Gita and the Gita is the highest metaphysics.

SWETASWATARA UPANISHAD

By Swami Thyagisananda

स्वदेहमरणिं कृत्वा प्रणवं चोत्तरारणिम् ।

ध्याननिर्मयनाभ्यासादेवं परयेन्निरूप्यते ॥

स्वदेह = one's own body अरणि = the under wood प्रणवं = the symbol Om उत्तरारणि = the upper wood च = and कृत्वा = making ध्याननिर्मयनाभ्यासात् = by practising churning in the form of meditation देवं = God परयेत् = one should see निरूप्यते = like something hidden.

Making one's own body the lower piece of wood and the Pranava the upper piece of wood and practising churning in the form of meditation, one should realise God as one would find out something hidden. (14)

Note.—This verse describes the process of meditation with the help of Pranavajapa as the best method to find out God in one's own self. Elsewhere, we find the Guru and Sishya (disciple) compared to the two pieces of wood and the process of learning to churning.

सिद्धे तु तैलं दधिनीवसर्पि रापः श्रोतःस्वरणीषु चाग्निः ।
 एवमात्माऽऽत्मनि गृह्यतेऽसौ सत्येनैव तपसा योऽनुपश्यति ॥
 सर्वव्यापिनमात्मानं हरिं सर्परिवापितम् ।
 आत्मविद्यातपोमूलं तद्ब्रह्मोपनिषत्परम् ॥

सिद्धे तु - In sesame seeds तैलं - oil दधिनि - in curds सर्पिः - butter
 श्रोतःसु - in (underground) springs आपः - water अरणीषु - in pieces of
 wood अग्निः - fire च - and इव - just as एवं - in like manner असौ - this
 आत्मा - the self आत्मनि - in oneself गृह्यते - is perceived यः - who एनै - this
 सर्वव्यापिनं - all pervading हरिं - in milk अर्पितं - which is contained सर्पि -
 butter इव - like आत्मविद्यातपोमूलं - rooted in self-knowledge and con-
 centration आत्मानं - the self सत्येन - by truth तपसा - by concentration
 अनुपश्यति - perceives again and again तद् - that परं - supreme ब्रह्म -
 Brahman उपनिषत् - the destroyer of ignorance.

As oil in sesame seeds, as butter in curds, as water in under-
 ground springs, as fire in wood, even so this Self is perceived
 in the self¹. He², who³ by means of truthfulness and meditation⁴
 perceives again and again⁵ this Self which is all-pervading like
 the butter contained in milk and which is rooted in self-knowledge
 and meditation, is that⁶ supreme Brahman, the destroyer of
 ignorance⁶. (15&16)

Note.—The two verses have to be taken together, as the last line of the first
 verse has to be read along with the second verse for proper construction. The
 first three lines show how the Self is perceived in oneself and not in anything
 else and how it forms the essence of everything. It also emphasises the
 necessity of self-effort for the realisation of Atman which is already existent.

The four similes are suggestive in their own way. The first suggests
 that the Atman is present everywhere, though invisible, as no particle of a
 sesame seed is free from oil. The second suggests how the all-pervading
 subtle Atman can be realised as having form through Bhakti, a form which
 is capable of melting away under the scorching rays of Jnana, just as the
 diffused fat particles in milk assume the form of solid butter in cool atmos-
 phere and melt away into ghee when kept in a hot place or over a fire. The
 third suggests that however great our trouble may be in reaching this hidden
 source of bliss, the moment we reach it, it is capable of quenching all our
 desires and of making us pure, just as a man who digs a well can slake his
 thirst and bathe himself as soon he reaches the water-level. The sugges-
 tiveness of the last is already explained under verse 13.

1. *In the Atman* (आत्मनि)—This here stands for Buddhi.

2. *By means of truthfulness* (सत्येन)—This represents the intellectual
 struggle to find out the thing-in-itself, the noumenon behind the phenomenon;
 the truth which exists independently, unaffected by time, space and causation.
 It denotes Gnana Yoga.

3. *By means of Tapas* (तपसा)—This represents the Yogic process of
 controlling the mind.

4. *Perceives again and again* (अनुपश्यति)—This shows the necessity of
 constant and repeated practice. Cf. Patanjali's Yoga Sutra I, 13 : स तु दीर्घ-
 कात्मनैरन्तर्यसंस्कारासेवितः

5. यः तद् — The difference in gender of these two correlatives of the text
 is meant to signify that all differences of sex exist only in the dominion of
 Maya and that Brahman and he who realises it transcend sex.

6. *Supreme Brahman* (परं ब्रह्म) — The knower of the Self becomes
 Brahman, because the self and Brahman are the same. Cf. ब्रह्मवेदब्रह्मैव भवति
 This is the culmination of repeated practice.

7. *The destroyer of ignorance* (उपनिषत्) :— Ordinarily it means the
 works known by that name. But according to the root meaning of the
 word, it means the destroyer of ignorance. So it is appropriate to consider
 Brahman as the Upanishad par excellence.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Two Outlooks on Life

Mr. Leslie J. Belton, M.Sc., writ-
 ing on "Individualism and Self-
 transcendence" in a recent issue of
 the *Hibbert Journal*, draws the fol-
 lowing pointed contrast between
 Eastern and Western outlook on
 life : "The concept of development
 too is very differently understood in
 Eastern and Western modes of
 thought. To the former, develop-
 ment may be described with fair
 accuracy as signifying the means by
 which Brahma achieves self-realisa-
 tion. To the latter, it signifies bio-
 logical development on the globe,
 viewed from the human angle. To
 the Westerner life is good in itself;
 he believes that in some measure
 man can assist in its development
 and direction. Whereas Eastern
 thought is fixed upon Atman, that
 which evolves, Western thought is
 concerned with that which he ani-
 mates, the world of manifestation.
 Thus Life assumes value in its own
 right ; not as Maya or as something

to be delivered from or even trans-
 cended, but as a realisable good
 which achieves its fullest expression
 on earth in self-conscious beings.
 Inertia is evil, to be overcome. Good
 is the active conquest of inertia,
 the flowering of Life in Mind,
 in finite personalities. And these
 self-conscious life-centres—microcos-
 mic epitomes of the Supreme Creator
 —evinced a capacity to plan and to
 direct Life in accordance with some
 value criteria as they apprehend."

A comparative study of Eastern
 and Western cultures will show that
 they have failed in their mission
 because of an over-emphasis on what
 have been described above as their
 differing outlooks on life. In her
 enthusiasm to spurn life the East
 has neglected life so effectively as to
 lose the very power of spurning it
 and as a consequence its outlook has
 degenerated into a sneaky type of
 materialism which wallows in the mud
 without knowing that it is doing so.
 The Westerner has forgotten the

Supreme Creator in his emphasis on the self-conscious life-centres which epitomise Him,—a natural consequence of the dictum that life is good in itself. This dictum, when actually applied in life, will defeat its own purpose ; for it necessarily hides from view the major aspect of reality which transcends the visible life, and thus by basing life on an incomplete view tends to make it the very opposite of good. That is the genesis of Western materialism—strong and vigorous but ultimately disastrous in its consequences. To see God within life and beyond it is the true ideal ; to split it into two and try to specialise in one or the other will always end in disaster.

The Greatest Three

H. G. Wells had stated some years ago that the greatest men of the world were in his opinion six in number. In a recent article appearing in the *Tribune* from his pen, the old six have been reduced to three, these being Jesus Christ, Buddha and Aristotle. Christ is, according to him, the greatest among these, and of him he remarks : "He is I think a quite cordial figure in human history and it will be long before Western men decide—if ever they do decide, to abandon his life as the turning point in their reckoning of time.... Now it is interesting and significant that a historian, without any theological bias whatever, should find that he cannot portray the progress of humanity honestly without giving a foremost place to a penniless teacher from Nazareth. The old Roman historians ignored Jesus entirely ; he left no impress on the historical records of his time. Yet more than 1900 years after, a his-

torian like myself, who does not call himself a Christian, finds the picture centring irresistably around the life and character of this most significant man." That he had tremendous personal magnetism and that he spoke with authority would not have in themselves given him the permanent place of power he occupies. "That place is his by virtue of the new and simple and profound ideas which he realised—the profound importance of the individual under the fatherhood of God and the conception of the Kingdom of Heaven ... It is one of the most revolutionary changes of outlook that has ever stirred and changed human thought. No age has even yet understood fully the tremendous challenge it carries to the established institutions and subjugations of mankind. But the world began to be a different world from the day that doctrine was preached, and every step toward wide understanding and tolerance and good will is a step in the direction of that universal brotherhood Christ proclaimed.

"The historian's test of an individual's greatness is, 'What did he leave to grow? Did he start men thinking along fresh lines with a vigour that persisted after him? By that test Jesus stands first."

The influence of Jesus on human thought has been very great, and we do not want to minimise it in any way. But we doubt whether the estimate of Mr. Wells is as free from prejudice as he claims it to be. He has, to be sure, no theological prejudice ; but we feel he is not free from that mentality of which Spengler accuses Western historians in general—the obsession that human history is the same as European history. It is no doubt true that as far as Europe is con-

cerned Christ has exercised a greater influence over its life than any other individual, but when European history is viewed in the true perspective of world-history there may not be wanting others who have been as important to other civilisations as Christ has been to that of Europe.

Buddha and Self-Sacrifice

About Buddha he remarks : "As with Christ so with Buddha, whom I would put very near in importance to Christ, you see clearly a man, simple, devout, lonely, battling for light—a vivid human personality, not a myth. Beneath a mass of miraculous fables, I feel that there also was a man. He too, gave a message to mankind, universal in its character. Many of our best modern ideas are in closest harmony with it. All the miseries and discontent of life are due, he taught, to selfishness. Selfishness takes three forms—one the desire to satisfy the senses, another, the craving for immortality, and the third is the desire for prosperity, worldliness. Before a man can become serene, he must cease to live for his senses or himself. Then he merges into a greater being. Buddha in different language called men to self-forgetfulness five-hundred years before Christ. In some ways he was nearer to us and our needs. He was more lucid upon our individual importance in service than Christ, and less ambiguous upon the question of personal immortality."

Aristotle and Intellectual Synthesis

As Christ and Buddha are important in the history of human will, so is Aristotle in the history of human intelligence. For, "Aristotle began a great new thing in the world—classifying and analysing information. He

was the father of scientific synthesis. There had been thinkers in the world before but he taught men to think together At one time he had a thousand men scattered throughout Asia and Greece, collecting material for his natural history. Political as well as natural science began with him Aristotle's insistence on facts and their rigid analysis, the determination to look truth in the face, was a vast new step in human progress."

Dr. Schweitzer's criticism of the Gita

A reviewer of a recent book in German on Indian thought by Dr. Albert Schweitzer summarises the Doctor's criticism of the Bhagavad Gita gospel of action as follows: "The Bhagavad Gita makes notable concessions to the latter (life-affirmation), concluding that activity is no less justifiable than non-activity. But activity contemplated is not the free activity indicated by the impulse of the heart. It is only activity in connection with the fulfilment of the obligation of caste. Because it fails to reach the idea of active love, the ethic of the Bhagavad Gita is like a smoky fire from which no flame flares upward. Within the world-view of world-and-life-negation, action can only be justified at all as performed in devotion to God. And since the God of the Bhagavad Gita is exalted above good and evil it is forced to regard non-ethical action as something required by God. Dr. Schweitzer's judgment of this famous book is : 'Because it contains such marvellous phrases about inner detachment from the world, about the attitude of mind which knows no hatred and is kind, and about loving self-devotion to God, we

are wont to overlook its non-ethical contents. It is not only the most read but also the most idealised book in world literature."

We take this criticism for consideration, because it is very typical of the criticism made of the Gita in ancient and modern times. The criticism about the ideal of activity inculcated by the Gita loses all force when it is seen that the Gita does not uphold caste, as the critic conceives, but only Varna which is based on the inherent characteristics of men. The activity resulting from these inherent characteristics is called Svadharma, and that is caste-duty or Varna-Dharma contemplated by the Gita as belonging to individuals. The impulse of the heart in its healthy manifestation is therefore certainly accepted by the Bhagavad Gita. The ideal of active love and social duty therefore find a harmonious reconciliation in the Gita, and the figure of the smoky fire becomes quite inappropriate. It was made, and is still being made, a gospel of vigorous action.

The charge that the teachings of the Gita are non-ethical will not in any way convince a mind that carefully reads the chapter in which the Daivic (the divine and ethical) and the Asuric (the diabolical and non-ethical) natures are described, and man is powerfully exhorted to follow the former and avoid the latter. So when in expounding the highest philosophy of self-surrender, the Gita goes beyond the dualities of good and bad, it must be borne in mind that it is not in the least upsetting the moral order, and that it is addressing its teaching to the morally perfect man with whom morality has become an inward urge and ceased to be an external compulsion.

A Scientist's Protest

In an article entitled "The Racial Question—Theory and Fact," Julian Huxley, the well-known biologist, points out that the racial prejudice which reigns supreme over the world in all countries except Soviet Russia has no biological foundation to stand upon. If it has any justification, it is only a temporary one born of the exigencies of culture-contacts, economic competition and political organisation. Racial purity, he points out, is a myth, and the strong feeling on this point that actuates Europe to-day has done more harm than good.

He remarks: "Notably in Europe both ethnic intercrossing and culture-contacts have proceeded so far that 'racial purity,' like complete isolationism and self-sufficiency, is impossible of attainment. And because they are impossible to attain, they are dangerous to aim at; as an ideal, they contain unrealities and impossibilities which may destroy essential realities and threat true possibilities."

"The violent racialism to be found in Europe to-day is a symptom of Europe's exaggerated nationalism; it is an attempt to justify nationalism on a non-materialistic basis, to find a firm basis in objective science for ideas, passions and policies which are generated internally by a particular economic and political system, and have real relevance only in reference to that system. The cure for the racial mythology, with its accompanying self-exaltation and persecution of others, which now besets Europe, is a tempering of the nationalist ideal, and in the practical sphere an abandonment of claims by nations to absolute sovereign rights. To drive this lesson home will take time and may even demand a new period of

war. Meanwhile, however, science and the scientific spirit can do something by pointing out the biological realities of the ethnic situation, and by refusing to lend her sanction to the absurdities and the horrors perpetrated in her name. Racialism is a myth, and a dangerous myth at that. It is a cloak for economic and nationalistic aims that in their uncloaked nakedness would look ugly enough. And it is not scientifically-grounded. The essence of science is the appeal to fact; and the scientific fact remains."

Leaving aside the question whether the race theory is a fact or fiction, one

point that interests us in the extract given above is the necessity that has arisen for the scientist to defend his subject against the abuses of it by politicians and leaders of society. It has been the custom for the critics of religion, including the scientists, to speak of the horrors and oppressions perpetrated in the name of religion. The religious man, however, attributes all these to perversions of religion at the hands of selfish men who happen to control it in society. That the man of science is also forced to-day to adopt the same line of defence takes the wind out of the sail of scientific criticism directed against religion.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

DISCOURSES ON GNANA YOGA AND OTHER LECTURES: By Swami Vivekananda. Published by Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora Dt. (Can be had at Vedanta Kesari Office, Mylapore, Madras). Price As. 10. Pages 98.

The lovers of religious literature all over the English-knowing world will greet with joy and enthusiasm this small book containing some of the brilliant writings and discourses of Swami Vivekananda that have hitherto remained unpublished. The book takes its name from its first chapter of 38 pages entitled "Discourses on Gnana Yoga" which sets forth in simple yet inspiring words the highest truths of Sankara Vedanta and the spiritual practices for the realisation of the same. The remaining 47 pages contain 12 small chapters under the following headings:—Struggle for Expansion, The Birth of Religion, Four Paths of Yoga, Cycle of Rest and Change, Love of God, India, A Preface to the Imitation of Christ, Christianity in India, Hindus and Christians, Similarity between the Vedanta Philosophy and Christianity, Child Marriage, Epistles. As these headings indicate, these chapters give the views of the Swami on diverse topics, religious, social and cultural. The last chapter containing some of his letters in verse form

gives a fascinating revelation of the witty and playful aspect of the Swami's character. It is needless to mention that as in the case of his major works, these writings of the Swami too are note-worthy for the force, inspirational quality, lucidity, simplicity and profundity, which have gained for his works a place of honour among the religious classics of the world.

THE MAHARSHI AND HIS MESSAGE: By Paul Brunton. The Liberty Press, Madras, Pages 112, Price 9 annas. (For circulation in India only).

This book dealing with the personality and message of Sri Ramana Maharshi is a selection from Mr. Brunton's famous book "A Search in Secret India," which was once reviewed in these columns. Those among the devotees of the Maharshi who cannot afford to purchase the costly work mentioned above, will feel highly indebted to the publishers of this book for bringing out in so cheap and handy a form Mr. Brunton's charming portrayal of the sage. Since both the writer and his theme have evoked keen interest among the public, we need not say anything more about the book here than that it is both fascinating and inspiring. The printing and get-up are excellent.

MATTER, MYTH AND SPIRIT : By Dorothea Chaplin. Published by Simpkin Marshall, Ltd., Stationers' Hall Court, London, E.C. 4. Pages 199. Price 8/6 net.

This book by Dorothea Chaplin, the scholar-tourist, is meant for travellers who care to penetrate beyond apparent distinctions to the unitary origins of human customs and beliefs. Many hitherto unexplained myths and customs among the Welsh, Irish, Scotch, English, Kelts and American Indians, as also among the Mexicans, seem to find an adequate explanation only in the Puranas. This the authoress illustrates by considering a few cults of importance. The Bull-cult, as found in the rock-carvings of Morayshire, Penrith and other places, is traced to the Nandin of Siva. St. Kentigern, the Protector of the Holy Cow, is strikingly like Gopala. The Knock-We-Gael and Dunadd Boars receive their signification from the third Avatar of Vishnu. Symbols like the lotus and the Swastika originated among the Hindus. The names of many places in the New Continent, viz., Rama, Nila, Narada, Pupil, Canada, and the name of the river Makara, many relics of the Mayan civilisation, the very name of Ireland (Arya land), the river Thames (Tamasa !), St. Margaret (Marakatha : pearl),—all these according to the authoress must provoke thought in any serious-minded reader. The cross is entirely Hindu in origin. "White Island" by which name the British Isles are known, is a literal translation of Sveta Dwipa ! And this is, in the writer's view, tenable as Bharata-varsha meant Asia and not present Hindusthan only. The beautiful subterranean grotto at Margate on the Isle of Thanet presents to view the Enlightened Buddha and Ganesa. These strengthen the evidence for the theory that there were pre-Christian Hindu settlements in America, Britain, Ireland and other parts

of the world ! And it need not be considered crazy as "many Hindu statements have been ridiculed in the past, which have now become established facts and this may follow the same course." The book is well illustrated with a dozen plates and six illustrations. It also has an index, which makes the book complete. It is a thought-provoking work of interest to tourists of all countries.

SAGE OF SAKORI : By B. V. Narasimha Swami. Pages 177. Price annas 8.

The author of "Self-Realisation" presents here the life of Upasani Baba. Sri-man Narasimha Swami has been much attracted by the life and personality of this 'Sage of Sakori', in whose Ashrama he spent a good many useful months. Sakori Baba's life, as presented in this book, speaks the growing influence of this person in Maharashtra. The peculiar mysticism of this life may not find credence amongst all who may chance to read this book, but the long period of intense Sadhana Upasani Baba underwent as a disciple of his Moslem Guru, Sai Baba, cannot but strike us with admiration. The Indian is prepared to go through, willingly, any torture of body and mind, and can suffer any denial of the ordinary comforts of life, if he is convinced that the truth he is hankering after would thereby be attained. However great a person may be, one should guard against unwittingly becoming the "depository of other people's beliefs." India should not also, by developing a very sceptical attitude towards mystic experience, and the message of world-reform some mystics adumbrate, lose the experiences of the modern adventurers in the realm of the spirit.

The book can be had at the office of the *Sunday Times*, Loane Square, Broadway, Madras ; or from the Manager, Sri Upasani Baba's Ashrama, Sakori, P.O. Rahata, Dt. Ahmednagar.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

The long-expected inauguration of the Sri Ramakrishna Birth-Centenary Celebrations took place on 24th February 1936. According to the programme drawn up by the Centenary Celebration Committee at Belur, these celebrations are to be held in India and abroad for the whole year from February 1936 to February 1937. The enthusiasm that was evinced in several big cities of India on this occasion and the information received till now regarding the numerous celebrations held in the smaller cities and towns are sufficient to fill the heart of a lover of Indian culture with joy ; for, does it not show that even in the midst of economic and political pre-occupations India still remains true to her ideal of God-realisation, of which the life of Sri Ramakrishna is the most striking embodiment in recent times ?

CALCUTTA

Of all the great cities in India, it is Calcutta that has evinced the greatest fervour and enthusiasm in the celebration of this great occasion. There is a common saying that a prophet is not honoured in his own land, but in the case of Sri Ramakrishna, however, Bengal has not only given birth to this World-man, but has shown the rest of India and the world at large how to honour and cherish the memory and message of the most out-standing spiritual personality of the age. Every year the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna stirs the city of Calcutta, but this time it has been observed as a holiday and a festive occasion by vast numbers of Hindus in the city. The seven days preliminary celebrations began at Calcutta on the 24th of February, the actual birthday of the Master, which was observed at Belur Math, the head-monastery of the Order, with the worship of all the prophets and incarnations of the world, and the performance of a Homa in a specially constructed altar on the bank of the Ganges, to the accompaniment of Vedic chanting by Brahmmins specially sent by the religious institutions of Benares. About 8,000 devotees partook of the sacred offer-

ings that day. In the evening there was a public meeting in the monastery, when several speakers, monk and lay, spoke on the Master and his message. Dr. Kalidas Nag, who was among the speakers, observed by way of reflections on the Master's life and personality : "Hundred years ago Sri Ramakrishna was not known to the world, nor was any temple built for him. On the opposite bank of the Ganges, at Dakshineswar, this superman had manifested his real nature which baffles all description. Then no one imagined that that place would become a pilgrimage hundred years later and that millions of men and women would come to worship him year after year. He lived the life and gave no 'discourse' or lectures nor did he 'preach', but the life he lived has made him famous to-day." The other items of the celebration that day consisted of the broadcasting of the message of the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, the illumination of the monastery and its precincts, the worship of the Divine Mother all through the night, and the initiation of several novitiates into Brahmacharya and Sannyas.

On the 26th of February there was a largely attended meeting at the Town Hall of Calcutta under the presidency of Maharaja Sir Manmatha Nath Ray Chaudhury of Santosh when many distinguished citizens of Calcutta paid their tribute to the Master.

Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee remarked on this occasion : "Considering that no school, no college, no university, no library contributed to his mental and spiritual equipment and that all that he owed to other human beings for such equipment was due to contact and conversations with some Sannyasins and other religious minded persons and the guidance of a 'Bhairavi' in the earlier stage of his preparation for his life's work, the conclusion becomes irresistible that his spiritual genius was extraordinary and marvellous.... What is known as religious tolerance or toleration but would probably be better called mutual appreciation and respect among the followers of different faiths, has been traditional in India for ages That Ramakrishna was such a

harmoniser in spite of his not having read the scriptures of even the principal historical religions in the original or in translation gives him a distinct, a unique place in the long line of teachers of harmony of many a clime and age. India's supreme note has always been spiritual. Keeping that fact in view, one may say that the Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Centenary is the year's most noteworthy contemporary event in India."

Swami Abhedananda, one of the few direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna yet surviving, paid his tribute to the Master by pointing out that once in every five hundred years divine incarnations have appeared in this world and that five hundred years after Chaitanya "the Lord was born in the form of an illiterate priest" as Sri Ramakrishna. He also referred to the Master's doctrine of the harmony of all religions and specially to his sublime attitude towards women. He remarked: "Another great fact in his life was that he looked upon all women including his wife as the living representatives of the Divine Mother. He did not renounce wife and home like the other great prophets of the past, but living in the world, he was, at the same time the best of Sannyasins. He has once more set woman on the altar of motherhood and had even accepted a woman as his Guru."

The next speaker, Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar, besides referring to Sri Ramakrishna's message of the harmony of religions, emphasised also the universal significance of his personality. He said: "Though Bengal has every reason to be proud of the fact that the Paramahansa and his foremost disciple Vivekananda were born in Bengal, yet it should not forget that these great souls belong not merely to Bengal, not even to India, but to humanity itself."

The Maharaja of Santosh, the President of the evening, said in his concluding speech that 'Sri Ramakrishna Centenary' is the name given to a great national idea—that of rousing our people from morbid stupor and taking fullest possible advantage of that flood-light which is capable of removing the veil of darkness from the obscurest corners of human knowledge. "Our world-wide celebrations are meant to remove stagnations of every description and point

towards a great whirlpool of action in which the East is to be epitomised, its total knowledge codified." He said that he had deep reverence, and undiluted and absolute faith in the Saint of Dakshineswar. "It is he," the Maharaja continued, "who like the miracle man of the 20th century, shaped thinkers and organisers, that is, men great in essence and fit to lead in their own sphere of action. It is he who laid the broad foundation of perfect understanding of the universal spirit in a materialistic and nationalistic age which is torn asunder by diversity of races and interests. It is he who preached from the lofty pinnacle of great knowledge that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light I like to draw a portraiture of him before you, as I take him to be surely not as a saint whom mankind will remember as a stern religious leader, disrupter of social organisations, but as a saint full of sprightliness, humour and handsome courtesy; a saint of kindly countenance and fascinating conversation with the magical power to beguile you into being informed beyond your worth and wise beyond your birth-right.... It is Perfection, absolute in details that was worshipped by Sri Ramakrishna. His nature was dynamic. He was catholic in Spirit, strong in organisation and believed in a religion universal in nature.... As a child of nature, fired with imagination, he was carried on the high wings of fancy and he conceived in vividly fanciful colours of the impossibilities which are still lying beyond the ken to be focused. His spirituality thus became mixed with Realities. His master-pieces, the total growth and universal movement of his soul, are incalculable. The world owes to him more than the world can pay. One hundred years constitute a pretty long span of time and although he shuffled off his mortal call long, long ago, his spirit still resides with us."

The public celebration came off on the 1st of March. It is usual for huge crowds to gather at the monastery at Belur on the birthday celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna; but this year the crowd was so great that a section of Calcutta seemed to have been transferred to the monastery grounds. To

bring in and take away the crowds there were special steamer services and local trains running. The monastery offered no attraction by way of sight-seeing except it be its shrines; nor had it any arrangements for entertainment except it be devotional music. An attraction much mightier than what this earth offers must surely have been at work to hold together this seething mass of humanity in which all distinctions of caste, colour and creed were submerged and forgotten in a continuous wave of joy and spiritual exaltation. At 4 p.m. when the crowd was thickest, there must have been more than a lakh of people assembled in the monastery premises. And all through the day about twenty-five thousand people took full meal of offered food (Prasadam), and many more, small quantities of it.

BENARES

Benares, the Holy City of India, evinced an unprecedented enthusiasm in the celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's Birth-Centenary. The celebration which lasted for about a fortnight was noteworthy for three features—the opening of a temple of Sri Ramakrishna, the convention of a religious conference, and the whole-hearted co-operation of the various religious heads and monastic orders of Benares. Previous to the actual birth-day anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna, Rudra Yaga, Vishnu Yaga, Saptasati Homa and Vastu Yaga were performed with due solemnity and according to Sastrie procedure. The opening of the Temple which took place on the 24th February was solemnised with due rites and ceremonies and the feeding of devotees. On the following day took place a procession which was perhaps unprecedented in the history of Benares. Besides the elite of the city, the procession, which completed its route in the course of three hours, was accompanied by all the religious magnates of this Holy City—the Mahants and Mandaliswars of the various Maths and monastic Orders and hundreds of Sannyasins of various sects. These carrying their respective flags and symbols of office and either walking or mounted on cars or elephants marched in perfect order and solemn dignity both before and after a beautiful oil-painting of Sri Ramakrishna placed on the back of a gigantic elephant. The various Mandaliswars and orders of monks do not join in

procession even in old and long-established religious festivals like the Kumbha Mela. The universality of the Master's personality and message can alone account for this unique fact of all of them joining in honouring his memory. Equally wonderful was the spirit of harmony that prevailed on the occasion of the Samashti Bhandara (feast) next day, when the Naga monks of the three Akhdas—Nirvani, Niranjani and Juna—and the Paramahansas, numbering on the whole 2,000, and 500 Brahmins all took meals together. Such a large gathering of Sadhus and unanimity of feeling on the occasion of a feast are never witnessed ordinarily.

The Religious Conference which began from the 1st of March and held five sittings, was largely attended and had representatives of various religions and sects. Prominent among those who took active part in it were Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya Mahamahopadhyaya Pramatha Nath Tarkabhushan, Principal A. B. Dhruva, Siva Prasad Gupta and the heads of the six prominent monastic Orders of India, who are generally known by the name Mandaliswar — Swamis Swarupananda, Bhagavatananda Giri, Jayendra Puri, Nrisingha Giri, Krishnananda Giri and Madhavendra Giri.

Principal Dhruva who was the President of the 1st day's sitting, observed in his presidential address: "Sri Ramakrishna's life was mainly a life of realisation while that of Vivekananda was a life of interpretation. Of the two glorious institutions on both the sides of the Bhagirathi, Dakshineswar is the place of spiritual realisation of Sri Ramakrishna and Belur Math of interpretation of great Swami Vivekananda. Harmonious combination of realisation and interpretation in life alone can make all happy and prosperous."

On the succeeding days each of the Mandaliswars presided and the noteworthy feature of their addresses was that all these orthodox heads of long-established Sannyasin orders accepted Sri Ramakrishna as the Incarnation and World-Teacher of the present age.

The Conference also gave free scope for the representatives of the various religions of the world to expound their faiths, and besides followers of the Hindu sects, speak-

ers representing Buddhism, Mohammedanism and Christianity took part in the function. Mutual amity and perfect good-will prevailed among the various religionists assembled there on the occasion.

MADRAS

The preliminary celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's Birth-Centenary at Madras was observed with Pooja, Bhajana, feeding of the poor and Harikatha Kalakshepam. In the evening there was a meeting under the presidency of Prof. S. Kuppuswami Sastri, when Mr. S. R. Ranganathan, the Librarian of the Madras University Library, delivered an address on "Sri Ramakrishna and Play of Intuition." The lecturer pointed out that the lives of saints like Sri Ramakrishna are beyond the scope of scientific method; for science concerns only with factual knowledge, beyond which is a fringe representing the controversial part of science, and outside that fringe is the Great Unknown. As the lives of persons like Sri Ramakrishna belong to that Unknown, the method of understanding them is intuition. Intuition is an extra-conscious process, and the only way of understanding it is through authentic lives of saints like Sri Ramakrishna, and it is fortunate that the story of his inner life has been preserved for us in detail by men who had opportunity of moving with him intimately. There are three schools of thought regarding the validity of intuition

as a source of knowledge—the agnostics who do not believe in it, the Neo-Platonists who recognise it alone as the right source of knowledge and the school of compromise which accepts it as a possible source of knowledge. These discussions, the lecturer opined, can be set at rest only by coming into contact with realised souls like Sri Ramakrishna. He also pointed out that Sri Ramakrishna's individualistic method of instruction is coming into the forefront in the modern educational theory.

AT OTHER PLACES

Besides the celebrations held in these big cities we have hitherto come across reports of celebrations in several places, some of these celebrations being organised by the local centres of the Ramakrishna Mission and the others by admirers and followers of Sri Ramakrishna. We can only give the following list of such places in these columns: Trichur, Trivandrum, Calicut, Coimbatore, Conjeevaram, Nandyal, Pondicherry, Rajahmundry, Salem, Tellicherry, Trichinopoly, Villupuram, Ootacamund, Ellore, Madanapalle, Vellore, Hyderabad, Ponnur, Kandukur, Shiyali, Chinglepet, Cocanada.

The list given above include only places in this Presidency. In succeeding issues we shall give information about celebrations in other parts of this Presidency as well as the rest of India.

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—Swami Vivekananda

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[No. 1

HINDU ETHICS

दत्तातुकीतिविषयः क्षुद्रो नैकृतिकः शठः

असंभोगी च मानी च तथा सङ्गी विकृत्यनः ।

धर्मशीलं गुणोपेतं पाप इत्यवगच्छति

आत्मशीलोपमानेन न विश्वसिति कस्यचित् ।

परेषां यत् दोषस्त्यात्तदगुणं संप्रकाशयेत्

समानेष्वेव दोषेषु वृत्त्यर्थमुपधातयेत्

तथोपकारिणं चैव मन्यते वञ्चितं परम्

दत्तापि च धनं काले सन्तपत्युपकारिणे ।

भक्ष्यं पेयमयात्रेण यन्मन्यन्तसाधुभोजनम्

प्रेक्षमाणेषु योऽश्नीयाद् वृशंसमिति तं वदेत् ॥

Some people repeatedly talk about the gifts they have given. Some are characterised by partiality and meanness. Some are cheats in the garb of friends. Some pretend poverty when they are well off. Some are too miserly to enjoy their own possessions. Some are proud and doggedly attached to objects. Some are braggarts. Some readily impute vice to virtuous persons, taking themselves as the criterion, and never trust anybody. Some declare abroad the unobserved shortcomings of others although they themselves are victims to the same and throw obstruction in the way of their livelihood. Some there are who cleverly think that they have imposed on the person who has in time met his urgent need. Still there are others who partake drinks, delicacies and jellies under the eyes of others without sharing with them. All these are to be marked out as *nrisamsa*, wickedly cruel.

Mahabharata, Shanti Parva, Ch. 162, verses 5, 8, 9, 10 & 11.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

[Men of high spiritual attainment, while manifesting extraordinary powers, at the same time resemble little children in many respects. The incidents narrated below show how these two aspects of personality were harmoniously combined in the Master.]

The unique relation of Mathuranath with the Master

THE relation that the Master established with Mathuranath was thus both sweet and intimate. It was undoubtedly due to the Master's unconditional mercy on him that Mathuranath's love for him increased day by day until he began to look upon him as his very life and soul. Not a little of the attraction he felt for the Master was due to the latter's child-like state of mind. For, where is the man whose mind is not drawn towards a child inexperienced in all worldly matters ; who does not watch its sweet and purposeless activities with concern and hasten to its protection whenever it is about to harm itself due to its absorption in play ? Moreover, there was not the slightest trace of affectation in the Master's child-like behaviour. While in that attitude, he would actually appear to be a boy who was unable to protect himself. Therefore there is no wonder that Mathuranath, possessed of power and intelligence as he was, would spontaneously feel an impulse to protect him in every way. Hence, while on the one hand he relied upon the spiritual powers of the Master, on the other hand he was ever ready to protect the Master, knowing him to be an inexperienced child. Finding in the Master this unique combination of the attitude of the omniscient Guru and that of an ignorant child, Mathuranath probably came to the conclusion that he was to protect the

Master in all worldly matters including the preservation of the Master's body, while with regard to the subtle spiritual matters which are beyond the pale of the senses and control of human beings, the 'Father' was destined to be his protector. Just as the Master's character was complex, being the meeting-ground of such opposite traits as humanity and divinity, ignorance and omniscience, even so was Mathur's love for him correspondingly complex in form. Mathuranath no doubt adored the 'Father', who was established in Bhava-mukha (the spiritual state that unites the dual and non-dual planes of consciousness), and who could bestow boons on people and remove their fears ; yet the same 'Father', while in the mood of a child, would be so simple and dependent in nature that he had to be soothed and consoled by him on various occasions. In such situations Mathuranath, out of love for the Master, would resourcefully invent suitable explanations for the Master's questions.

Mathuranath consoles the child-like Master by his invention of 'the worm of lust'

One day, while engaged in conversation with Mathuranath, the Master suddenly went out, and returning with a melancholy face, inquired of Mathuranath, "What is this disease that I have got ? I found something like a worm going out through the

urinary passage. None has got this kind of worm in his body. What is this due to, then ?" The same 'Father', who perhaps a moment ago was giving extraordinarily simple explanations of abstruse spiritual truths, is now for nothing overwhelmed with great anxiety and stands in need of the advice and consolatory words of Mathuranath ! "It is very good, indeed, Father !" came the prompt reply of Mathuranath. "Everyone has got within himself the 'worm of lust' which gives rise to various evil thoughts and deeds. Now, through the grace of the Divine Mother it has gone out from your body. Why do you worry so much on this account ?" At once like a boy the 'Father' felt great relief and said, "Quite true. I am very fortunate indeed to have consulted you !" and began to express his delight over this matter.

The Master's conversation with Mathuranath regarding the coming of his future devotees

One day, in the course of a conversation, the Master told Mathuranath, "The Mother has convinced me through repeated visions that there are many devotees 'of the innermost circle.' They will all come, get instructions from here, i.e., from the Master, regarding things divine and gain realisation. They will attain the highest form of devotion." And pointing to his own person he added, "Through this form the Mother will have much play, will bestow Her mercy on many. That is why she has not yet destroyed it. What do you say ? Are these mere hallucinations or are they genuine visions ?"

"Why should they be hallucinations, Father ?" replied Mathuranath.

"When the Mother has not shown you anything untrue till now, why will this vision alone be so ? It must also come true. But why are they, the future devotees, delaying ? Let them come soon so that I may enjoy their company."

The Father became at once convinced that whatever the Mother had shown him was true. Said he, "Well, I don't know when they are to come. It is the Mother who has shown all these things. Let Her will be done."

An instance of the Master's child-like attitude : the incident of the picking of the greens

Rani Rasmani was without any male issue but had four daughters of whom the third and, after her death, the fourth and youngest one, were married to Mathuranath. The sagacious Rani allotted the shares of her property for all her sons-in-law even in her life-time, so that there might not arise any quarrel over the partition of the estate in future. One day, after the allotment of the shares, Mathuranath's wife went for bath to a tank which belonged to one of her sisters according to this partition. Noticing there a kind of greens growing luxuriantly, she collected some of them. The Master alone noticed her doing this, and at once various thoughts of the following nature began to agitate his mind : "It was very bad on the part of Mathuranath's wife to have taken another's things in that way without the permission of the owner. She did not even consider that the taking of things in this manner without the owner's permission amounts to stealing ! Moreover, why should she have so much greed for others' things ?"

Meanwhile that daughter of the Rani, to whose share the tank belong-

ed, happened to meet the Master. At once he informed her of the conduct of Mathuranath's wife. This report of the Master, given in an extremely serious attitude, made it impossible for her to restrain her laughter. "Very true, Father," she commented, "she has done a great offence, indeed!" That very moment the culprit also personally appeared there, and after coming to know of the cause of her sister's laughter, herself joined in the fun saying, "Well, Father, is it fair on your part to have reported this incident to her? While stealing these greens I took so much care to escape her detection, and you have thus exposed me to my great shame!" Thus both the sisters began to laugh loudly. Still came the Master's reply, "When the allotment of the shares has already been over, it is not proper thus to lay one's hand on another's property. That is why I brought it to her notice so that she might settle the matter with you." This statement of the 'Father' increased their laughter all the more, and filled them with wonder at the Master's extraordinary simplicity.

*Mathuranath takes refuge in the
Master in times of family
calamities*

On the one hand the Master was a simple child as shown above; on the other he was the saviour of Mathuranath at critical moments. The following is an event illustrating the latter point. In connection with a conflict with another zemindar, Mathuranath gave orders to his men to fight with clubs, and this resulted in loss of lives. In great distress Mathuranath approached the 'Father' seeking his protection. At first the 'Father' became very much annoyed and scolded him severely. "You fool,"

said he, "You will create troubles every now and then and come to me for protection! What can I do? Go, and save yourself now. What business have I with these things?" But later, on account of the persistent importunities of Mathuranath, the Master said, "Let the Mother's will be done." In fact Mathuranath was saved from that trouble.

*An instance of the miserly Mathura-
nath spending money lavishly for
the Master's sake*

Numerous instances may be cited which show this dual aspect in the Master's character. It was by observing these various attitudes of the Master that Mathuranath had the firm conviction that all he possessed, wealth, honour, power and what not, was through the grace of the 'Father.' Therefore there was nothing strange in Mathuranath's unflinching faith in, and regard for, the Master as an incarnation of God. The intensity of devotion in a man of wealth may be fairly guessed from his expenditure of money for the sake of his object of devotion. Moreover this test is specially applicable to Mathuranath who was miserly also to some extent, as clever and calculating rich men are generally found to be. That Mathuranath's faith and devotion sprang directly from his heart becomes quite evident from his lavish expenditure for the Master's sake. He would have the Master gorgeously dressed and seated to witness the performance of religious dramas with one hundred rupees or more arranged in rows of ten in front of him, so that he might reward the distinguished performers with it. In the course of the performance he would perhaps get into an ecstasy on hearing some touching song

or recital and push the whole amount kept before him towards the performer as his reward! But Mathuranath would not at all be vexed on this account. He would rather express his delight saying, "The reward is just in keeping with the 'Father's' generous mind," and have an equal amount arranged again before him. But in that ecstatic mood of his how long would it remain before the Master who had completely rid himself of greed by practising to look upon a piece of gold as identical in value

with a lump of clay? Perhaps this newly placed amount would be disposed of in the same manner under the intoxication of a fresh wave of emotion. Later, finding no money at hand he would perhaps give away his shawl and other costly garments, and thus stripped to the skin, sit motionless, and deeply absorbed in a state of ecstasy. Mathuranath would on such occasions go mad with joy considering that his money had been used in the best possible way.

AN ANCIENT MESSAGE TO THE MODERN CONSCIENCE

[An attempt is made in the following paragraphs to make a general review of Buddhist thought with a view to extract from it what might possibly have been the universal message of the Buddha to mankind.]

A Gospel of Love

THE full moon of Vaisakh which falls in this month is a day of consecration and rejoicing to a very large section of humanity. For it is a thrice blessed day, being the anniversary of the birth, enlightenment and final Nirvana of Gautama Buddha whose life and teachings have been a blessing and an inspiration to countless men and women for more than two millenniums.

The rise and spread of the great world-religions all the world over constitute some of the most heroic and sublime chapters of human history. They reveal the possibilities of human nature when it is thrilled by a soul-stirring faith; they record the achievement of man in his effort to reach out from animality to Divinity. But it so happens that when the foundations of human nature are shaken by a deep emotional upheaval, it is not only its nobler aspects that

find expression but also the cruder traits that lie dormant in it. Hence we find that when the religious spirit of human societies is enkindled into a mighty flame, it is usually encrusted by a smoky film of narrowness, bigotry and unhealthy spirit of aggression. Such at least has been the case in the rise and spread of some of the great world-religions like Islam and Christianity. It is difficult to adjudicate whether their phenomenal success in early days is more due to the holiness of their saints and the zeal of their missionaries, or due to the sword of their kings and the aggression of the priesthood. It is, however, the great glory of the religion of the Buddha that it won about a third of humanity into its fold without shedding a single drop of blood or violating the conscience of any man. The Buddha, it is said, was born in this world to remove the sufferings of men; and his followers, whatever their

faults in other respects, always kept this in view; and never did they stoop, in the course of their world-wide propaganda, to the expediency of force in preference to the principles of their compassionate Master. They have ever been free from the sophistry and hypocrisy of the organised priesthood of some other religions, who thought it an act of great mercy to rescue heretics from the eternal torments of hell through the short-lived pangs of earthly fire.

The Message : Dhamma as Deity

What did the Buddha teach? What was his saving message to mankind? On this question there has been no unanimity of opinion ever since the Great Council was held about two centuries after the Buddha, when the then existing eighteen sects of Buddhists grouped themselves under two main schools—the Theravadins (Sthaviravadins) or followers of the doctrine of the Elders who maintained the orthodox tradition now preserved in the Pali Canon, and the Mahasanghikas or adherents of the Great Council who developed later into the diverse sects of Buddhism called Mahayana. The numbers of Buddhist sects are to be counted to-day in hundreds. A brief reference to the beliefs held by some of them may not be out of place here. There are the Theravadins, otherwise known as Hinayanists, who hold to the Pali Texts which are claimed to contain the pure teachings of the Buddha. They teach a sort of philosophy which perceives in this world a vale of misery, and in man and the universe a constant flux having no permanent substratum. The human personality is a composite stuff. There is neither a soul nor a God. The goal of man is to get out of the

recurrent cycle of life and death by seeking the extinction of personality in Nirvana. This is to be achieved through the practice of certain moral virtues and an abstract analysis of personality with a view to realise its unsubstantiality. Till recently these teachings of the Pali Books were supposed to embody the genuine gospel of the Buddha, although many non-Buddhists and non-specialists in Pali did doubt their genuineness and see a positive content even behind these negative teachings. The researches of Mrs. Rhys Davids have, however, confirmed the doubts of non-Buddhist admirers of Buddhism. She has shown that the Pali Canon is not so immaculate a piece of work, that it has undergone a good deal of additions and emendations at the hand of monastic editors and that the original teachings of the Buddha are far different from the generally accepted principles of Theravada. She has pointed out that the message of the Buddha is not a pessimistic gospel of riddance, but a dynamic teaching of hope and cheer for Everyman. He taught the Middle Way, the Bhavammagga or the Way of Becoming which consists in man "becoming ever better, ever less imperfect, ever narrowing that gap between man as he is and Man-in-the-Highest. Desire to become, Will to become, using body, sense and mind in the quest, is necessary; necessary, too, the guiding rein, the curb, the whip of rule and discipline and training. Following neither 'end' alone, nor to excess, by this midway of becoming shall the pilgrim to the topmost height fare on." He disputed neither the existence of the soul nor of the Deity. Anatta is not soulless but not-the-self, and it is spoken only of sense experi-

ence and not of the essence of personality. There is a More in man and his goal in life is to develop that to its fullest possibilities. "You are not just being," he taught, "You are becoming; your becoming is that growing within you; your becoming is a matter, not a ritual of just knowing; it is your very living. In the other man that too is becoming. You are each and all in the long way of becoming toward That Who you are." The goal towards which man is developing is the Immanent Deity, and it is this Deity immanent in man that the Buddha denoted by the term Dhamma. Hence the essence of the Buddha's teaching, as interpreted by Mrs. Rhys Davids, is nothing but the manifestation of the Divinity in man.

The Doctrine of the Three Bodies

This identification of the Deity with the Dhamma receives weighty sanction when we consider the later developments of Buddhism as embodied in the Mahayana. Later, they are called only because these teachings became widely popular several centuries afterwards. That they existed from very early days is shown by the presence of the Mahasanghikas, to whom we have made reference before. In these developments of Buddhism we find the faith transformed from a soulless and godless system of ethical discipline and mental analysis into a complicated form of theism that fully satisfies the devotional needs of the religious mind. We find here that the reality of the Buddha is something more transcendent than the earthly historical figure of the Sakyamuni. From very early times it was believed even by primitive Buddhists that after the passing away of the Buddha he lived in the Dhamma. It

was also believed that many Buddhas had appeared in this world from time to time to minister to the spiritual needs of man, and that the Dhamma they all preached was not different from one another but the same. If there is, therefore, unity in the Dhamma preached at various times, it is natural to suppose there is also a unity in the personalities of the teachers, the various Buddhas. If truth is immutable, those who reveal it are not many but one. This unity was effected by the doctrine of the Trikayas or 'three bodies'. According to this theory the earthly Buddhas lose their importance considerably and become subordinate to the conception of Dharmakaya or "body of law". What is called Dhamma in the Pali books is, in the light of this theory, not merely an abstract law, but the sum and substratum of all existence, the Tathata or 'trueness' which is the inner essence and support of the whole universe. It is that which lies beneath all phenomena but continuously manifests itself through them. It is identical with supreme enlightenment or Perfect Knowledge. According to this doctrine all the Buddhas that have appeared in this world are not different personalities but in essence identical, being the manifestations of the one and eternal Dharmakaya. The Dharmakaya is world-transcendent, but it expresses itself from time to time for short periods as Nirmanakaya "creation-body." The earthly Sakyamuni is only one of the many such visible manifestations of the transcendent Buddha by virtue of his wondrous, illusory power. There is yet another body of the Buddha in contrast to these temporary historical manifestations. This is the Sambhogakaya or

the enjoyment-body, which is a rather vague conception standing for the redemptive activities of the Buddha in the various spheres of the universe. While he is preaching in one sphere he is eternally active in all the various spheres of the universe as the perpetual organ of Revelation—as the innumerable Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of glorified bodies who have gained perfection through a long course of self-denial or who, though entitled to perfection, have spurned it with a view to help the suffering beings. We shall not attempt here to describe the complicated implications of the terms 'Buddha' and 'Bodhisattva', but only remark that both these are stages of spiritual development capable of being achieved by all human beings through proper effort. In the conception of the Sambhogakaya an attempt is made to reconcile the idea of Buddhahood as something won as a result of age-long effort with the notion of it as an eternal and infinite energy working as a perpetual organ of Revelation and Redemptive Love.

The Doctrine of the Adibuddha

We come across a further attempt at systematisation of Buddhology with pronounced leanings towards theism in the conception of Adibuddha. The Adibuddha or Paramadibuddha, though conceived as issuing from Sunyata (void), is yet unoriginated and beginningless. He is pure Light, exists by himself and has never been seen. By five acts of contemplative power he has created the five Dhyani-Buddhas (Buddhas of contemplation)—Vairocana, Akshobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha and Amoghasiddha. By the twofold power of knowledge and contemplation, these in turn have given birth

to the Dhyani-bodhisattvas (Bodhisattvas of contemplation)—Samantabhadra, Vajrapani, Ratnapani, Avalokitesvara or Padmapani and Visvarupa respectively. These are the creators of the world. The present creation of which we form a part is the work of Avalokitesvara, the fourth Bodhisattva, and the Dhyani-Buddha Amitabha is its protector. This universe has had for its earthly instructor Sakyamuni, the fourth of the human Buddhas. There are five earthly Buddhas corresponding to the five Buddhas of contemplation. The earthly Buddhas are not, however, incarnations, but reflexes (Pratibimbās) or magical projections (Nirmanakaya).

Arhat, Bodhisattva and Buddha

We have referred above to some of the diverse ramifications of Buddhist dogma only to show to the general reader that the soulless and godless gospel that generally passes for the Buddha's teaching has not been left unchallenged from early times by large sections of the great teacher's followers, and that the theistic developments of Buddhism, especially its conceptions of Adibuddha and the Dharmakaya, fully justify the contention of Mrs. Rhys Davids that Dhamma stood for immanent Deity in the original teaching of the Enlightened One. We of to-day do not stand in need of the complicated Buddhology described above. We have our own theologies, and feel no need or inclination to substitute them with any brand of Buddhology. Is there then any strand in the complicated system of religious and philosophical thought that has gathered round the Buddha which may be of universal appeal—a message which any spiritually-minded person can

gladly accept and profit by, whether he be a professed Buddhist or not? In the message of every World Teacher there is such a strain of teaching by virtue of which he gains recognition as a World Teacher, and the case of the Buddha too is not an exception in this respect.

The universal aspect of the Buddha's message can be best expounded by considering the significance of the three terms that stand for different grades of perfection in Buddhism—Bodhisattva, Arhat and Buddha. The Buddhahood, which is the peak of spiritual attainment possible for man, is the result of a long and strenuous process of discipline and self-sacrifice. An ordinary individual by following the system of moral and mental discipline preached by the Buddha can become an Arhat, a perfected being even in this life. Such a person having understood the secret of existence, attains Nirvana, and after the falling away of the body there is therefore no more birth for him. But there are persons of exceptional moral fervour who do not care for their individual salvation, but overcome by Mahakaruna (great pity) and Mahamaitri (great friendliness) for the suffering beings dedicate themselves to the work of redeeming them, even though individual salvation is of easy achievement for them. Gotama, the Sakyamuni, was one such. He had, according to the Buddhist scriptures, almost reached the state of an Arhat or perfected individual in a previous birth, and the eternal bliss of Nirvana was his for the mere choice. But out of pity for the world he renounced this goal of individual salvation, and took the vow that he would not enter into Nirvana until he had set mankind on the path of deliverance.

Individual salvation is comparatively of easy attainment, but the capacity to save the world is derived only by the tremendous moral and spiritual force derived from repeated acts of self-sacrifice. Since he who was to be the Buddha took upon himself the vow of world-deliverance in his birth as Bhikshu Sumedha, he entered on his series of life as the Bodhisattva—a long and strenuous period of discipline in which there was no thought of individual salvation or welfare but which was characterised by a supreme readiness to sacrifice all personal interests for the good of others. Men suffer heat and cold for selfish ends, would they not suffer the same for the sake of the world?—this was the motto of the Bodhisattva. He practised, as Bodhisattvas are expected to do, the ten Paramitas or transcendent virtues consisting of giving, morality, renunciation of the world, wisdom, energy, forbearance, patience, truthfulness, resolution, love and equanimity. Each of these virtues could be practised in three stages—giving, for example, from bestowal of alms, through the sacrifice of wealth and limb, to the surrender of child, wife or life. These previous lives of the Buddha as the Bodhisattva are recorded in the Buddhist books called the Jatakas, and it was by virtue of the spiritual energy generated by supreme self-sacrifice in hundreds of births as Bodhisattva that Gotama, the Sakyamuni, attained in his final birth the status of the Buddha or Enlightened One—a state that differs from that of the Arhat or perfected man in that the latter gives one the power of saving oneself alone while the Buddha by renouncing the idea of individual salvation gains the capacity to redeem the world. Thus according to the Buddha's gospel,

spiritual perfection of the highest order progresses from the discipline of Arhatship, through that of the Bodhisattva, to the state of the Buddha.

Two Views of Spiritual life

In this unification of the dual ideals of the Arhat and the Bodhisattva in the conception of the Buddha is the universal message of Sakyamuni to humanity of all times. In this combination the Buddha has given an example as well as warning to all spiritual aspirants, whatever might be their religion or creed. Man's quest after salvation and spiritual perfection has run in two directions that look apparently opposed. There has always been one party that looks upon spiritual life as a purely subjective or internal process. They think of it in terms of a dive within, as an effort to reach at the inner essence of man through a process of meditation and mental analysis. The dynamic virtues of life are discouraged, and emphasis is laid more on the process of elimination rather than of enrichment. A withdrawal from life rather than participation in it, a retreat rather than an advance becomes the motto of the spiritual pilgrim. In staticity they see the ideal of perfection, and in movement nothing but a shadow of it—an erroneous perception that hides the face of Reality and has therefore to be negated by realising its illusory nature. Through withdrawal from all activities of life and practice of the perfect quietism of introspection they seek to achieve this goal. Among those who seek perfection through introversion, a very large number relapse into dullness and inertia and a good many become self-centred ego-

tists while a small minority develop into a type of static saintliness, full of peace within and capable of carrying peace to the few who may fall in with them in their line of thought. These perfected introverts are the Arhats, good in their own way, but not good enough for the world at large since they lack the dynamic spiritual energy of a Buddha which alone can make the saintly life significant and substantially contributive in the history of societies and nations. Their perfection is not all-sided. Much that is valuable in their personality is shrunken and undeveloped.

As distinguished from this type of introverts are the perfect extraverts for whom religion and spiritual life are understandable except in terms of social programmes. They see the external world in all its glory and in its imperfections, and feel that if there is any progress for them it is by participation in the joys and sufferings of their fellow-beings in whose midst they find their own life cast. Gregariousness is more predominant in them than the instinct of self-preservation. Abstract meditation and self-analysis fail to satisfy their heart's longing. Unless they are able to do something of tangible good to their fellowmen, be it feeding the hungry, nursing the sick, or educating the ignorant, they feel they have lived in vain. In actually contributing towards social good, towards the realisation of the 'good life' in society, are their joy and the fulfilment of their life. This type is the one that seeks development on the lines of the Bodhisattva ideal.

As in the case of pure introversion, the quest after perfection through a life of pure extraversion is also not without serious dangers. For it is

as much a lop-sided development as the other. Man is not purely a social being but a psychological being as well, and unless fertilised by the graces of contemplative life mere social activity remains barren of all spiritual results. For perfect selflessness in pure extraversion may be a theoretical possibility, but like many theoretical possibilities it is outside the pale of practical achievement. Hence just as the pure introvert generally ends by becoming a pure egotist due to the unhealthy 'self-fixation' involved in his discipline, so too the 'other-fixation' of the amateur world-saviour drives him gradually to be ubiquitous in the affairs of his fellow-men and finally end his life as a vainglorious individual who feels that he is the axis of the world. In these days when instances of this type are in abundance, we need not develop the point further here.

The Buddha's Contribution

The message of the Buddha in its pristine purity is a warning to man in this respect. Buddhahood which is the consummation of all spiritual striving is not to be attained merely by introspection or through mere service of fellow beings. It is an attainment born of a harmonious combination of both. The Arhat or the man of perfect introspection lacks the spiritual dynamism, the contagious influence of personality that is characteristic of the Buddha. Though he has gained inner tranquillity, his spiritual potentialities have not been fully developed. For this higher development he has to identify himself with the life and feelings of all living beings, and to that end he must undergo the discipline of the Bodhisattva which is one of repeated self-

sacrifice and self-denial. But the true Bodhisattva is not like our amateur world-saviours of to-day who seek development in external life but suffer from atrophy within. He is a man of deeply contemplative life, one who is on the way to be an Arhat, but yet spurns the bliss of individual salvation, overcome by a sense of utter dedication to the welfare of fellow-beings. The knowledge of Sunya, by which the Buddhists meant ultimate Reality, is at his command; but he gives up absorption in it because that knowledge is in itself imperfect and ineffective unless it is enlivened by Maha Karuna (Great Pity) which establishes one in identification with the interests of all life. Thus the true Bodhisattva, the aspirant after the highest spiritual perfection, is one who seeks to harmonise the inner life with outer life, the cognitive powers with the emotive and conative faculties, one who tries to combine knowledge with love or who, in Buddhist mystical phraseology, mingles Pragna with Upaya. From this successful combination is generated the mighty world-shaking spiritual energy that is the Buddha.

Bifurcation and its Dangers

In the life of the Buddha and his early disciples the twin conceptions of the Arhat and the Bodhisattva were integrated into a single ideal of spiritual perfection. But a time came, a bad time, indeed, judged by the results, when these ideals were bifurcated and set in opposition by the two main sections of Buddhists—the Hinayanists trying to specialise in the ideal of the Arhat and the Mahayanists in that of the Bodhisattva. This was an unnatural division, having no sanction in the life of the Buddha, and the consequence was

naturally disastrous. Self-salvation may be successfully followed by a few individuals, but when it becomes the ideal of a whole society or a nation, the natural consequence is the degeneration of spiritual life into sloth, idleness and passivity. This has been the fate of Hinayana with its uncompromising insistence on monasticism and self-salvation. The Mahayanists, however, erred on the other side. They despised the ideal of the Arhat and exalted that of the Bodhisattva. Man was asked to care only for world-salvation and never for self-salvation, and every tyro in spiritual life began his career with the high and grandiose aim of working for universal welfare without, however, taking much trouble to develop the spirit of non-attachment born of a contemplative life. What is worse they developed queer ethical doctrines which seem to exempt the Bodhisattva from the limitations of ordinary moral codes. The Bodhisattva, they stated, is daily making numerous sacrifices for the welfare of others, and therefore there is nothing he should not do, meaning thereby that the theory of Karuna gave them a blank charter for committing all kinds of heinous offences and violating all laws, human and divine. "As for those world-saviours who have originated the Bodhi mind and are established in Sambodhi, there is nothing that they are prohibited from doing," was a popular verse among the Vajrayanists, a set of the Maha-

yana. "Those actions for which mortals rot in hell for hundreds of years—by those identical actions the Yogi is liberated," was another favourite slogan of theirs. True to the conviction echoed in these verses, the Mahayana, especially in its Tantric form, produced veritable demons of lust and greed, and the work of world redemption ended in the promotion of sexual promiscuity, participation in the love-intrigues of degenerate courts, the cultivation of occult powers, the performance of the six cruel acts and a host of such nefarious activities that became the favourite occupation of Buddhists in later times. All this may be traced to the bifurcation of the ideals of the Arhat and the Bodhisattva.

In the spirit and history of Buddhism is a great lesson for modern humanity. Spiritual life is not merely working out of a programme of social upliftment, as many modern minds think. Nor is it pure self-absorption and a quest after self-salvation. Like a tree it has got its root in the mud and mire of society, but its branches and leaves are spread in the transcendence and illumination of God. To disconnect it with its social environment is as disastrous as it is to shut it off from illumination born of insight. Only when both these conditions are fulfilled does it produce a luxuriant foliage and plentiful fruitage of ideal characters. The Buddha's message of spiritual dynamism is nothing if not this.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

By A Disciple

[Sri Saradamani Devi, otherwise known as the Holy Mother, was the consort of Sri Ramakrishna. She was both wife and nun at the same time. Though possessed of great spiritual attainments and respected and worshipped like a goddess by the devotees of the Master, she was always simple and unsophisticated in her life and way of thought. In these reminiscences of a great woman of modern India, the reader will get intimate glimpses of a glorious type of womanhood through the little acts and simple talks of every-day life.]

IN 1913, during the holiday of the Janmastami we, five brother disciples, went to Jayrambati. One of us took his young son along with him. We reached the Math at Koalpara in the evening. As we had only a few days of vacation, we did not like to spend the night at that Math. We set out for Jayrambati. Before we reached our destination, we were overtaken by a heavy rain. The night was pitch black. The road was filled with water and mud, and only with great difficulty we reached the village. As it was late at night we did not inform the Mother of our arrival. Next morning we went to see her, and told her of the inclement weather of the previous night. The Mother said, in a tone of reprimand, "Sri Ramakrishna has protected you. It was a dark night; there were snakes around. It hurts me to see you face such danger. One should not be obstinate."

Disciple: Mother, we were extremely eager to see you. We have only a few days of vacation, therefore we had to hurry up.

Mother: It is quite natural for you to do so, but it is painful for me.

Sister Sudhira, the late headmistress of the Nivedita Girl School, was then at Jayrambati. That day, at noon-time, the Mother sent for me and said "Sudhira will accompany you to the

railway station at Vishnupur. Be extremely careful on the way. Keep her carriage between your two carriages. You are all my people. I look upon you as my children."

Disciple: Yes, Mother. We shall take her with us and do exactly as you have asked us.

At supper-time, the Mother sat near us, and we began to talk about various things. Referring to the initiation of the young boy in our party, the Mother said, "He is quite young now. It is too early for him to get initiation. The boy is a devotee. May he live long. May he serve other devotees." The Mother asked me to help the boy with his food. In the course of our conversation I asked the Mother, "I eat everywhere. Is it bad for me?"

Mother: Sri Ramakrishna insisted the devotees not eating the food of the Sraddha ceremony. That is an obstacle to devotion. Through every work, no doubt, we worship God alone; but still he forbade the devotees to eat that food.

Disciple: What shall we do if it happens to be the ceremony of our relatives?

Mother: Well, how can you avoid that?

Next afternoon at about two o'clock, we went to see the Mother. She was seated on the floor. A few

days before there had been a terrible flood of the river Damodar. The Mother asked, "Are people suffering too much on account of the flood?"

I narrated to the Mother what we had heard about it from the newspaper report and other sources. She listened to everything attentively, and said with great compassion, "My child, do good to the world." At these words of the Mother, I prayed mentally for the privilege of serving God in the form of humanity; and as I was about to take leave of her, I heard her muttering to herself, "Money, money, money." I shuddered at these words. Perhaps she had noticed my emotion and therefore spoke as she did. She looked at me and said, "Yes, child, we want also money. Look at my brother; he is always anxious to get money."

On the 24th of December in the year 1915, I went with my wife to the Udbodhan office to visit the Mother. My wife carried some sweets in her hand. Golap-Ma thought that she would offer them later on, and was about to keep them elsewhere when the Mother said to her, "Please offer the sweets, which my daughter has brought, to Sri Ramakrishna right now. She will gain some spiritual benefit from this." Next morning my wife went to Bhagbazar to see the Holy Mother and returned home in the evening. She said to me, "To-day the Mother was abundantly gracious to me. I will remember this joy all my life. At about ten o'clock in the morning she sat on the floor with some puffed rice and fried gram on the skirt of her cloth. She was eating one or two grains, while she handed them to me in large quantities. I have enjoyed many delicious foods in my life, but the joy of eating

this insignificant puffed rice with her was unparalleled. At noon-time she asked me to massage her feet, and also to air her bed. She has blessed me by accepting these little services from me. In the course of our conversation I said to the Mother, 'Mother, there is great suffering all over the country on account of this terrible war. The price of food and clothing has gone so high.' The Mother said, 'Still people cannot get over their foolishness.' I asked her if this war would do any good to our country. The Mother said in reply, 'Every incarnation of God is followed by such an upheaval. You will see that many such things will happen in future.'"

That evening, when we went to see the Holy Mother, she referred to our going to Jayrambati in that inclement weather, during the Janmastami vacation, and said again in a tone of reprimand, "One must not go anywhere in such an obstinate mood." I said, "No, Mother, I will not go any more." The Mother thought that perhaps I intended not to visit her again at her village. She said at once, "No, you must come there. But, my child, if a thorn pricks the sole of your foot, I feel the pain of a spear in my heart." The Mother said to my wife, "Dear daughter, please restrain his obstinacy."

In the year 1917, during the Durga Puja holiday, I went to the Udbodhan office with a brother disciple, to visit the Holy Mother. We took with us two pieces of cloth for her. We placed the cloth at her feet, and bowed down. The Mother blessed us and said, "Your pecuniary condition is not good. Why should you bring these cloths?" We were a little hurt at

this remark and said, "Mother, you have many wealthy children. They can give you costly cloths. We are poor, and have brought coarse things for you. Please accept these and fulfil our desire." The Mother said with great tenderness, "My children, these are as valuable to me as any silk cloth." She was suffering from a tooth-ache at that time. Referring

to it she said to us, "Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'One who has not experienced a tooth-ache cannot understand how painful it is.'"

In the summer of 1919, I went to Jayrambati and asked the Mother, "Does Sri Ramakrishna listen to our prayer?" The Mother said in an excited voice, "If he be real, he must listen to your prayer."

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL IN DIVINE CREATION

By Prof. Akshayakumar Banerjia, M.A.

[Mr. Banerjia is the Professor of Philosophy in Anandamohan College, Mymensingh, Bengal. He tackles in this article the most vexed question in the philosophy of religion, namely, the problem of evil in a divinely constituted world-order. It is a question that has engaged the attention of the best thinkers from the very dawn of religious and philosophical thought but being one of those ultimate questions relating to the very foundations of life, it has never received a solution that will satisfy the intellect unamenable to the influence of faith. Nevertheless Prof. Banerjia's re-statement of the problem and the various solutions of it from different points of view together with his own suggestions for overcoming the difficulty will be found highly stimulating and instructive. The second part containing the writer's own solution of the problem will appear in the next issue.]

CONTEMPLATION upon the wonderful order and adjustment experienced in all the departments of nature has led the religiously-inclined thinkers of all ages and countries to the inevitable conclusion that the world is created and sustained by the unlimited power of thought and will of one infinite, eternal, self-conscious, self-determined, self-existent Personality; and the testimony of our conscience, the possibility of the realisation of moral perfection in this world, the apprehension of a moral causation determining the courses, not only of the human but even of the physical events, have supplied them with a rational ground for regarding Him as a perfect moral Being,—for attributing to Him the moral qualities of justice, goodness, holiness, benevolence and mercy in perfection. This reli-

gious conception of the Universe has been echoed and re-echoed by the best minds of all races and communities. The Creator, Preserver and Governor of the phenomenal universe has been described by many as Absolute Love and by others as Absolute Bliss. This universe of bewildering diversities and complexities has been regarded as the product of His free act of self-enjoyment—His *Leela*. There is nothing which can escape His notice, nothing which can happen without His approval, nothing which is not the expression of His thought and will. He has created the world of finite spiritual and material beings from Himself, and all that actually exist or can possibly exist anywhere at any time in the universe must be looked upon as the expressions of His perfectly good and beautiful, perfect-

ly loving and merciful, perfectly wise and blissful, nature.

With all our reverence for the religious scriptures and the preachers of this beautiful conception of God and His universe, we are bewildered when we look at the other side of the picture, which presents itself to our experience, whether we will or not. When we direct our attention to the multitude of defects and disorders which are present side by side with the beauties and harmonies in the very constitution of phenomenal nature, when we think of the struggle for existence and the sufferings and agonies in the animal world, when we contemplate the indomitable passions and propensities which vitiate human nature and forcibly lead men astray from their cherished ideals, when we experience the oppressions of the weak by the strong, the trampling down of goodness by brute force, the apparent triumphs of vice over virtue,—the question automatically arises in our mind, can such a world be expected from a Supreme Person, who is perfectly good, loving, beautiful and blissful, and at the same time omnipotent and omniscient? How can these natural and moral evils, prevalent in all the departments of the world of our experience, be compatible with the character and power attributed to its creator and governor by the religious philosophers?

The problem assumes a gigantic and terrific form, when we actually witness such natural phenomena as devastated recently a large territory of Bihar and Nepal. Many towns and cities, which had developed in wealth, beauty and sublimity through the co-operation of man and nature in course of several centuries, were reduced to vast deserts and horrible

graveyards in the twinkling of an eye. Many flourishing villages associated with the memories of generations of men disappeared altogether under sand and water. Innumerable men, women and children, who had been dreaming of sweet and blissful future without the shadow of an idea that anything untoward might happen, were crushed to the most inconceivably painful death. Perhaps Nature bore an unsatisfied grudge against those who survived. She therefore sent cold waves and rains to torture those wretched human creatures, with bruised limbs and broken hearts, without food, clothing and shelter. The cries of agony and misfortune of the dumb creatures, possessing the feelings of pain and pleasure equally with men, were no less heart-rending. Can such phenomena be designed deliberately by a good and loving and wise Father?

Can we console our hearts by supposing that such calamities are rare on earth? Our experience gives the lie to such supposition. Earthquakes and volcanoes, storms, cyclones, and tornadoes, floods and droughts,—are not they found to disturb the harmony of the world's system and become sources of incalculable miseries to men and animals every now and then? Forces of nature appear to be always fighting with one another and creating havoc in the different parts of the universe. The elements do not seem to be disposed in the most advantageous manner. Orders and harmonies are being always disturbed. Many regions are being brought into existence only to be destroyed on the next occasion. There are many parts of the world, which are apparently sheer wastes in the creation. The opera-

tions of the forces and the distributions of matter do not seem to have any definite plan or any foreseen end. In the organic nature we find in the bodies of living beings some organs which do not appear to serve any useful purpose, and many important organs in the very constitution of which there are essential defects. Moreover, there are numerous abortions and monsters, which imply failures in the achievement of desirable purposes. Pain and struggle and mutual destruction are associated with the birth and growth of all living creatures. Are these indications of the infinite wisdom and power of a perfectly good and benevolent Creator?

When we reflect upon the world of sentient creatures including men and all species of beasts, birds and insects, we find that it is a scene of hunger and thirst, violence and agony, terror and fear, disease and death, privations and bereavements, wars and destructions. No man, however, powerful, majestic and glorified, however beautiful, tender and attractive, is free from pain and suffering, free from the cruelties of nature. Every limb, every sense-organ, every faculty of men and animals are so constituted as to become in certain circumstances sources of trouble and misery. All sentient beings in general appear to be so created that they cannot live and grow without struggling with, inflicting pain upon and killing one another. They are born with pains to themselves and to their parents. They grow through pains of wants and appetites and incessant struggles against various hostile forces. There are audible or inaudible cries of agony everywhere in land and sea and air. It is with agonies that their life

begins and it is with agonies that it comes to an end. Can this be the dispensation of an infinitely wise, merciful and able Creator?

In addition to these miserable conditions prevailing in inorganic, organic and sentient nature, we notice the moral evils arising out of the so-called abuse of the apparent freedom bestowed on the rational beings of the world. Along with this apparent freedom of will, such a variety of powerful passions and propensities are found inherent in human nature, that most men cannot but succumb to them and be compelled to do what their reason does not approve. The demands of sensuous life are in many cases so predominant as to turn reason and conscience into their slaves, and they are not unoften of such a nature as not to be satisfied without transgression of what reason recognises as moral laws. Thus there is an eternal conflict between the moral and the sensuous nature of man, and it is a source of agony to him.

The conditions of the world also do not appear to be favourable for the development of virtuous life. Virtue is not infrequently found to be rewarded with sufferings and indignities, and vice with honour and prosperity. History supplies ample illustrations to show that vice triumphs over virtue, that races superior in brute force domineer over, oppress and sometimes wipe out of existence races superior in moral and spiritual culture. In what is called "the state of nature" individuals are supposed to have been 'wolves' to one another, while in what is now called 'the civilised state' every nation is a wolf to every other nation. The stronger—whether individuals or communities or nations—are always seeking for an

opportunity to devour the weaker, and the weaker are waiting for opportunities to retaliate. Intelligence seems to have been given to man only to increase and intensify the sufferings of humanity and the animal creation. The havoc caused by the earthquakes, cyclones, epidemics, scarcities and other natural evils, sometimes appear to dwindle into insignificance in comparison with those caused by the great wars, which are not often created by the vagaries, vanities or stupidities of the few men who control the administrative machineries of different nations and whom people in their foolishness and helplessness worship as statesmen. Reason, with its grand discoveries and inventions, is found to serve like a slave girl the evil propensities of the powerful and unscrupulous men and created new fields of misery. If this be human nature and human destiny, are we justified in maintaining that the Author of this nature and the Ruler of this destiny is a supremely benevolent, perfectly rational and infinitely powerful Divine Being?

Human reason finds itself in a very awkward situation from which it sees no way of escape. The inner demand of the moral and spiritual nature of the self impels reason from within to believe in the existence of an infinite, eternal, perfect, self-existent, moral and spiritual Personality creating and governing this finite, transitory, imperfect, phenomenal world of experience; and this urge determines the outlook of reason so strongly that even the most uncompromising sceptic cannot but admit that 'a purpose, an intention, a design strikes everywhere even the most careless and the most stupid thinker' and that 'no man can be so hardened in absurd

systems as at all times to reject it.' On the other hand, when reason studies with open eyes the actual facts of the sense-experience, it is so overwhelmed by the natural and moral imperfections of the phenomenal world—by the natural catastrophes, the sufferings and agonies in the animal creation, the vices and inequities in the human society,—that it fails to reconcile these with the perfection and omnipotence of the Divine Creator. Various attempts have been made and are still being made for finding out some way of reconciliation, because so long as this is not found out reason feels a painful inconsistency within itself and gets no peace.

It has been maintained that the amount of evil is relatively insignificant in comparison with the amount of good in the universe. But who can ever measure the amounts of good and evil in the universe to prepare a satisfactory balance sheet? Further, the estimation of phenomena as good and evil depends so much upon our subjective point of view, that an objective standard of measurement is scarcely available. The same conditions and the same forces of nature may be sources of happiness to some and misery to others, and to the same creatures they may be desirable from one point of view and undesirable from another. Most men have got this personal experience that many things which appeared to them as evil and ugly at one stage of their mental development were found to be of inestimable value when they learnt to take a deeper and more comprehensive views; and the experience of a contrary character is equally common. Many elements in nature which were regarded previously as altogether evil are being discovered to

be sources of immense good with the progress of knowledge. Newer and newer sources of evil also are being discovered and invented. But whether good or evil predominates in the world cannot be known by means of any mathematical calculation from the materials within our experience.

Even if it be admitted that good preponderates over evil, the problem is not solved. Why should evil exist at all in a world created and governed by an omnipotent, omniscient and morally perfect God? Either He did not intend to create a perfectly good world, or He had not the power or wisdom to carry out His good purpose; that is to say, either He is not perfectly good or He is not infinitely powerful and wise. Such considerations led many thinkers to the conception of a *Finite God*. But in what respect He is finite,—in respect of morality or in respect of power and wisdom—is a matter of controversy among them.

Some classes of religious thinkers have maintained that the infinite goodness of God is beyond question, but in the determination of the characters of phenomena, His perfectly benevolent intentions are resisted and sometimes apparently baffled by another Power, called *Satan* or *Ahriman* or *Mara*; in the long run, however, the latter is defeated and the ideal of goodness is realised. This justification of the goodness of God does not seem to be quite satisfactory. If the Power of Evil is not His own creation, He is not the sole creator of the universe, and if He has created that Power also out of Himself, He cannot be acquitted of responsibility for the evils in the world.

Others, again, hold that to be finite and at the same time to be without

imperfections—without any moral or natural evil associated with it—involve a self-contradiction. We have got the best of all possible finite worlds. The imperfections are not in excess of what must necessarily exist in a world of finite beings. No body has ever been able to suggest any better scheme. The imperfections in the finite created objects do not, however, necessarily imply any imperfection in the creation. We might say that if God were essentially perfect in all respects, He should not have thought of creating any phenomenal world at all. But that is a different question, into which we have no right to enter here. If on some independent reasonable grounds we are led to conclude that this unitary system of the phenomenal world with its order and harmony and self-evolving, finite, moral and spiritual beings is produced by one infinite and perfect moral and spiritual Being, the presence of apparent imperfections,—natural and moral evils—in this world cannot prove that its cause also must be finite and imperfect.

Such special pleading in justification of the goodness and benevolence of the omnipotent and omniscient Author of the universe does not, however, appear convincing to many rationalist thinkers. Was creation a free act on His part or not? If not, He must be under some bond of necessity and cannot be regarded as a perfectly self-determined and self-realised spiritual Personality, nor the ultimate ground and cause of the universe. This would mean that He is not a perfect God. If He was free in His act of creation, did He not know that the creation of

a phenomenal world of finite moral and material beings would necessarily involve such positive miseries and catastrophes, vices and inequities? If not, He was not Omniscient. If He did, why did He exercise His freedom in creating and preserving such a world at all? If it was not possible to create a world of virtue and happiness, unalloyed goodness and beauty, He might not will to create at all and might have eternally enjoyed the bliss of perfection in His own self.

(To be continued.)

THE PARABLES OF BUDDHA

By Swami Vividishananda

[The Swami is the leader of the Vedanta Society, Washington, U.S.A. The following parables of the Buddha, adapted from The Gospel of Buddha by Paul Carus, will be read with interest on the occasion of his birth anniversary.]

BUDDHA, the Enlightened One, was the light of Asia and of the world. His life and teachings are a perennial source of inspiration and edification. To study them is like opening a perfume box and being enthralled by the sweet odours coming out of it.

The truth he lived and taught is attractive in the beginning, glorious in the middle and sublime in the end. It is excellent through and through, in spirit as well as in letter. But the masses could not very well understand and assimilate it because of its deep philosophy. So Buddha, full of love and consideration for the lowest of the low, came down to their level, adapting his thought to their thought and speaking their language. They were like unto his own children, and as children love parables he taught them in parables, illustrating great moral and spiritual principles otherwise hard to grasp, even as the other Enlightened Ones did before.

The parables of Buddha are simple, drawn from common life, but direct, appealing and meaningful. We take at random and present here a few of

these parables out of the many in order to show their beauty and simplicity and not to expound Buddha's philosophy systematically.

In days gone by there lived a well-to-do householder who owned a large but old mansion. It was so old that it looked as if it would come down any moment. Its rafters were worm-eaten, its pillars weak and rotten, its roof dry and combustible. And one day it so happened that the mansion caught fire to the dismay and consternation of the householder. Running outdoors he realised that his own dear children, ignorant of the danger, were playing and jumping around in the house which was ablaze.

Panick-stricken and distracted, he calmed himself and started thinking. To warn them of the danger from outside, he thought, would be useless. To run in and catch and carry them out would make the situation worse. For, some he might be able to get hold of while the rest would perish in the flames. Suddenly an idea flashed across his mind. "My children love toys", he thought, "If I promise them toys of exceptional beauty, they will listen to me."

Then he shouted aloud, "Children, come out and see what a feast of toys your father has for you. You have not seen their like before. Hurry, before it is too late!"

The word toy acted like magic, and lo and behold! the children ran in no time out of the blazing ruins. The father, beside himself with joy, took them in his arms and kissed them and rewarded them later on with multicoloured playthings of rare workmanship and beauty. The children in their turn understood the good intention of their father and appreciated the wisdom which was instrumental in saving their lives.

Buddha, likewise, kind and wise, knows that the children of the world love the tinsel of sense-pleasure. In order to win them over to righteous living, which is grounded in truth, he tells them of the bliss of Nirvana and saves them from the round of birth and death and its attendant evils.

We pass on to the next parable:

Once upon a time there lived a man, born blind, who moved in his own world without knowing anything of the visible universe of light, colour and form, so beautiful and grand. Naturally, he would not believe his friends who talked to him of the sun, moon and stars, of rivers, mountains and waterfalls, and of flowers and other attractive things the world possesses. To him they were illusions and he stubbornly clung to his idea in spite of the remonstrances of people.

A physician of unusual experience and wisdom fortunately dropped in and diagnosed the disease. He mixed four simples together and prepared a medicine which, administered at the right time and in the right dose, brought sight to the man born blind.

Buddha is the physician and the four simples are the four Noble Truths, namely, sorrow, sorrow's cause, sorrow's cessation and the way.

Now follows the third parable:

During the time when Buddha sojourned in this planet of ours, preaching his gospel, there lived in Sravasti, a man who inherited immense riches from his parents and lived an apparently comfortable life. But in spite of his wealth he knew not what happiness was, for he was suffering from obesity, excessive drowsiness and other annoying ailments.

Fortunately Buddha happened to be there at the time and the man out of desperation came to him and begged for a remedy.

Noticing the luxuries with which the man was surrounded, Buddha put to him this question: "My friend, you really wish to be cured of your ailments? I know their cause." The man expressing his eagerness to be helped, the Blessed One said: "It is luxurious living that is the cause of your disease and corpulency; drowsiness and pain are its symptoms. Exercise self-control when you eat, avoiding rich food. Give up love of sleep and hankering after pleasure. Use discrimination in everything you do and take upon yourself an honest occupation that will exercise your talents and make you useful to your fellow-men."

The man took the words of the Enlightened One seriously, following them to the letter. As a result very soon he recovered the lightness of his body and the health and vigour of youth. As a mark of gratitude he returned to Buddha and prostrating himself before his feet, said: "Master, you have healed my body."

Please do heal my mind by giving me enlightenment."

And Buddha said: "A man of the world nourishes the body at the expense of the soul. One who has better understanding and discrimination rather feeds the soul, enjoying peace himself and giving peace to others."

Next we tell the fourth parable:

When Buddha was living at Rajagriha, practising austerities and struggling hard for the realisation of Truth, it was noised abroad that a holy man had come, whose equal very few had seen.

A simple woman who lived in the neighbourhood, earning her bread by the sweat of her brow, had a calamity. She had a child that was the pupil of her eye. One day as he was playing in the field while the mother was working, he unwittingly caught hold of a snake. The snake bit the innocent child and the venom worked instantaneously, leaving the little thing cold, pale and dead. The disconsolate mother went from place to place carrying her darling on her shoulder, but nobody could bring him back to life. At last she came to Buddha, and narrated her sad tale, begged the Master that the child, the only joy of her life, be revived.

Buddha did not know how to console the aggrieved mother. Full of the milk of human kindness, he was touched, and instead of telling the blunt truth, he adopted an ingenious way and said: "Mother, my heart goes out to you in your bereavement. Your child would live again if you could bring some white mustard seeds—just a handful. But mind, you have to get them from a family which has never known death." Full of hope the poor woman travelled from house to house, begging for the requir-

ed mustard seeds. All, in sympathy, wanted to help her if they could, but nobody could fulfil the condition. Everywhere she got one answer: "Alas! The living are few, but the dead are many. Please do not remind us of our past grief. Where would you find a house that had no death?"

Weary and broken-hearted, the woman sat down on the wayside and began to watch the city lights flicker up and go down till at last there was nothing but darkness. This phenomenon brought to her mind a picture of the fate of man. "The life of man also flickers up and extinguishes. In this valley of destruction nobody can escape death. How selfish am I in my grief to think that I am the only sufferer!"—she thought within herself. It was a great revelation. She forgot her grief and coming to Buddha took refuge in him.

Buddha while accepting her as a disciple said: "The life of every creature is brief and painful. He who is born must die. Death is inevitable. The way out is righteous living and spiritual understanding, which alone can insure peace and rest."

Our last parable:

Buddha was the embodiment of love and goodness. His rule in life was to conquer evil by good and hatred by love, and he taught the same to those who came to him for guidance.

Once upon a time he was talking to a mixed group, and the theme of his talk was something of a similar nature. "If a man unnecessarily hurts you by his thought, word or deed," said Buddha, "be sure that he does not know better. Without taking any offence return to him the protection of your ungrudging love. The more evil comes from him, the more good should go from you. In

the long run, you are the gainer. You get the fragrance of goodness, while the offending party the obnoxious air of evil."

An ignorant man who was present on the occasion wanted to test Buddha's patience and goodness. And he started abusing him mercilessly. Buddha listened without showing any sign of anger or disturbance. The man stopped after a while when Buddha broke the silence by asking him this question: "Son, if a man declines to accept a gift made to him, to whom would it belong?" The man replied: "It would be his who offered it."

"My son," Buddha said, "You have abused me. I have the liberty to accept or reject. Suppose I ask you to keep it yourself. Who will suffer? As the echo accompanies the

sound, and the shadow the substance, so misery follows the evil-doer."

The abuser seemed to be impressed and the Blessed One continued: "A man looking up and spitting at heavens is defiled by his own spittle. A man flinging dust at another when the wind is contrary is bespattered by his own dust. Likewise a slanderer or an evil-doer."

Naturally ashamed of his own conduct, the abuser begged the Master's pardon and took refuge at his feet.

The parables we narrated speak for themselves. The teachings of great men, although conveyed in different languages are the same in essence. They are universal and eternal. One cannot limit them by space or time, or monopolise them.

HINDU CONTRIBUTION TO MUSLIM ARTS AND SCIENCES

By Prof. M. A. Shustery

[Mr. Shustery is of Persian nationality, and is the Professor of Persian in an Indian University. The following article from his pen is not a vague generalisation as is often the case with writings on subjects of this type, but a close and detailed study of the cultural contact between India and the Muslim world, especially from the point of view of translations from Sanskrit into Persian and Arabic.]

MUSLIM culture has been affected by Hindus through the following forms of contact: (1) through commerce which existed since time immemorial between India and West Asia; (2) through Muslim scholars who visited India to study the Indian languages and philosophy; (3) through Hindu scholars, travellers and captives, who during the rule of Umayyeds and Abbasides came in contact with Muslims; and (4) through direct contact with Muslims when India was ruled by Arabs, Turks and Moghuls.

The first connection existed long before the appearance of Islam when Arabs of South and South-East Arabia and Persians had regular intercourse with the West India through the Persian Gulf and the Arabian sea. The following were the chief ports that formed the centres of Indo-west-Asian trade: (1) Ublah near modern Basrah; (2) Syraf in Persian Gulf; (3) Qays in Persian Gulf; (4) Deyhal in Sindh; (5) Thana near Bombay, noted for the manufacture of cloth; (6) Khambayat noted for its shoes; (7) Sanbarah

and (8) Jeymur, both in Gujarat ; and (9) several ports on Malabar Coast. Among Indian products, the chief articles of export into Arabia and Persia were the following : Cardamom, sandal wood, cloves, pepper, nutmeg, vitriol, deck, myrobalan, muslin, chints, plantain, coco-nut, drugs, camphor, ginger, musk, etc. The last three have retained their Indian origin in Persian and Arabic languages and have been mentioned in Quran, as Kafur (Indian Karpur), Zanjabil (Indian Zanjabira) and Musk (Indian Mushka).

During the Umayyad rule, Sindh was conquered by Arabs and annexed to the Muslim Empire. A large number of Indians, both men and women, found their way to Damascus, the capital of Muslim Empire, as captives or visitors, and some of them settled down in Syria, Mecca, Madina, Kufa and Basrah. During the Abbasid rule, the capital was transferred from Damascus to Baghdad, which became the great centre of Muslim learning. Scholars from distant countries were invited. Among them, the following were Hindus :

(1) Manka (Manikya or Manick) noted physician and philosopher. He was well acquainted with Persian and Sanskrit and translated the books on poison, written by Shanuk, another Hindu scholar, into Persian. His first visit to Mesopotamia was during the reign of Harun-ur-Rashid, the famous Khalif. Learning the fame of the Khalif, he paid a visit to Baghdad and soon made himself popular and respected in learned society. He cured the Khalif from a disease which could not be successfully treated by the local physicians.

(2) Saleh, son of Bahlah, a great scholar in Ayurvedic sys-

tem of medicine. He became famous when he cured Prince Ibrahim (cousin of the Khalif) who was thought to be dead by other physicians, and was about to be buried. Saleh prevented the burial and treated and cured the apparently dead body. Afterwards he embraced Islam and lived in the high favour of the Court.

(3) Dhan, an Indian physician employed in Barmakiah Hospital of Baghdad. His son became the chief physician of the same hospital and translated a number of books from Sanskrit into Arabic.

(4) Shanak (Chanakya), a physician and philosopher. He was the author of the following, translated into Persian and Arabic : (a) The book of poisons in five discourses. This book was translated and commented upon by several scholars such as Manka, Abu Hatim, Balkhi (who wrote a commentary at the command of Yahya, son of Khalif) and lastly by Abbas, son of Saeed Jauhari ; (b) a book on astrology and astronomy, (c) another on morals, entitled Muntahul-Jawahar ; and (d) a fourth work on veterinary art.

(5) Kan-kah or Kan Kiraya, physician and astronomer, was the author of the following works, which were translated into Arabic : (a) Unnamudar fi A'mar or the Book on Age ; (b) Israr-ul-mawalid or the Secret of Nativities ; (c) Qirantulkabir and Qirantul-saghir or the Great and Small Cycles of the Year ; (d) Ihdasut-Alem vad-daur-e-fil-Qiran or the Beginning of the World and Revolution in conjunction ; (e) Kanash or the Book on Medicine ; and (f) Book on Mesmerism.

The Hindu scholars were divided into two classes—those who could not

write in Arabic and therefore had to be assisted by Muslim translators, and those who had studied Arabic and themselves did the work of translation. Jandar (Yodhara or Godhara), a Hindu scholar, wrote a book named Great Nativities or Mawalid-ul-kabir. Nahak or Nayak, Bazrigar, Bhakkar or Bhaskaracharya (the astrologer), and many others were Hindu scholars and authors who produced works on various branches of philosophy and medicine. Their names are quite Arabicised. Most of them must have been natives of the Punjab and Sindh. Mohommod Zakariyya Razi, the famous Persian author, in his great work entitled "Al-Havi" has mentioned the work of Sirak or Charak, which for the first time was translated from Sanskrit into Persian, and the translation was commented in Arabic by Abdulla, son of Ali.

Among the important Indian works translated into Arabic are these : (1) Surya Siddhanta on astronomy was popular among Muslim scholars, and through them it reached Spain and thence found its way to the interior of Europe. It was divided into four chapters. (2) Khandakhodyaka, also a work on astronomy. (3) Charak (Charaka-samhita) was translated first into Pahlavi and re-translated into Arabic by Abdulla, son of Ali. Charaka was a moralist, philosopher and the court physician to King Kanishka. The work Charaka-samhita consists of eight parts covering the whole field of medical science known in those days. (4) Sandhashan (?) or the Essence of Success, was translated by the son of Pandit 'Dhan' into Arabic. (5) Nidan, an important Indian work on pathology, which continued to be an accepted

authority by all later authors on the subject, contained diagnosis and treatment of all diseases known at that time. (6) Pancha Tantra and Hitopadesha were retranslated from Pahlavi into Arabic by Ibn-e-muqaffa.

There are a large number of other Hindu works whose Indian titles are not known, such as, a work on drugs and herbs translated by Pandit Manka into Arabic ; on physiological effect of Indian medicines ; on female diseases, whose original author was an Indian lady ; two books on medicine by Pandit Navkashnal ; a book on pregnancy and female diseases ; a short treatise on drugs and herbs ; on intoxicants ; on causes of various known diseases, their treatment and names of drugs and herbs by one Raja Kurash ; on beverages by Pandit Itri ; a book named 'Satya' by Pandit Saobarina ; a book on palmistry and also one on omens ; a work entitled Sarpa Vidya (Arabic Optudia) by Pandit Roi on poisons of snakes ; another work on the same subject ; a work on food and poisons translated into Persian and re-translated into Arabic by order of Khaled-ul-Barmaki ; Nafir, the Arabic translation of a Sanskrit work on music ; and Arabic translations of parts of Mahabharata by Saleh, son of Shoaib. Pandit Bajhar or Bhakkar translated a number of Sanskrit works on politics, art of war and diplomacy into Arabic. There were Indian works on sword and its use, theories of State, Indian languages, rhetoric and so forth, which were translated into Arabic. Two works entitled the Wiles of Women by Raja Kosh and Buddhasattva which in Arabic came to be known as Buzasef were popular books among Muslims.

While the majority of Greek works were translated or re-translated from Syriac and Pahlavi into Arabic by Syrian Christians, works in Sanskrit were translated direct from the said language or retranslated from Pahlavi by Indian and Iranian scholars. The Abbasid Khalifs on the one hand invited Hindu scholars to their capital and on the other hand despatched Muslim students to India for the work of research. Among them were Abu-mansur-al-Muvaffaq, and Mohammed, son of Ismail Tanuki (9th century), a scholar in astronomy and astrology, who visited India to collect further information on the said subject.

The name of Susruta was known to Muslims in the 9th and 10th centuries as a great physician. Susruta and Charaka were translated into Persian and Arabic as early as 800 A.D. During the middle ages down to the 17th century Arabian medical science remained authoritative among European physicians and through Arabic works Indian medical writers also became known to the West. Besides Surya-Siddhanta, other Indian works on astronomy and astrology were also translated, and most probably the famous Hindu writers on the said subject, such as Varahamihira, Srishena, Aryabhatta, Brahmagupta and others were known to Muslim scholars. With the conquest of Sindh and the Punjab by Muslims, particularly after the repeated invasions of Sultan Mohammed, the Muslims came in direct and close contact with Indians, and by influencing each other the work of amalgamation of Hindu-Muslim culture progressed during the rule of the Khiljis, Tughluqs and Lodhis. Under Sikan-dar Shah, for the first time, Hindus

began to study Persian, which continued and reached its perfection during the rule of the Moghuls, when Persian was about to become the *lingua franca* of India. Among the famous Muslim scholars in Indian literature and philosophy is Abu Raihan-al-biruni, who studied Sanskrit and the vernaculars spoken in the Punjab. Biruni soon made himself known to Hindu learned men who gave him the honourable title of Vidya-sagar. His books contain valuable information on Indian philosophy, history, customs, etc.

The Indian works so far translated into Arabic were on medicine, astronomy, astrology, music, mathematics, fiction, moral stories and ethics but under Muslim rulers of India, from the time of Biruni, philosophy, mythology, history, religion and other subjects were also included among the translations. Amir Khusruc, the famous poet, who lived under the Slaves, Khiljis and Tughluqs, was one of the best scholars in Indian music. He knew Hindi as spoken in his time so well that he could compose verses in that language. Among the Slave rulers, Ghiasuddin Balbun and Nasar-ud-din Mohammed were patrons of learning. Feruz Shah found a large collection of Sanskrit books in Nagarkot and ordered some of them to be translated into Persian. Lodhi kings had Indianised themselves by adopting Indian language and customs. The example of the Lodhis was followed by the Moghuls, particularly by Akbar and his descendants. Emperor Akbar married a Rajput princess and his son Jehangir was half Rajput, who in his turn also married a Rajput princess, and his son Shah-c-Jehan was more a Rajput than a Moghul. Thus a Turko-Indian dynasty was

established in India. Pandits were asked to recite or read the Mahabharata, Ramayana and other legendary stories of India to the Emperors and princes. When the Muslim story narrators found that their royal masters were too much absorbed in Hindu fiction, they too wrote or narrated similar stories, in which the heroes are Muslims. Some of them such as Amir Hamza (uncle of the Prophet) are historical persons but their deeds are imaginary. These stories are published in huge volumes. They contain heroic deeds of Muslim princes and generals possessing extraordinary strength. They can defeat any number of men, Jinnies and Ifrits living on Mount Qaf. They subjugate fairies and marry them. They fight with infidels and always defeat them, break their idols and destroy all monuments of idolatry and magic. Magicians can perform wonders but even they are defeated and killed by Muslim heroes. One can detect in these books a great mixture of Indo-Iranian ancient myths. The spirit of the age is well represented in these writings. The stories narrated to the Moghul princes of Delhi and Nawabs of Lucknow expose to what extent Muslim aristocracy had degenerated during the 18th and 19th centuries A.D. Such are the voluminous and apparently absurd books entitled Bustan-e-khiyal and Amir Hamza.

Yogis and Sanyasis along with Fakirs and Pirs were held in respect and enjoyed private conversation with Moghul Emperors, ministers and nobles. Prince Dara Shukoh, son of Shah Jehan, was confident of gaining the throne because his "Guru" named "Sarnad" had predicted it. Unfortunately Dara Shukoh was defeated and slain by his brother

Aurangzeb who took revenge on Sarnad by causing him to be executed.

Among the celebrated writers of the Moghul period were the following : (1) Abul Fazl, minister of Akbar whose knowledge of Sanskrit and Indian philosophy was deep, and his work Ain-e-Akbari gives valuable information on Indian customs and history. (2) Faizi, elder brother of Abul Fazl, was a Sanskrit scholar. He versified the story of Nala-Damayanti into Persian. (3) Naqib Khan, assisted by Hindu Pandits, translated the Mahabharata into Persian. (4) Badayuni (Abdul Qadir) joined Naqib Khan in the work of translating Sanskrit works into Persian. (5) Haji Mohammad Sultan and (6) Mulla Shiri also translated the Mahabharata and named it "Razim Nama." (7) Girdhar Das, translated the Ramayana (for the second time) in 1626.

Prince Dara Shukoh was an enthusiastic student of Hindu philosophy. In 1657, assisted by a Pandit, he completed the translation of the Upanishads and named it Sir-rul-israr or Sir-ul-akbar, which means, Secret of the Secrets or the Great Secret. He also caused the translation of the Bhagavat Gita and Yoga Vasista. His other works are : (1) Dialogue between him and an ascetic named Baba Lal Das ; (2) Safinat-ul-ouliya and (3) Majma-ul-Bahrain, a comparative study of Vedantism and Sufism, completed in 1654.

While Muslims were engaged in the study of Hindu languages, arts and sciences, Hindu also seriously took up the study of Persian, which they continued even after the fall of the Moghuls and rise of the British Em-

pire. Among these Hindu writers in Persian, we have got the works of four poets and fourteen historians. From among these, the Persian poems of Munshi Chandra Bhan Brahman were incorporated by Saib, the great Persian poet, in his selections from celebrated Persian compositions. There were also several Hindu writers on literature, mathematics, fiction and other miscellaneous subjects.

The number of Hindu poets and authors in Urdu is so great that to mention their names is beyond the scope of this article. At least about seventeen Hindus have established reputation as either poets or prose

writers. Among Indian patriots and political leaders, Pandit Motilal Nehru and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru are noted for their knowledge of Urdu and Persian literature.

It has also to be mentioned that while Muslims were influenced by Hindu culture, Hindu culture in its turn has been influenced by Muslim civilisation. All Indian vernaculars and Sanskrit itself contains borrowed Persian, Arabic and Turkish words. Among those sections of Hindus who came in direct contact with Muslims, there have resulted modifications even in their religious and philosophical outlook.

A VEDANTIST OF ANCIENT CHINA

By Swami Jagadiswarananda.

[Swami Jagadiswarananda gives in the following article an account of the career and teachings of a great Taoist teacher of China named Chuang-tzu. He is called a Vedantist because of the striking resemblance of his ideal in life with the Vedantic view of life.]

CHUANG-TZU was a great Chinese sage who lived about two and a half centuries after Lao-tze, the first prophet and teacher of the ancient and indigenous religion of China known as Taoism. If Lao-tze was the founder of this cult, Chuang-tzu was the person responsible for popularising it among the masses and classes of China. He was to Lao-tze what St. Paul was to Christ.

The teachings of Taoism have much in common with the ideas of the Upanishads, and there are competent critics like Father P. L. Weiger who opine that it is only an adaptation of Vedantic teachings to the religious needs of China. While this resemblance is quite evident even in the writings of Lao-tze, who according to Chinese legends had visited India by

the overland route, it becomes still more patent in the thought of Chuang-tzu. Whether this is due to direct Indian influence or mere coincidence of thought is difficult for us to decide. Whatever be the reason, from the point of view of philosophical affinity, it will be no exaggeration to style Chuang-tzu as a Vedantist of China.

As far as his worldly position was concerned, Chuang-tzu was only a petty official in a small provincial town. But his philosophical genius brought him into the lime-light of the public. He had to fight with the leading scholars of the age to defend and disseminate his doctrines. Due to lack of worldly ambition he could not gain promotion in his career, and had to give up his job ere long. A

born philosopher, Chuang-tzu was "bold in fancy yet retiring by disposition, prone to melancholy yet full of eager enthusiasm." As Spinoza refused to accept a professorship of philosophy in the Heedelberg University even when requested by a German prince and remained content with his humble profession of pebble-grinding, so this Chinese philosopher too refused to become the Prime Minister of the State of Chu, in spite of the best persuasions of the Prince of that State through his chief officials.

There is an interesting anecdote about this refusal of his. A deputation consisting of the State officials of Chu waited on Chuang-tzu while he was fishing in the Pu river. Chuang-tzu went on with his work, and without turning his head said, "I have heard that in Chu State there is a sacred tortoise which has been dead now some three thousand years and that the Prince keeps this tortoise carefully enclosed in a chest on the altar of his ancestral temple. Now would this tortoise rather be dead and have its remains venerated, or be alive and wagging its tail in the mud?" When the officials affirmed the latter, Chuang-tzu cried, "Be gone! I too will wag my tail in the mud!"¹ Chuang-tzu did not seek any worldly advancement, for he was rich in the things of the spirit. In the words of the poet, he had nothing of this earth, yet he had everything of Heaven.

Another anecdote confirms that his mind was always dominated by the idea of holiness and renunciation. Once Chuang-tzu went to visit his

¹ This and the following personal anecdotes of Chuang-tzu are gleaned from "Musings of a Chinese Mystic" published in The Wisdom of the East Series, London.

friend, Hui-tzu, the Prime Minister of the Liang State. It was falsely rumoured that Chuang-tzu had gone to take the place of his friend. Hui-tzu got afraid and wanted to see him in order to know the truth of the rumour. After many days' search, Hui-tzu met his friend, and Chuang-tzu thereupon said to him, "In the South there is a bird, a kind of phoenix. Do you know anything about it? It started from the South sea to fly to the north sea. It would eat nothing but the fruit of the bamboo, drink nothing but the purest spring water, and would not alight anywhere except on the sacred tree. An owl which had got the rotten carcass of a rat looked up as the phoenix flew by, and screeched. Are you not screeching at me, like the owl, over the kingdom of Liang?"

Chuang-tzu believed like the Vedantists of India in the immortality of the soul. He knew from his own spiritual experiences that the soul is eternal and immortal, and that death is also a passing phase in its eternal existence. Death destroys only the physical body but cannot do anything to the soul. Hence the bereavement of his wife could not sadden his heart at all. His intimate friend, Hui-tzu, who went to condole and console him, found the widower sitting on the ground with his legs spread out at right angles, and singing and drumming on a bowl. At this Hui-tzu exclaimed in surprise and said that it was bad enough for Chuang-tzu not to shed a drop of tear over the corpse of his life-long companion but that he was surely going too far to drum on a bowl and sing. "Not at all," replied Chuang-tzu, "when my wife passed away I could not for the time help being affected by her death.

Soon, however, I remembered that she had existed before birth in an unconditioned condition, and that after death she will continue to exist in another state. I therefore refrained from sorrowing. For, to die means to pass from one phase to another like the sequence of spring, summer, autumn and winter. And while she is thus lying asleep in Eternity, for me to go about weeping and wailing would be to proclaim myself ignorant of this Truth I have realised. Hence I do not mourn."

Chuang-tzu was blessed with the cosmic consciousness, and all his life, his mind was rooted in it. This fact is corroborated by the following anecdote, quite reminiscent of realised Vedantists. When Chuang-tzu was in his death-bed, his dear disciples expressed a desire to give him a splendid funeral. But Chuang-tzu said: "With heaven and earth as my coffin and shell, with the sun, moon and stars as my burial regalia, and with all creation to escort me to the grave—are not my funeral paraphernalia ready at hand?" "We fear," replied the disciples, "lest the carrion-kite should eat the body of our master." To this Chuang-tzu said: "Above ground I shall be food for kites; below I shall be food for mole-crickets and ants. Why rob one to feed the other?" This anecdote without a shade of doubt proves that Chuang-tzu was imbued like the Hindu Rishis with the experience that 'All this is Brahman.'

"The perfect man" in the opinion of this ancient Chinese Philosopher "can transcend the limits of the human and yet not withdraw from the world?" "Perfection consists," says Chuang-tzu, "in the knowledge of the The Great One (Tao), and to attain

this state one must go beyond good and evil and all pairs of opposites." His fast friend and close companion, Hui-tzu used to discuss with him many a problem of life and death. Once Hui-tzu asked him whether there were men who had no passions. Chuang-tzu replied that they certainly were. Hui-tzu argued what it was that made him a man, who was devoid of passions. He replied that Tao gave him expression and Teh gave him form. Why should he not be a man? The questioner reiterated that if he was a man, then how could he be without passions. "What you mean by passions," answered Chuang-tzu, "is not what I mean. By a man without passion I mean one who does not permit good and evil to disturb his internal equilibrium, but rather falls in with whatever happens, as a matter of course, and does not add to the sum of his morality." It is needless to add that Chuang-tzu spoke from his own experience about the state of perfection. That is why his exposition of the eternal verities of life carry conviction into the hearts of men.

About his peaceful old age he sang thus: "Tao gave me toil in manhood, gives me repose in old age and will give me rest in death." "Within my heart no sorrows can abide. I feel the great world's spirit through me thrill. If I depart I cast no look behind; if still alive, I still am free from care. Thus strong in faith I wait and long to be one with the pulsings of Eternity."

The conception of Tao, the pivotal principle in the ancient Chinese philosophy, is almost the same as that of Brahman. This is also evident from a comparison of definitions. "Tao," says Chuang-tzu "is some-

thing beyond material existences. It cannot be conveyed either by words or by silence. In that state which is neither speech nor silence, its transcendental nature may be apprehended. The very name of Tao is only adopted for the sake of convenience." Lao-tze speaks of Tao as having existed before heaven and earth, i.e. as the first Principle. Chuang-tzu calls it the Mystic Moral Principle or Self-luminous Law. We may conclude therefore that Tao² is equivalent to Brahman. Is the Chinese word 'Tao' a corrupted form of the Sanskrit word 'Tat?' Who knows?

To Chuang-tzu the highest form of virtue does not mean the mortification of physical nature or living the life of a hermit, but consists in the contemplation of Tao which can alone destroy attachment to existence and loosen the soul from the transmigratory shackles. He condemns both ritualism and asceticism, and recommends "the fasting of the heart," as conducive to illumination.

Exactly like a Hindu Vedantist Chuang-tzu believes that "every human being has a soul, which is an emanation from the great Impersonal Soul of the Universe. Soul is in its nature immortal and after passing through a series of different states in conditioned being, finally reunites with Divine Essence from which it sprang."

In accepting all human experiences as relative Taoism comes very near the Vedantic conception of Maya. Romain Rolland and Devamata, representing European and American

minds respectively, understand Maya as Relativity. Buddhism also has a doctrine of illusion in the same sense. There is a saying of Lao-tze that the recognition of beauty as such implies the idea of ugliness and the recognition of good, the idea of evil. Chuang-tzu expands this doctrine and insists on the ultimate relativity of all human perceptions. Not only space and time, he asserts, are relative but also every form of sense knowledge that is gained by looking at things only from one point of view. The doctrine of illusion as advocated by Chuang-tzu fulfils his doctrine of Relativity. He says that life is a delusion after all. "While they dream," remarks Chuang-tzu "they do not know that they are dreaming. Some will even interpret the very dream they are dreaming; and when they awake they know that it was a dream. By and by comes the great awakening and then we find out that this life is really a great dream." "Once upon a time I, Chuang-tzu, dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious of following my fancies as a butterfly and was unconscious of my individuality as man. Suddenly I awoke, and there I lay, myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man. Between a man and a butterfly there is necessarily a barrier. The transition is called metempsychosis."³

²For a detailed definition of Tao, see "Tao-Teh-King" published by the Shrine of Wisdom, London. Paul Carus' edition (Open Court Publishing House, Chicago) is also equally good, if not better.

³For the wealth of illustrations which is a noteworthy feature of Chuang-tzu's writings, see his famous work "Nan Hwa King" and other important Taoist Texts published in the "Sacred Books of the East" series, Oxford.

Before we conclude we shall give below some of the pregnant sayings of Chuang-tzu that disclose his profundity of thought and depth of wisdom.

"The perfect man ignores self; the divine man ignores action; the true sage ignores reputation." "If men's passions are deep, their spirituality is shallow." "The pure men of old slept without dreams, and awoke without anxiety. They act without discrimination, breathing deep breaths. For pure men draw breaths from their uttermost depths; the vulgar only from their throats." "The mind of the sage, being in repose, becomes the mirror of the Universe, the speculum of all creation." "Take no heed of time, nor of right and wrong; but passing into the realm of the Infinite, take your final rest therein." "Our life has a limit, but knowledge is without limit." "He who delights in man is himself not a perfect man." "Fishes are born in water. Man is born in Tao. If fishes get ponds to live in, they thrive. If man gets Tao to live in, he may live his life in peace." "What I call perfection of hearing is not hearing others but hearing oneself. What I call perfection of vision is not seeing others but seeing oneself." "A man who knows he is a

fool, is not a great fool." "Alas! the life of man is but a stoppage at an inn." "The best language is that which is not spoken, the best form of action is that which is without deeds." "Let knowledge stop at the unknowable. That is perfection." "Birth is not a beginning; death not an end." "Discard the stimuli of purpose. Free the mind from disturbances. Get rid of entanglements to virtue. Pierce the obstructions to Tao." "Get rid of small wisdom, and great wisdom will shine upon you." "Alas! man's knowledge reaches to the hair on a hair, but not to eternal peace." "The highest reaches of Tao, seem to us darkness and silence. When It holds the soul in Its arms in stillness, even the body becomes pure." "Only the perfect man can live in the world and yet remain withdrawn, can live in accord with mankind and yet remain himself." "The heart of the perfect man is as a mirror; it reflects all things, but holds nothing for itself alone." "He who rests with resignation within himself, unconscious of change or transformation, becomes one with Tao." "There is the way of Heaven; there is the way of man. Action in inaction is the way of Heaven; action with resistance is the way of man."

SWETASWATARA UPANISHAD

By Swami Thyagisananda

CHAPTER II

PREFACE

In the third Mantra as well as the closing verses of the previous chapter, reference has been made to Dhyana or meditation as the best means for realising the Ultimate Principle behind the universe. The present chapter attempts to give a more detailed treatment of the subject of meditation.

The first five verses are taken bodily, with slight variations here and there, from the Samhita portion of the Vedas, and some of them are also cited in the Brahmanas and interpreted in relation to their application to liturgy. The Upanishad, however, makes use of them as relating to Yogic Sadhana, and in its application to Brahma-Vidya. These verses are often taken as authority to show that meditation and self-culture are as old as the Vedas.

युञ्जानः प्रथमं मनस्तत्त्वाय सविता विद्यः ।

अग्नेज्योतिर्निवाप्य पृथिव्या अय्यामरत् ॥

प्रथमं = first मनः = the mind विद्यः = the senses (च—and) तत्त्वाय = with a view to realise the Truth युञ्जानः = harnessing सविता = the Ultimate Principle conceived of as the immanent cause of the evolution of the Universe (Antaryamin) अग्नेः = of the fire ज्योतिः = light निवाप्य = having found out पृथिव्याः = out of the earth अय्यामरत् = brought out.

First harnessing the mind and the senses¹ with a view to realise the Truth², and then having found out the light of the fire³, the evolving Soul⁴ brought itself out of the earth⁵. (1)

Note.—The verse alludes to the preliminary steps in the process of Sadhana.

1. *Harnessing the mind and senses*—This refers to the preliminary process of attaining Chitta-Suddhi by a life of self-control in accordance with the rules of Dharma.

2. *With a view to realise the Truth*—Unless the Sadhaka has the goal always in view, he is apt to follow the rules in a mechanical way unintelligently. He may often be led inadvertently to follow certain rules which are detrimental to his spiritual progress unless he is very careful, being carried away by mere custom and tradition.

3. *The light of the fire*—Fire and light are both symbolic. Fire refers to the ordinary waking intellect conscious of external objects, and light refers to the pure consciousness or Chaitanya. To find out the light of fire is to understand that the pure consciousness is separate from the ordinary consciousness of the intellect. This part of the verse alludes to the capacity to dis-

criminate between truth and untruth, the first of the four qualifications demanded of the spiritual aspirant according to the Advaita system.

4. *The evolving Soul*—The word Savita ordinarily means 'one who brings forth or creates'. It is generally used as a synonym of Surya to mean the sun. The visible sun has no part to play in spiritual practice, and so the word is here used symbolically to denote the Antaryamin or the Ultimate Principle conceived intellectually as the source of all creation and as working constantly and eternally in the hearts of all beings to raise them to higher and higher levels of life, and thereby causing the process of evolution from behind the scene. This inner urge for greater and still greater perfection, which never stops until absolute perfection is attained, is the cause of all evolution. Cosmologically, the Ultimate Principle is thought of as being associated with a power called Maya which belongs to Itself, and of which It is the absolute master. All spiritual practice is thus the result of this natural urge of the involved Brahman to find its natural level of absolute purity and perfection. It will thus be clear what part the Antaryamin plays in spiritual life.

5. *Out of the earth*—The expression is used symbolically to denote matter in general. The allusion here is to the development of the spirit of renunciation which is the second of the four qualifications demanded of the aspirant. 'Brought itself out of the earth' means 'extracted itself out of all attachments to the pleasures of the world.'

The whole verse therefore insists upon the development of the necessary purity of mind (Chitta-Suddhi) as a result of self-control and righteous life, and the acquisition of the necessary discrimination (Viveka) and Vairagya (renunciation) as preliminary steps in spiritual practice (Sadhana). This is in terms of Advaita Sadhana. In terms of Yogic Sadhana the verse might be taken to refer to the preliminary steps of Yama, Niyama and Pratyahara.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

An Indian Savant honoured

The appointment of Sir S. Radhakrishnan as the first Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at Oxford is a memorable event of this year from the point of view of Indian culture. All lovers of India will feel that it is an honour done not only to the Professor personally, but to our country and culture as a whole. But the joy of cultural India on this occasion is not, however, quite unalloyed, seeing that such a recognition of Indian scholar-

ship by the Universities of Great Britain has been long overdue.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan is one of the very few Indians who have gained the ear of the world. Few will agree with him in attributing this to mere luck or to the timeliness of his volumes on Indian philosophy, as he modestly did the other day at an entertainment held in his honour. His hitherto published works amply show that his reputation rests on no such accidental factor but on the solid worth of his many-sided intellectual attain-

ments, his rare literary abilities and his vast erudition in the systems of thought, both ancient and modern, Eastern as well as Western. It is no exaggeration to say that Professor Radhakrishnan has set a new standard and created a new tradition in the exposition of Indian philosophy. The ordinary exponent of Indian philosophy has not yet been able to orientate himself in proper relation to the vast accumulation of modern knowledge. He still swears by Nyaya physics and Ayurvedic physiology, while his scholarly conscience, even now predominated by Tika and Tippani tradition, views originality of thought as a heinous crime and as an act of infidelity to the mighty minds of old. Sir S. Radhakrishnan is the one Indian philosopher who has had the courage to set at naught the cramping influence of traditionalism, and adopt an interpretative method even in expounding ancient systems of thought. Arts and sciences have progressed by leaps and bounds since the great founders of Indian systems lived. To ignore this fact in the exposition of Indian philosophy is to invite ridicule on our culture. Co-ordination and re-statement are what we want to-day in the field of Indian philosophy, and this Professor Radhakrishnan has attempted in his works, especially in his masterpiece, the *Idealist View of Life*, with a mastery of the literary art unsurpassed by any Indian who has used the English language as the medium of expression. For this he has been found fault with by Indian philosophical snobs, but for this has he gained recognition and reputation all the world over as the chief liaison officer between the East and the West.

We hope the new position which he has been invited to occupy at Oxford will give him ampler opportunities to discharge the work of interpreting India to the West.

Is there a Blight on Philosophy?

At a dinner party given at Madras recently in honour of Sir S. Radhakrishnan's appointment to the above mentioned professorship at Oxford, Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, in the course of his speech, raised the question why "some blight has fallen on philosophy in our universities and educational establishments." It is well-known that several colleges in India have, in their scheme of retrenchment, applied the axe to the Philosophy Department and abolished the chair in that subject. Sir S. Radhakrishnan was asked to give an explanation of this, and his views on the question are in many respects interesting and illuminating. He pointed out that there was no blight on philosophy at all in this country till recently. When they were not able to take into account concrete problems concerning their immediate condition, when they wanted to drive away philosophy into remote and abstract speculations which had little bearing on practical life, there would certainly be a blight. It was absolutely essential to make philosophy have a bearing in life. It was essential again to translate that into social strength. It was possible for this individual or that to go to the mountain top or a monastery and save his soul. But, it would not be possible for a society to save itself, if it became isolated and became a hermit nation. It was essential that the ideas that they were able to bring out in the solitary hours of their contemplation should be utilised for the

sustenance of society. It was because latterly they had not been able to make philosophy have direct bearing on life, that some kind of blight had overtaken philosophy itself, that the social life was imperilled and millions of people who found their life meaningless on account of social mal-adjustment dismissed philosophy as something which was of no concern to them in their daily existence.

To our mind the downfall of philosophy does not appear to be an isolated phenomenon peculiar to India. It is a part of the world-wide decline in prestige that an ancient branch of study has undergone. In the universities of Europe also philosophy used to occupy a much more important place than it does to-day. They might not have scraped off the philosophy department as several colleges in this country have done; but that is only because they are financially much better off than educational institutions in our country and have therefore no need to court the disgrace of an apparently mean course. But in a country where the Government depends on the salt tax for its solvency, colleges and universities need feel no humiliation to save a few rupees at the expense of philosophy.

Philosophy has declined all the world over because as Sir S. Radhakrishnan pointed out men have begun to doubt its practical utility. With the growth of experimental sciences, the pure seeker after truth has begun to place more reliance on them than on philosophy for the understanding of life and nature. With the advent of industrialism, training in technology is found to be more advantageous than knowledge of humanities by those who want to prepare themselves

for a career with good prospects. Philosophy has therefore lost the allegiance of talented men, as they have turned their attention to subjects of more practical utility.

This state of affairs is bound to continue and philosophy remain a 'depressed subject' in the educational curriculum until it becomes really useful for men in modern life. As we find it to-day, improvement in the conditions of life does not very much seem to elevate the position of philosophy. Patriotism, nationalism, socialism and other similar 'isms' are perhaps going to be more and more operative in ordering the collective life of societies in the future, and philosophy may not find its proper mission in that field, unless of course we are prepared to admit that philosophy is purely a subject of secular significance. But philosophy, at least as understood in India, has a much wider scope and a deeper significance. It is a Darsana, a method of gaining insight into the nature of man and his place in the scheme of existence taken not simply in its sensuous meaning but in its transcendental significance as well. There is the field for philosophy in the future. In spite of exact sciences, industrialism, and improved standard of living, there is a lot of discontent and disharmony that make life unbearable for the modern mind. For one thing, cases of neurosis, domestic unhappiness and suicides are becoming commoner with the spread of modernism in all its virulence. Exact sciences and technology are of no use here. They cannot cure men of these soul-distressing maladies; they can only contribute to them and make the matter more complicated. If philosophy can do something for relieving the ills of

life in this respect, it may hope to regain its lost ground. For this it has however to develop from a purely academic subject into a true Darsana. The philosopher in his turn while retaining his intellectuality and erudition has to become a mystic, and training in philosophy, besides developing the power of thought, has also to aim at culturing the intuitive power of man.

For true mysticism is the leaven of philosophy; without it philosophy is useless intellectual fabrication. If philosophical academies can produce sages, not of the world-shunning but of the world-elevating type, the blight on philosophy will automatically disappear. No more will there then be talk of academic philosophy but only of applied philosophy.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

INDIAN MYSTICISM : MYSTICISM IN MAHARASHTRA : By Prof. R. D. Ranade. Published by Aryabhushan Press, Shanwar Peth, Poona. Pages 475. Price Rs. 15 library edition; Rs. 10 ordinary edition.

This book which constitutes the 7th volume of the History of Indian Philosophy Series is quite a readable and edifying work on the mediæval saint poets of Maharashtra that wrote or sang in Mahratti, viz., Jnanadeva, Namadeva, Ekanatha, Tukarama, Ramadasa and their contemporaries. Extracts from these translated into English take up more than three-fourths of its bulk, and make it specially valuable to those who, though ignorant of the Mahratti language, yet aspire to enjoy its spiritual treasures. The work begins with Jnaneswara who lived in the last quarter of the thirteenth century A.D., and his *magnum opus*, *Jnaneswari*, a commentary in *ovi metre* on the Bhagavad Gita. His minor work, *Amritanubhava*, a short account of the experiences and impressions of saints and God-realisers, his hymns (*abhangas*) &c., and a brief glance at the songs of his contemporaries, Nivrutti, Sopana, Muktabai, and Chandeva complete the first part of the book, named "Intellectual Mysticism," implying that Advaita Jnana, i.e., Sri Sankara's method or manner of realising Brahman is its predominant feature. The second part deals with Namadeva and the poets of his age; and their mysticism is styled "Democratic mysticism," not merely because of their use of the vernacular and of a popular and simple method of teaching but also because of their appeal to all classes, castes, sexes and ages. Inci-

dentally the author notes that one feature of this appeal is to slur over *Swadharma-charana*, i.e., duties arising out of each man's caste, position or lot.

The next age, which is the subject of Part III, is that of Ekanatha, the famous author of the Mahratti Srimad Bhagavata, and his contemporaries. Their views and ways are labelled "Syncretic Mysticism" to denote the fact that they combined the mysticism of the previous age with attention to social duties and *Swadharma-charana*. Tukarama, the Kirtana performer and author of innumerable compositions, and his contemporaries are dealt with in Part IV, headed, rather curiously, 'Personalistic mysticism.' Personalism here denotes that Tukarama's mystic experience was moulded by the vicissitudes of his own life as set out in his songs. The chief of these incidents are the death of his wife during a famine for lack of food, the humiliations to which he, a poor ill-educated Sudra, and his verses were subjected, his steadily swelling cup of sorrows, his increasing despair, querulousness, and doubt about the justice, and mercy, or even the very existence of God, his attempt at suicide, his sudden attainment of beatific God vision, his repeated loss of the sense of self in the feeling that the entire universe is God, and his alleged final ascent to heaven with his physical body on a *Vimana*, a feat vainly attempted by Trisanku with the mighty help of Visvamitra.

The book closes with its fifth and last part, giving an account of Ramadasa (the great Guru and inspirer of Sivaji Chatra-

pati) and his "Activistic Mysticism"—a label intended to emphasise the fact that Ramadasa amidst his various teachings in his *Dasabodha*, etc., stressed the compatibility of *Svadharmas* or one's active discharge of the duties one owes to one's self, group and country, with spiritual progress and God-realisation.

The songs of these saints are well-known to, and highly prized and used by, the people of Maharashtra at their devotional gatherings, *bhajan*s, *kirtan*s, &c., but are almost a sealed book to others, who must therefore be thankful to Mr. Ranade for the present publication. While the extracts given in the book and the comments thereon are of undoubted interest and occasionally touch the fringe of Mysticism, readers specially interested in that subject may feel rather disappointed with certain features of the book. They may feel, for instance, that all the variations in his labels refer to mere accidental concomitants of Mysticism and have no real connection with or bearing upon the mystic experience referred to in each case, that mysticism does not develop from age to age, that the variations in the contents of mystic experience, dependent chiefly on its type, have not been adverted to, that all mysticism may be considered personalistic in the sense that a personal history of joys, sorrows, etc., might lie behind it, developing, moulding, retarding or colouring it at various stages, that mysticism, in itself, is never democratic or aristocratic, that activistic mysticism is "syncretic," and may also be 'personalistic,' 'democratic,' etc., and that much that has been referred to as mysticism in the book, is unconnected with intuitive and direct apprehension of Reality. It has also to be remarked that the treatment, instead of being a scientific analysis and evaluation as in the case of standard works on Western Mysticism, is only a bare historical and textual review of the subject. These shortcomings may perhaps be due to the fact that the Publishers had to change the original programme of the series. They promise to give a further and fuller definition, analysis and evaluation in another volume entitled "The Pathway to God."

THE SCIENCE OF THE SOUL (SRI SANKARACHARYA'S BHASHYA ON THE BRAHMA SUTRAS). By Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswamy Sastri. *The Manager, The Dharma-raja Office, 47, Swami Naick Street, Chintadripet, Madras. Pages 207. Price Rs. 1-8 only.*

This handy volume contains the text in Devanagari character of Badarayana's *Brahma-sutras* arranged together in *Adhikaranas* and followed by their English translation, to which is appended a brief summary of Sankara's commentary, also in English. This novel arrangement of presenting all the aphorisms forming one *Adhikarana* or topic of discussion together in one place so as to have a clear grasp of the march of thought and line of argument is itself a great achievement towards clarity. The next achievement of the learned author is his summary of Sankara's commentary. Sankara's commentary on the *Brahma-sutras* is noted for its terseness and brevity; to have prepared a preeminently readable summary of such a work in so brief a compass and without omitting any interesting and relevant discussion in the original must in itself be described as an achievement in the art of selection and abridgment. A perusal of the book shows that at the back of it is a mind thoroughly conversant with the original writings of Sankara, and with the needs and intricate workings of the religious mind of to-day. Another valuable feature of the book deserving special mention here is the fact that the author gives in proper context all the important Upanishadic texts on which the Acharya has based his commentary. It is also delightful to notice in brackets on almost every page of the book short selections from the text of the commentary, the most beautiful gems of Sankara's own creation. The reader feels assured that a perusal of this book, written in a direct argumentative manner and in a simple flowing style, will acquaint him not only with the Acharya's thought, but also with his technique of argument and the inimitable literary beauty of his style. Even in the translation of the *Sutras* the author's aim has been to present the ideas contained therein as clearly as possible without aiming at a too literal version. As a popular edition of Sankara's

interpretation of the *Brahma-sutras* the book occupies a high rank.

But the book suffers from a few defects which, we hope, will be remedied in a subsequent edition. The Sanskrit portion of the book is full of printing mistakes from which even the *Sutras* are not free. Then there is no consistency in the method of transliteration. The modern reader will also feel it somewhat annoying to note that the book is without a table of contents and an index, the unavoidable accompaniments of every serious publication in these days. These are, however, unimportant defects which may easily be overcome in the next edition to the enhancement of the value of the book and to the convenience of the readers. The volume as it is even now, will no doubt be highly prized by the English reading public, especially by the university students of Indian philosophy.

THE UNADISUTRAS IN VARIOUS RECENSIONS: *Madras University Sanskrit Series No. 7. Parts 2 & 6. Edited by T. R. Chintamani, M.A., Ph.D. Published by the University of Madras. Price Rs. 2-8 or 4 sh. and Rs. 3 or 6 sh. respectively.*

The Department of Sanskrit in the University of Madras has deserved the gratitude of the scholars by bringing out the *Unadisutras* in various recensions accompanied by some of the important commentaries and embellished with all the paraphernalia of a modern critical edition—General Introduction, textual variants, notice of manuscripts, Index to *Sutras*, Index to words, Index to works and authors cited, etc. The learned editor has evinced something of that 'German patience' in this, by no means easy undertaking. Working upon moth-eaten manuscripts bristling with clerical and other errors and marred by several lacunae, he has succeeded to an eminent degree in establishing a correct text with the least number of gaps. The *Sutras* known under the name of *Unadi*, it is well-known, form an interesting item in almost all the systems of Sanskrit grammar and though not as important as the *Astadhyayi* itself, their authority has been constantly invoked by commentators of Vedic texts in fixing the accent of words or in tracing the meaning and formation of several vocables mostly out-of-the-way. This review concerns itself with parts 2 and 6 only of this publication.

Part 2 gives the *Unadi* as preserved in the *Prakriyasarvasva*, a voluminous grammatical work. Part 6 consists of the *Unadi* Su. of Bhoja and the Un. Su. of the *Katantra*; the former is accompanied by the commentary of Dandanarayana and the latter by that of Durgasimha. The peculiarity about Bhojas' *Unadi* is that he has incorporated the *Sutras* in the body of his grammatical work known by the name of *Sarasvatikanthabharanam* while others have dealt with them in a separate appendix. Of all the three recensions before us, that of *Prakriyasarvasva* is the most comprehensive and the comment by Narayana Bhatta on them is the most exhaustive and illuminating. The indebtedness of Bhatta to Bhoja is patent on almost every page. Nevertheless Narayana Bhatta's *Vritti* is remarkable in several ways. He is such a staunch supporter of the *Vyutpattipaksa* that he makes out a sense from the root out of which a particular word is supposed to be derived and which apparently bears no relation in sense. Thus, for instance, the words *kutumba* (a family), *manduka* (a frog), *papa* (sin), *pustaka* (a book) and *vipra* (a brahmana) are derived from √*kut*=to be crooked (what makes the mind crooked, wife, etc., P. 147), √*mand*=to decorate (what is decorated with stripes P. 92), √*pib*=to drink (what drinks up happiness, P. 58), √*pus*=to nourish (what nourishes knowledge) and √*vap*=to sow (in whom seeds of merit are sown) respectively. It is rather amusing to note the derivations of words like *Yavana*, *Turushka*, *Kasmira* and *Kalinga* from roots. The word *maccha* derived from √*mad* is a *prakritism*. *Ivara* and *anna* usually derived from √*is*=to lord over (see Pan 3-2-175), and √*ad*=to eat are, according to the *Unadi*, from √*ac*=to pervade and √*an*=to breathe. It seems Narayana Bhatta was slightly disconcerted by the sight of new vocables by legions, that he could not draw a line of demarcation; so a few Malayalam words as instanced in the case of (P. 111), *mani*, a bell (P. 109), *tali*, an ornament for the neck and (P. 97) *parpata*, a particular fried dish were all pompously derived from roots and given the royal eminence of Sanskrit words. On page 28 appears a *Karika* to the effect that the word *padma* is written wrongly as *patma* in the south,

and to add to the confusion we notice even to-day the word pronounced with an 'i' sound in the Kerala country.

May we suggest that the book would have been more compact and convenient for reference had it been possible to adopt some such plan as that we see adopted in the Adventures of Vikrama published by the Harvard University where we find almost parallel presentation of the various recensions? However, the work has been executed satisfactorily with the following reservations. On page 22, line 14 Katantra Unadi we notice the ✓ jani printed with the anubandha ॐ which is not so found in the Dhatupatha; so also on page

23, lines 13 and 14 of the same, we meet ✓ caksun which also according to the Dhatupatha where it is found as ✓ cakain, is in all probability a mistake. It has also to be remarked that the book suffers from a number of misprints. Here is a list of such errors that have not been noticed in the corrigenda put up at the end of each part. Part II page 46, line 9; page 85, line 4; page 142, line 20; Part VI Bhoja's U: Page 32, line 23; P. 33, line 6; P. 36, line 14; P. 37, line 18; P. 38, line 3; P. 53, line 7; P. 54, line 1; P. 56, line 2; P. 63, line 22; P. 70, line 18; P. 71, line 2; P. 72, line 14; Part VI Kat: Un. P. 9, line 11; P. 19, line 13; P. 32, line 20; P. 40, line 18; P. 45, line 4; P. 62, line 19.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary: Thesis and Essay Competition

The public are hereby informed that, under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary, Thesis and Essay competitions will be held all over India, Burma and Ceylon, on the lines indicated below:

I. *Thesis Competition*: It is open to men and women of India, Burma and Ceylon. The competitors should possess the minimum academic qualification corresponding to M.A., M.Sc., etc., of Indian Universities. The Thesis should be written in English on "*The philosophy of Sri Ramakrishna and its bearing on world-culture*" and be complete in about 20,000 (twenty thousand) words. First prize—Rs. 200 in cash. Second prize—Rs. 150 in cash.

II. *Essay Competition*: (a) Among College Students: It is open to college students (both boys and girls) of all grades, belonging to educational institutions of India, Burma and Ceylon (Government, private or otherwise). The essay should be written in English on "*Sri Ramakrishna's contribution to the social and religious life of India*" and should not exceed 4,000 (four thousand) words. For boy-students: First prize—Rs. 30. Second prize—Rs. 25. For girl-students: First prize—Rs. 30. Second prize—Rs. 25. Each prize shall comprise a copy of "*The Cultural Heritage of India*" (The Ramakrishna Centenary Volume in two parts of about 2,000 pages of double crown octavo), one medallion and cash.

(b) Among School Students: It is open to all boys and girls of matriculation or corresponding classes in educational institutions of India, Burma and Ceylon (Government, private or otherwise). The Essay should be written in their own mother tongues on "*Sri Ramakrishna and his Teachings*" in about 2,000 words. The competitors of this group are invited to write their essays in any of the following languages: (1) Assamese; (2) Bengali; (3) Oriya; (4) Hindi; (5) Urdu; (6) Gurmukhi; (7) Sindhi; (8) Gujarati; (9) Marathi; (10) Tamil; (11) Telugu; (12) Malayalam; (13) Kanarese; (14) Burmese; (15) Sinhalese.

There will be 60 prizes in all for school boys and girls. In each language group two prizes will be awarded to the best two essayists among the boys and two to the best two among the girls. For boys: First prize—Rs. 15. Second prize—Rs. 10. For girls: First prize—Rs. 15. Second prize—Rs. 10. Each prize shall consist of valuable books and a medallion.

N.B.—The Thesis and Essays should be written neatly and clearly on only one side of the paper and not on both sides and should reach the undersigned on or before the 31st July, 1936. The essay competitors should produce a certificate from the heads of the institutions to which they belong, to the effect that they are bonafide students of their respective schools and colleges. All communications may be addressed to Swami Sambuddhananda, Asst. Secretary, Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee, 15, College Square, Calcutta.

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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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[No. 2

HINDU ETHICS

अज्ञानप्रभवो मोहः पापाभ्यासात् प्रवर्तते ।

यदा प्राज्ञेषु रमते तदा सद्यः प्रणश्यति ॥

प्रीतेः शोकः प्रभवति वियोगात्तस्य देहिनः ।

यदा निरर्थकं वेत्ति तदा सद्यः प्रणश्यति ॥

कुलात् ज्ञानात् तथैश्वर्यात् मदो भवति देहिनाम् ।

एभिरेव तु विज्ञातैः मदः सद्यः प्रणश्यति ॥

कृपणान् सततं दृष्ट्वा ततः संजायते कृपा ।

धर्मनिष्ठां यदा वेत्ति तदा शाम्यति सा कृपा ॥

अज्ञानप्रभवो लोभो भूतानां दृश्यते सदा ।

अस्थिरत्वं च भोगानां दृष्ट्वा ज्ञात्वा निवर्तते ॥

Ignorance is the source of delusion. It becomes active by repetition of vicious deeds. As soon as the person takes pleasure in the company of wise men delusion falls off. Distress comes out of pleasures when the object in which the creature finds pleasure slips away from it. When that is realised to be meaningless, sorrow vanishes. Arrogance is the outcome of pedigree, learning and wealth. When these are known thoroughly, forthwith they fly. Beholding often the wretched, pity is evoked in the mind. When one understands the foundation of righteousness, it is quelled. Greed is always seen in creatures due to ignorance. By observing and understanding the inconstancy of enjoyments it stops.

Mahabharata, Santi Parva, Ch. 161-verses 10, 12, 15, 19, & 20.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

By Swami Saradananda

[Further instances to show the intimacy that existed between the Master and Mathuranath are narrated here.]

Other incidents of like nature

NUMEROUS are such occasions when the close-fisted Mathuranath behaved in the most generous fashion in order to please the Master. When he went on pilgrimage to the holy places of Benares, Brindavan, etc., he took the Master also along with him. At Benares, under the instruction of the Master, he took the vow of giving away anything that he might be asked for, and accordingly gave away all that people wanted of him. When the 'Father' was requested to ask for something on this occasion, the Master, failing to find out any want at all, at last asked for a water-pot only. This instance of the Master's spirit of renunciation brought tears to Mathuranath's eyes.

Mathuranath's service of the poor at Vaidyanath in obedience to the Master's desire

In the course of the same pilgrimage, while the party was passing through a village near Vaidyanath, the Master's heart melted with pity at the sight of the misery of the people there. He therefore said to Mathuranath, "Are you not merely a secretary to the Mother? (i.e., all your wealth belongs actually to the Divine Mother and therefore should be spent for Her children.) Give these people, then, sufficient oil to rub on their heads and a hearty meal for a day along with a piece of cloth to each of them." At first Mathuranath hesitated a little. "There will be enormous expenditure at the place of

pilgrimage," he argued, "and the number of these people also is pretty large. If we now proceed to feed and clothe them, the money at our disposal may run short. What is your advice under these circumstances?" But the Master was in no mood to listen to his apologies. He was shedding profuse tears at the sight of the villagers' plight. His heart was filled with pity. "I won't go to your Benares," said he firmly, "I must live with these people. I cannot desert them when there is none to help them in their distress." With this, like an importunate child, he left the party and sat in the midst of the village people. Faced with this situation Mathuranath had no other alternative but to get down cloths from Calcutta and act in accordance with the Master's wish. The Master also was greatly delighted at the sight of the villagers' joy, and taking leave of them, went with Mathuranath with a smiling face. We have heard of another occasion when the Master was similarly moved to pity at the sight of the miserable condition of the people of a village within Mathuranath's estate, in the vicinity of Ranaghat. On this occasion too he made Mathuranath serve the people in the same way.

The Master's relation with Mathuranath was ordained by Providence.

The Master on Mathuranath's re-birth in consequence of his desire for enjoyments

The Master, ever established as he was in the attitude of the Guru, made

Mathuranath bound for ever with a sweet relation of this nature. This unique relation of love that existed between these two souls was the mature fruit of the Master's prayer to the Divine Mother during the period of his Sadhana: "O Mother, do not make me a dry ascetic, but keep me rather in the middle path."

It was in response to this prayer that the Divine Mother showed him the four persons who had been sent along with him with the special charge of preserving his body and supplying all his needs. Of these four, Mathuranath was the first and foremost. Had this relation been other than divinely ordained, could it last unimpaired for

such a long period? Few, alas, are the instances of this kind of sweet and pure relation the world has seen so far! One day, a friend of ours, while hearing from the Master himself the wonderful incidents about Mathuranath, became filled with wonder and admiration at his great fortune and inquired of the Master, "What happened to him, sir, after his death? Certainly, he will not have to be born again?" But the Master replied, "He must have been born somewhere as a king. For the desire for enjoyment was still there in him." With this the Master suddenly changed the topic.

HINDUISM TO-DAY

[In the following paragraphs we have tried to review the spiritual and social conditions that are exercising a devitalising influence on Hinduism. We do this not out of a sense of despair or a feeling that Hinduism has played out its part. On the other hand our idea is that Hinduism possesses vast spiritual potentialities and has got an important mission to fulfil in the world; but without a new religious and social adjustment these possibilities and expectations cannot be fully realised.]

The Pride of the Past

IT has become a fashion in these days with every pious Hindu who writes or speaks about his religion to declare vehemently that Hinduism is the oldest of all religions and that it is as deathless as the Immortals themselves. It is no doubt a fact that it has withstood more attacks, directed from within and without, than any other faith in the world, and that its beliefs, ceremonials and institutions have in most cases a history that can be traced without a break to the hoary culture represented in the Vedic literature. There is nothing wrong in a people feeling a sort of pride in a tradition so ancient, so spiritual and so heroic, provided it is

made an incentive for achievements yet greater. But unfortunately we often misuse this pride of the past for deluding ourselves into a false sense of our present greatness, as scions of ruined aristocratic families do with the old traditions and achievements of their houses. There is nothing so ruinous as this to the future possibilities of a people. Hence whatever is said and done to rouse them from an impotent contemplation of the past to a consciousness of the hard realities of the present must be considered beneficial in every way, and that is our excuse in indulging in the following reflections.

It is a common belief among Indians themselves and among many

foreigners having a friendly disposition towards our country that India's contribution towards the culture of the world is mainly spiritual. Especially when we hear a friend of India from Europe or America declaring this in all sincerity and fervent expectation, we cannot help feeling humbled to the very core of our being; for the thought occurs—are we after all fit to discharge this great mission? Is modern India endowed with sufficient vitality and spiritual energy to fulfill this great expectation? In other words the question clinches itself into this: Is Hinduism to-day a sufficiently living force in the life of its followers, in the true sense conveyed by the term 'living' when applied to a religion?

The True Function of Religion

In considering this point we have to determine, in the first place, what constitutes the true function of religion. In modern times attempts have been made by many scholars who are not themselves religious men, to formulate definitions of religion, and it has been the common criticism of all these definitions that none of them is satisfactory. None the less we may, from the spiritual point of view, describe religion as consisting in the quest after the ultimate meaning of life and regulating life in the conviction that there is such an ultimate meaning. If we examine the life of man, we shall find that in whatever station of it he may be, he attaches some purpose to it and directs his energies for realising the same. Thus when a person is a student, a degree or a diploma constitutes the meaning or purpose he attaches to life; when he is settled down in life, earning a livelihood and providing for his family becomes the guiding factor in life; or if by birth he is placed

beyond such needs, he may live for making a name in the world. The point to be noted is that man **always** attaches some meaning or purpose to every phase of life. But ordinarily he has only parts or periods of life in view, and he does not feel a need for seeking the significance of life as a whole. He seems to take only a regional view of life, investing the same with artificial and fleeting values born of the exigencies of life's struggle. His vision is always confined to the four walls of life, and seldom happens to go beyond it and take a view of it in its entirety, or, to enquire whether life, apart from the interests attached to its different aspects, has any meaning in its totality.

Religion, in its state of pristine purity, consists in this discovery of the meaning of life as a whole—a discovery without which a thoughtful person would feel that life with all its riches and beauties is nothing more than a long line of zeroes without any value-giving figure on the left. It is this meaning of life in its totality that has been described in the great world religions as God or the Supreme Being, and which some of the modern thinkers prefer to describe as Eternal Values. Just as a student's life gains a meaning when he has a diploma in view, or a citizen's life gains a significance when it aims at the acquisition of wealth or fame, so also life as a whole becomes meaningful, when it recognises God as its source and its end. The power and vitality of a religion as a source of spiritual upliftment can be measured by the degree in which a consciousness of this ultimate meaning of life is reflected in the life of its followers.

The Ideal of a Spiritual Society

Hinduism has gained a high reputation for its spiritual standards because it has made an attempt to substitute this total view of it as a significant whole for what we described as man's regional view of it. It refuses to admit that the practice of religion is only the duty of old age or is the exclusive concern of a few who have set apart their lives for it. No particular period of life or no particular station in it is specially suited for the practice of religion to the exclusion of others. Whether one is a student or a citizen, a scholar or an ascetic, life is to be lived not for the limited purposes associated with these stages in it, or rather these purposes are not to be taken as being in themselves self-sufficient. On the other hand one is to recognise the total significance of life even in the particular purposes associated with its parts, or in other words look upon the discharge of even the temporal duties of life as a means for realising its ultimate purpose.

This is the general principle underlying the Hindu conception of every stage of life as an Ashrama, and the duties appertaining to it as Dharma. In the social and religious training of the Hindu, the one fact that is always kept before him is the truth that life in all its stages and aspects is a preparation for realising a higher spiritual status. Thus the student is required to look upon his period of education as not merely a training of his body and mind for taking part in the struggle of life, but also as a preparatory disciplining of his whole being for God-realisation. Hence the life of the student is called Brahmacharya or walking the path of God.

So also the life of the Grihastha or householder is to be devoted not merely to the acquisition of wealth and the other desirable things of this world; it is also a field for acquiring self-control, sympathy for all beings, devotion to God and the higher refinements of the soul. Thus a higher standard of living is not the sole aim of the householder's life; in fact without a higher standard of thought and spiritual attainment the purpose of life will be futile.

The conception of duty is also interpreted in a similar fashion.

Duty in the modern sense is entirely world-bound. It is a matter of obligation or professional honour. But according to Hindu ideals duty is a Dharma, having a significance much wider than the immediate purpose with which it is concerned. A duty or a lawful responsibility in life is a work entrusted by God into the hand of man, and a proper discharge of it is therefore the most tangible form of worship that man can offer unto Him. The mundane significance of the various forms of work is therefore transfigured into a great spiritual purpose. Thus for the student study is in itself not only an intellectual discipline, but also a worship of the supreme Being. For the citizen too his daily occupation in life, however humble or exalted it might be according to our worldly calculations, is a form of divine worship, besides being his means of livelihood. He may be a king or a military leader, he may be a politician or a business man, he may be a petty officer or a teacher, he may even be a labourer or a scavenger—provided he performs his work in the true spirit of worship, the spiritual efficacy derived therefrom is quite capable of cleaning his mind of all accumulated

dirt and bringing him to the door of spiritual realisation.

It will be amply clear from our explanation of the conceptions of Ashrama and Dharma what we mean by saying that true religion consists in ordering life not simply with reference to the artificial significance we attach to its phases but by a consideration of its significance as a whole. In looking upon studentship and citizenship as not only means for the fulfilment of their limited purposes but also as disciplines for spiritual realisation, Hinduism presents an ideal which is truly religious or spiritual to the core. A time there must have been when this idea used to be a living force in a considerable section of Hindu society, resulting in the production of a large number of spiritual giants and raising the general spiritual level of society as a whole. It is this fact that has gained for India a special reputation for spirituality.

We said in the beginning that India to-day is finding it difficult to fulfil the great expectations that many people outside are having about her. This is because the great idea that we have described above is increasingly disappearing from modern Hindu consciousness. In its absence, bare clinging to the forms of old institutions or vaunting about the achievements of the ancients is not going to bring any tangible benefit. When the spirit has broken down, the form becomes more a burden than a help. The spiritual outlook on life that we described before, and not any particular institution or form of social organisation like caste, has been the main source of the strength of Hinduism; and it is the decay of that ideal that is responsible for the torpid condition of Hinduism to-day.

The Strata of Hindu Society

The modern Hindus may be divided into the following classes from the point of view of their religious outlook. Since in Indian society the open flouting of religion and the rejection of its sacraments and institutions have not become sufficiently noticeable as in the West, we cannot specify any group as avowedly non-religious. But none the less, we may describe a very large section of modern English educated people, consisting of lawyers, doctors, officers, business men, etc., as non-religious in as far as many of them have no faith in a spiritual principle, or even if they have no decided opinion on this point, do not bestow even a serious thought on it and problems allied to it, and therefore lead what may be described practically as a non-religious life. They may observe the social and sacramental rules associated with religion from very hoary times, but this is more as a matter of convenience than due to any conviction. In contrast to them is the overwhelmingly large group of religious folk. In this falls the huge mass of humanity constituting the Indian masses, whose religion is often of a very crude kind and adulterated on a very liberal scale with unhealthy superstitions. Often this class may seem very religious, but it is very doubtful whether their religiosity has any deep foundation. In contrast to the religion of the masses there is higher Hinduism with a twofold division in it. There is in the first place the section described as "orthodox people" who swear by every word of the ancient books, and believe in the efficacy of all the rules of caste and Acharas, ceremonial purity and impurity, of touchability and untouch-

ability enforced by the Shastras. These people are described now-a-days as Sanatanists. A large section of them is sincerely orthodox, but there are however a good many in this camp whose orthodoxy is the result of blind, unthinking conservatism or the outcome of a desire for social prestige and leadership. Lastly there is a small yet growing body of people at the present time who are as sincerely religious as the staunchest among the Sanatanists, but do not adhere to the letter of the Law, and find nothing sacrilegious in making a distinction between the essentials and non-essentials of Hinduism and rejecting, as belonging to the latter category, a considerable portion of what is described as Sanatana Dharma.

The Social Aspect of the Question

Now this tendency for stratification into diverse spiritual and social layers is another feature of Hinduism at the present time that demands serious attention from those who believe that Hindus as a people have a distinctive contribution to make for the spiritual and moral well-being of the world. A religion has two aspects, the individual or purely spiritual aspect, and the collective or the social aspect. We have pointed out before the reason for the spiritual devitalisation of Hinduism to-day. Just as this spiritual lethargy is hampering the efflorescence of Hindu spiritual genius, so also the forces of social disintegration working apace among the Hindus is seriously threatening the health, nay, the very future existence of Hinduism. The seriousness of the situation will become patent if we just look at the numerical strength of Hindus and the other religionists in

this country, as revealed by the recent census figures. A time was when the whole of India was undoubtedly Hindu, a term in which we include the Buddhists and Jains also. But by the time that British power was established in India, Hindus formed only 80 per cent of India's population. The census figures available after that time show a steady decline in their numbers, and according to the latest census figures the Hindus form only 68.2 per cent of India's total population. What Hinduism has lost in the course of these years has undoubtedly been gained by other religions, especially by Christianity in modern times and by Islam in pre-British days.

This process of de-Hinduisation has been so gradual and accomplished through the course of so many centuries that the vast masses of Hindus do not practically understand its significance. But the problem assumes a tangible form when the cumulative result of centuries finds expression in the figures of the Indian census for 1931 according to which out of every 1000 of India's vast population 682 are Hindus, 222 Muslims, 36 Buddhists, 24 followers of tribal religions, 18 Christians and 18 belong to other religions like Sikhism. It is true that from the purely spiritual point of view the numbers that claim to follow a religion has very little significance. But Hinduism is not only a way of salvation; it is a culture as well, and for a culture, with its distinctive ideals, both secular and spiritual, the numerical strength of the society that embodies it is certainly an important consideration. All the cultural elements that India can claim to be distinctively her own, are Hindu in origin and can

flourish only under the stimulating influence of Hindu religious ideals. For those therefore who believe that India has got a substantial contribution to make towards world culture, the preservation of Hindu society which forms, as it were, the body of Indian culture becomes a matter of very great importance. It is from this point of view that we draw the attention of the reader to the fact that at the present day Hindus form only 682 out of every 1,000 of India's population whereas several centuries ago India was almost cent per cent Hindu.

In the past it was Islam that used to take away large numbers of Hindus as converts; but to-day the position has changed, and Christianity has become the centre towards which seceders are gravitating. It is a well-known fact that the large majority of Christian converts are drawn from the sections of Hindus described as Depressed Classes and Hill tribes.

The ban of untouchability placed on these people by the high caste Hindus, the very loose nature of their connection with the rest of Hindu society, and the fact that genuine Hindu religious ideals have very little permeated among them—all these conspire to make these classes a very fruitful field of activity for Christian Missions working in India. This fact is borne out by the statements of the missionaries themselves. Dr. Whitehead, lately Bishop of Madras, says: "Ninety years ago it was almost the universal opinion among the leading missionaries in India and their supporters at Home that the important thing to do for the spread of Christianity was to educate the Brahmins and high caste Hindus in cities and towns, so that, when they were converted, Christian truth might spread out from

the cities to the villages and permeate downwards from the top to the bottom of society. Experience has proved that Christianity is destined to spread in India in exactly the opposite way. The Christian Church has been steadily and rapidly built up, not in the cities and towns, but in the remote village districts and mainly among the poor outcastes." According to the same authority, "the outcastes of Hindu society are being gathered into the fold of the church at the rate of 2,000 a week." He expects this rate to increase much more in the future. "To-day," he remarks, "it is a mass movement, to-morrow it will be an avalanche." There is nothing to falsify this prediction, unless the Hindus make a strenuous effort to absorb these classes into their society and permeate them with Hindu religious ideals.

The Pre-disposing Cause

It is often pointed out that the ignorance and poverty of the lower class Hindus is responsible for their falling victims to the propagandist activities of the Christian missionaries. There seems to be very little truth in this belief. For, if this is the reason for mass conversions from Hinduism, why is it that Islam has been so conspicuously immune from the proselytising zeal of Christian missionaries. From the point of view of education and wealth, the poor classes among the Muslims are not much better off than the lower strata of Hindu society, and yet the activities of the Christian missionaries among them have borne so little fruit that they have well nigh given up the hope of converting the Muslims. It is worth while for the modern Hindu

to enquire what constitutes that bulwark of Islam against which all the batterings of Christian enthusiasts have been in vain. A study of Muslim society will show that the strength of Islam in this respect consists in the fact that there is much greater cultural contact between the upper and lower strata of Muslim community, and that as a result even the poorest and the most ignorant of Muslims is made to mentally participate and feel pride in the achievements of his religion and community. This is the very thing that Hindu society lacks so woefully and for which it is paying the penalty at the present time. The untouchable classes have hitherto been allowed to occupy only the fringes of Hindu society, and have never been given an opportunity to participate in the higher cultural achievements of Hinduism. They are utterly oblivious of, and therefore feel no pride in, India's millenniums of civilisation and the long line of sages and saints of which the higher caste Hindus are so justly proud. What is more, into this mentality of the outcaste having no intimate sense of identification with Hindu culture, are entering modern democratic ideas which reveal to him by contrast the injustice of the stigma of untouchability attached to him. In the presence of these two pre-disposing causes, one positive and the other negative, what wonder is there in people of this class responding to the promise of redemption, material and spiritual that Christian missionaries are offering to them?

But to-day the situation has received a new complexion owing to the refusal of influential sections of

Hindus to move with the times. In early days there used to be only individual conversions or conversion of families. Of late we are often hearing of mass conversions, and what is still more remarkable, there is at present a movement among the Depressed Classes themselves to change their faith without any inducement from missionaries of other religions. When the feeling of self-respect is roused in man, he gives up the attitude of passive submission to oppression. Casting aside the meekness of patient suffering, he develops a keen consciousness of injustice. The progress of ideas during the last two decades has engendered this mentality among the Depressed Classes, and that is why out of a feeling of despair with regard to their social future in the Hindu fold they are to-day suggesting that their whole community should give up Hinduism. The die-hards of Hinduism, with their curious 10th century mentality and social outlook, are, as it were, driving these people to other religions, not so much in quest of the redemption of their souls as in a desperate effort for the salvation of their society.

To conclude, therefore, the most prominent features of Hinduism to-day are on the one hand the dwindling of the spiritual energy of the race due to the decay of the sacrificial conception of life, and on the other the threat of social disintegration arising from the mass conversions of Hindu outcastes into other religions. In our next issue we shall consider under the heading "Aggressive Hinduism" what measures Hinduism of the future is to adopt in order to combat these forces.

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

By A Disciple

[Sri Saradamani Devi, otherwise known as the Holy Mother, was the consort of Sri Ramakrishna. She was both wife and nun at the same time. Though possessed of great spiritual attainments and was respected and worshipped like a Goddess by the devotees of the Master, she was always simple and unsophisticated in her life and ways of thought. In these reminiscences of this great woman of modern India, the reader will get intimate glimpses of a glorious type of womanhood through the little acts and simple talks of every-day life.]

WE, a few friends, started from Shillong for Jayrambati, to pay our respects to the Holy Mother. We had all seen the photograph of the Holy Mother, taken at an earlier period of her life. One of us, during the trip, dreamed of the present appearance of the Mother. Later on we were all overcome with joy and surprise to find that the dream vision of the Mother actually tallied with her present appearance. One of us had been previously initiated by a monk. Referring to his initiation, the Holy Mother said, "You have got the sacred word from a monk. That will illumine your soul." All of us, excepting him, were initiated by the Mother. After the initiation we expressed our desire to go to Kamarpukur, and begged her permission to go there. The Mother said, "How is it possible? I want to feed my children well to-day." I thought it proper to ask the Mother as to what I should do, after the initiation, for my further spiritual advancement. I asked her, "Mother, what else should I do?"

Mother: You need not do anything.

Disciple: Must I not do anything else?

Mother: No.

Disciple: Nothing else whatsoever?

Mother: No, nothing else whatsoever.

Three times she gave the same answer in the negative, and I then realised that as she had been gracious enough to be my spiritual teacher, therefore she also must have taken the entire responsibility for relieving me from the bondage of worldliness.

One day I looked at Bhanu Pishi's* palm, and said, "Aunt, you will live twenty-five years more." She reported it to the Mother, saying, "Mother, your child knows palmistry." The mother sent for me and said, "Can you read the lines on the palm? Can you tell me if my rheumatic pain will be cured?" I was completely surprised at this question. I did not know anything of astrology or palmistry. I had made that remark to Bhanu Pishi in a most casual way. I had heard previously that the Mother was suffering from this rheumatism of the leg on account of her accepting the sins of others vicariously. I said to her, "You have been suffering for us alone. How can you be cured, as long as we are alive?" No sooner had she heard these words than she became extremely mortified and suddenly sat on the ground exclaiming, "Goodness! What does he say?" I was totally puzzled at this plight of the Mother and asked, "Well, Mother,

* A woman living in the neighbourhood of the Holy Mother's house, who was a contemporary of Sri Ramakrishna.

would you like to be cured?" She answered in the affirmative. "Then you must be cured," I added. She again became cheerful and said after a moment, "Look at their devotion. They realise that everything depends upon my will."

Before returning to our native place, I prostrated before the Mother and said, "Mother, I cannot count the numbers at the time of repeating the beads. If my fingers move, my tongue remains silent. When my hands and tongue become active, the mind does not remain steady."

The Mother said in reply, "You will find later on, that your fingers and tongue will remain inactive, but the mind will continue to think of God."

It was the time of the Durga Puja at Belur Math, in 1916. The Holy Mother came to the Math on the first day of the festival and stayed in the adjacent garden-house, to the north of the monastery. Next day, she came to the Math to see the image. The monks and the Brahmacharins were cutting vegetables, next to the kitchen. Referring to them, the Mother said, "I see that my children know this work very well." Swami Jagadananda said, "The one goal of our life is to please the Divine Mother. It does not make any difference with us if we achieve this goal through meditation and prayer, or through cutting vegetables."

That day people without number prostrated before the Holy Mother. She was washing her feet in the Ganges water again and again. Jogin-Ma said to her, "Goodness, Mother, what are you doing? You will catch cold." The Mother said in reply, "Well,

Jogin, how can I explain it to you? Some people touch my feet and that refreshes me wonderfully. Again there are others who, when they touch my feet, make me feel a terrible burning sensation. I do not find any relief unless I touch the water of the Ganges."

One day later, in the course of conversation, I said to the Mother, "Mother, once during the Durga Puja you told us that when some persons touch your feet, you experience pain."

Mother: Yes, my child, there are some people whose touching of my feet makes me feel as if I were stung by a wasp, but I never tell them about it.

Then she looked at us with great tenderness and said, "But I do not mean my children like you." I said, "Well, Mother, we always feel that we have not been able to achieve anything even though we have the blessing of a Mother like you."

Mother: Do not be afraid, my child. Always keep it in your mind that Sri Ramakrishna is protecting you. I am also always with you. Why should you fear anything when you have a mother like me? Sri Ramakrishna once said to me, 'I shall lead to the goal by hand those who will come to you.' Do whatever you like, live as you please. Sri Ramakrishna must come at the end for your liberation. God has given you limbs and organs. They must play their part. They must do their function.

One day I was about to offer food before the image of Sri Ramakrishna, when I noticed a ray of light coming from the picture and touching the offering. I therefore asked the Mother, "Is what I saw a mere hal-

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lucination pure and simple, or real? If it be a hallucination, please make my nerves quiet." The Mother thought for a while and said, "No, child, it is all true."

Devotee : Do you feel all these things.

Mother : Yes.

Devotee : When I offer food before Sri Ramakrishna and you, does Sri Ramakrishna accept it? Do you also accept it?

Mother : Yes.

Devotee : How shall I know it?

Mother : Why, have you not read in the Gita that whatever you offer to God with devotion, a fruit or a flower or a little water, He accepts?

I was surprised at this reply and said, "Are you then God?" The Mother laughed outright at these words. We also laughed.

It was in Jayrambati that I went to see the Mother one evening.

Disciple : Mother, everybody says that we must pray for something under a Kalpataru.* But we are your children. What special wish should children make before the mother? The mother knows what is good for her children and she always gives them what is for their good. As Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'The mother cooks different dishes for her different children according to their power of digestion.' Now, Mother, what is best for me?

Mother : How little intelligence does a man possess? He may require one thing but he asks for another. He starts to mould an image of Shiva but he ends by making that of a monkey. It is best therefore to sur-

* A heavenly tree of Hindu mythology which fulfils whatever wish one makes under it.

render all desires at the feet of God. He will do whatever is best for us. But one may pray for devotion and detachment. These cannot be classed as desires.

Disciple : Mother, Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'This is the last birth of those who come to me.' But Swami Vivekananda says, 'No one can be liberated without Sannyasa; that is, without taking the monastic vows.' If that be true, then what will be the fate of the householders?

Mother : Yes, my child, both of them are right. For the householders it is not necessary to take any external vow of renunciation. They naturally will get the inner renunciation. But it is necessary for some to take those external vows. Why should you fear anything? Always take shelter at his feet, and also remember that Sri Ramakrishna is protecting you.

Once I told my mother that I wished to take her to Benares on a pilgrimage, but she did not agree to it because the time was not auspicious.† I spoke about it to the Holy Mother. In reply she said, "My child, they say that a pilgrimage to the holy places at an improper time destroys the merit of previous virtues. But this also is true: one should carry out all pious intentions as soon as possible." I could not grasp the meaning of this statement, which apparently had a twofold significance. Seeing my confusion, she said, "In the opinion of worldly men, it is not proper to visit a holy place at an inauspicious time. It is true that one may put off such a pious intention in considering the propriety or impro-

† According to the orthodox Hindu belief, certain months of the year are not auspicious for making a pilgrimage.

priety of the time, but Death does not make any distinction of time. As Death is always uncertain, one should carry out virtuous wishes whenever the opportunity presents itself, without waiting for a particular time."

One of my friends died in the hospital in a very helpless condition. I

wrote to the Mother about his pious character and devotion to God, and I begged her to pray for his liberation. The Holy Mother wrote to me in reply, "I pray to God that your friend may attain liberation. May Sri Ramakrishna remove all his bondage."

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL IN DIVINE CREATION

By Prof. Akshayakumar Banerjia, M.A.

(Continued from the last issue)

[Mr. Banerjia is the Professor of Philosophy in Anandamohan College, Mymensingh, Bengal. He tackles in this article the most vexed question in the philosophy of religion, namely, the problem of evil in a divinely constituted world-order. It is a problem that has engaged the attention of the best thinkers from the very dawn of religious and philosophical thought, but being one of those ultimate questions relating to the very foundations of life, it has never received a solution that will satisfy the intellect unamenable to the influence of faith. Nevertheless Prof. Banerjia's re-statement of the problem and the various solutions of it from different points of view together with his own suggestions for overcoming the difficulty will be found highly stimulating and instructive.]

THE difficulty in meeting such objections has led those rationalist thinkers to conceive of the ultimate ground of the universe as devoid of all moral attributes,—as absolutely indifferent to good and evil, happiness and misery, virtue and vice. They think that the source of the world is a non-moral or supra-moral principle, whose nature it is manifest Himself in an orderly phenomenal world without any purpose in view, good or bad. Good and evil, virtue and vice, happiness and misery, are present only to the finite sentient and rational beings and are the products of the relations and interactions among them and among the forces and laws operating within this world. God has nothing to do with them. The very conceptions of good and evil, virtue and vice, beauty and ugliness, happiness and misery are absent from

the supra-moral consciousness of the Author of the universe.

Such a conception of non-moral and impersonal God, indifferent to good and evil of the world, is of course inconsistent with the theistic conception of God and is regarded as incapable of satisfying the religious and moral demands of human nature. If this doctrine represents the true character of God, then He cannot be an object of worship and reverence to moral and spiritual beings. If the world has no moral purpose inherent in it, it is not truly a fit habitation for moral and spiritual beings. This conclusion is actually accepted by a class of thinkers who hold that the existence in the world is evil by itself and that to get rid of evil we have to get rid of existence itself.

The believers in the unimpeachable goodness of the Divine Creator, how-

ever, adopt various means to justify the presence of the apparent evils in the moral scheme of the universe. Some pious thinkers are of opinion that justice is the most fundamental moral attribute, and this attribute, though tempered with mercy, God possesses in perfection. Enjoyments and sufferings are given to His creatures as rewards and punishments for their virtues and vices. Though some of the greatest men even of the present day have tried to interpret some of the most horrible physical catastrophes of the recent times in terms of divine punishment for human sins, can we reasonably maintain that such explanations really contribute to the solution of the general problem. First, only rational beings endowed with the gift of freedom of choice can be held responsible for their conduct and character, and justice can have reference to them alone. But natural calamities, physical disorders and cries of agony among the living creatures had been prevalent even before the birth of mankind in the world, and even now we witness the sufferings of the irrational creatures for no fault for which we or God can hold them responsible. Secondly, the Author of the physical and mental constitution of human creatures cannot reasonably disown the responsibility for the passions and propensities which drive them to the perpetration of wrong deeds.

Another school of thought, while maintaining the absolute goodness of the Divine Author of the universe, proclaims that "physical catastrophes have their inevitable and exclusive origin in certain combination of physical facts." It adds that "unless we believe in the inexorableness of universal laws, in the working of which

God Himself never interferes, .. we find it impossible to justify His ways on occasions like the one which has sorely stricken us in an overwhelming manner and scale. If we associate ethical principles with cosmic phenomena, then we shall have to admit that human nature is normally superior to the Providence that preaches lessons on good behaviour in orgies of the worst behaviour possible." But this contrivance for the exoneration of our loving and merciful Providence from the responsibility for physical catastrophes and the dissociation of ethical principles from cosmic phenomena cannot be accepted by the thorough-going theistic thinkers, who maintain that not even a leaf can move or a sparrow can whisper without His knowledge and will. If God, having created the world, has left it to the operations of the inexorable universal laws, is He not responsible for these laws themselves, and also for His non-influence, even when a certain combination of physical facts in accordance with those laws tends to "imperil the integrity of His own creation"? Or has He deprived Himself of the power or the right to interfere, and willingly became finite in that respect? Is such self-limitation consistent with His being the sole absolute Creator and Ruler of the Universe and his immanence in creation? Is His wilful non-interference consistent with His infinite love and mercy?

Another class of thinkers, dissatisfied with the above doctrines, has recourse to the 'Instrumental' or 'Medicinal' theory of evil. They hold that the finite spirits are created for their progressive self-development and ultimate realisation of the highest good inherent in Divine Nature, and

they have been placed in a world designed for goading, encouraging and assisting them in this direction. Calamity and prosperity, misery and happiness, vice and virtue, are equally necessary and useful instruments designed for the realisation of this ideal in divine creation. For instance, the feeling of pain and the struggle for getting rid of it are suitable means for the development of the inherent powers and superior qualities in the living beings and for their ascent to higher and higher planes for existence, knowledge and action. No better arrangement for the evolution of such a variety of species of beings can be suggested even for an omnipotent and omniscient Creator to adopt. This instrumental value is attached not only to physical and mental pain, but also to sins or moral failures, to which man is liable. When we reflect upon human progress from the ethical and spiritual point of view, it becomes evident that this progress depends upon the self-disciplined exercise of freedom, and this freedom is the most valuable gift bestowed upon man by His creator. Freedom implies liability to commit errors, acquisition of wisdom and strength through failures, struggle with temptations and passions, etc. An ancient writer thinks, "It is difficulties which show what men really are. Therefore, when a difficulty falls upon you, remember that God, like a trainer of wrestlers, has matched you with a rough young man. For what purpose? you may say. Why, that you may become an Olympic conqueror; but it is not accomplished without sweat?"

A modern writer glorifies pain and suffering in these terms. "It is of incalculable use in correcting and disciplining the spirit. It serves to

soften the hardness of heart, to subdue the proud, to produce fortitude and patience, to expand the sympathies, to exercise the religious affections, to refine, strengthen and elevate the entire disposition. To come out pure gold, the character must pass through the furnace of affliction. And no one who has borne suffering *aright* has ever complained that he had been called on to endure too much of it. On the contrary, all the noblest of our race have learned from experience to count suffering not as an evil but a privilege, to rejoice in it as working out in them, through its purifying and perfecting power, an eternal right of glory." Thus to the noblest hearts pain itself appears as an evidence of love and mercy of the Creator and Ruler of the world. The afflictions which befall the individuals are designed not only to contribute to their own perfection, but to the happiness and glory of the whole race.

The possibility of vice is a necessary concomitant of morality and is an evidence of the truth that the world is a moral order. "Character consists in right choice, for which opportunity does not exist unless wrong choice is simultaneously possible." If what we now appreciate as good and conceive as the ideal were of necessity present in the world as an accomplished fact, it would not be estimated as good or ideal at all. The very essence of goodness lies at the touch of necessity. The very conceptions of truth, beauty, holiness, blessedness would have been absent if they were mere matters of fact, if there were no falsehood, deformity, vice and suffering in the world. In that case the world would have been devoid of all its glories, man would have been deprived of all his excellen-

ces. We can conceive of no greatness, no goodness, no love and sympathy, no search after truth, no admiration for beauty, no reverence for perfection, except on the background of pettiness and sinfulness, poverty and affliction, ignorance and ugliness, failures and imperfections. The greatest, the noblest, the most sublime and beautiful characters in the world—of whom we are all proud and the memories of whom give us happiness—are those that have undergone the bitterest sorrows and pains for the realisation of the highest ideals, and that have laid down their lives for the relief of the sufferings of other men and creatures.

We are not, however, left to struggle perpetually with hostile forces and take our chance in a chaotic world. The mental constitution of men as well as the conditions of the world is so planned that it is impossible for any man, in spite of his freedom, to continue in the path of vice for ever. God has made vice self-destructive. Vice works out its own defeat, disgrace and destruction, and virtue, as the immanent ideal, being the foundation of the order and harmony of the world process, must always reign as the ideal and realise itself in the long run. The intrinsic beauty and glory of virtue, the all-conquering power and all-comprehending truth of goodness, exhibit themselves brightly on the background of vice defeated, temptations and passions fully overcome, pains and sufferings smilingly accepted. It is a wonderful arrangement, which, having given full freedom to the finite spirits to violate the divine moral law and having associated pain with violation and pleasure with obedience, almost insensibly develops their

character so as to make them the glorious conquerors of the world of relativity and finitude and to lead them on to attain and enjoy the perfection and blessedness of the infinite and absolute divine nature. This is the eternal glory of Divine Providence as manifested in His creation.

However plausible and encouraging the doctrine may appear to be, when we put it to the test of our actual experience, we find strong grounds for disbelieving it. How can we believe that the terrible earthquakes, cyclones, tornadoes, epidemics, etc., killing, destroying, sweeping away the achievements of centuries and perpetrating various kinds of unthinkable cruelties, are necessary instruments for the realisation of the infinite goodness and beauty, happiness and bliss, of divine nature in His creation? An overwhelming amount of suffering does not appear to contribute to any higher good whatsoever, but rather checks the progress already made and gives a backward motion. That the sins and moral depravities of the most heinous sort, which we come across in the human race, are the necessary conditions of men's ethical and spiritual development, is an assertion which requires a good deal of credulous faith to be accepted as true.

To such objections the pious philosophers reply that we should not place too much reliance upon our limited experience. The world, to be properly understood, has to be taken as a whole. The world is an organic unity, in which the past, the present and the future, the nearest and the most remote, are united in one whole, and in which one supreme central ideal, eternally present in the mind of one omnipotent infinite Divine Per-

sonality, is being realised through progressive stages. One life-power pervades the whole and every part of the universe. It is from the standpoint of this whole universe that the worth and utility of everything in it is to be judged, and from this standpoint there is nothing in the world which is unnecessary and useless.

The problem of evil in divine creation appears to have baffled all attempts for solution on account of a fundamental misconception underlying the problem itself. It is assumed once for all that pain and sin are evils, and then the question is raised, how can the presence of evils be consistent with the goodness and omnipotence of the Creator? What is the true meaning of evil? It means that which ought not to exist, that which is demonstrably against the realisation of the highest ideal. It requires to be proved that the temporary physical and mental sufferings undergone and the sins and crimes committed by the finite creatures are incompatible with the ideal immanently working itself out in the universe, before they can be condemned as evils. Good and evil are, unlike happiness and misery, moral conceptions, and they are to be applied to facts by reference to the Supreme Ideal.

We ordinarily take for granted that goodness consists in the satisfaction of the demands of our sensuous nature, that the sensuous nature of the finite creatures stands at the centre of the world process and has an inherent right to determine the course of the nature of the universe, and that the creation is or ought to be based on the hedonistic principle. Happiness enjoyed by the sentient creatures is thus regarded as the criterion of

good conduct on the part of the universe or the Author of the universe. We forget that good and evil are moral conceptions, and that they should be estimated not by reference to what we desire actually at the present stage of our development, but by reference, from our standpoint, to what we ought to desire as the highest ideal of life, i.e., the perfect fulfilment of our existence, and, from the divine standpoint, to the perfect manifestation of the infinite riches of divine character in the phenomenal world.

When we refer to the experiences of men at different stages of intellectual, moral and spiritual development, we find that their judgments upon the phenomena of nature substantially differ. As men rise to higher and higher planes of culture, their outlook becomes more and more refined and comprehensive and they attain higher and higher conceptions of good, by reference to which they estimate the worth and necessity of the different kinds of phenomena in the physical, sentient and rational nature. It is in the lowest physical plane that the criterion of value is pleasure or happiness. In the moral plane of thought, all the physical sufferings and the mental agonies, all the catastrophes in the external nature and the disasters in the human race, appear as good and beautiful and expressions of divine mercy, in proportion as they are found to be suitable means and contrivances for the progressive development and perfection of the moral character and outlook of the finite creatures and for the varied expression of the glories of the divine character. From the standpoint of the moral ideal immanent in the

world, the world as a whole and in all its departments appears to be a contrivance for moral and spiritual discipline—for "divine education"—for the gradual awakening, self-emancipation and self-perfection of the finite spirits and their ultimate self-identification with the Absolute Spirit. All worldly phenomena are the contrivances for the revelation, exhibition, demonstration and glorification of the power, greatness, goodness, purity, beauty and blessedness of the spirits, in relation to, and in interaction with various orders of circumstances. All finite spirits have been placed in such situations and relations, in the midst of such friendly and apparently hostile forces,—such struggles and agonies, passions and temptations, successes and failures, enjoyments and sufferings,—as may be of value to them to call forth their inherent powers and glories and to develop in them the aspiration and the capacity for the realisation of the divine infinity and perfection in themselves by dint of their own free efforts. The sufferings, failures, calamities, etc., appear in sublime, beautiful, brilliant and glorified forms, when viewed from this higher moral plane, because they are the mirrors on which the inner glories of the self-perfecting spirits are reflected; they are the backgrounds which brighten and enrich their self-expressions; they furnish the measures for the estimation of their essential greatness.

But there is a still higher point of view, from which these worldly phenomena can be, and actually have been observed. When the highest spiritual plane of experience and outlook is reached, and the world is looked upon from the most comprehensive viewpoint, it no longer appears

even as a 'divine education' for the progressive attainment of a perfect ideal, but it reveals itself as the embodiment of the perfect character of God. The whole universe is experienced as the glorious manifestation of Truth, Beauty and Goodness of Divine Character, as the expression of Divine Bliss in diversified forms. "It is from the character of Absolute Ananda (Bliss) that all these phenomenal existences have emanated, it is by Absolute Ananda, which is immanent in them, that they are being sustained, it is towards Absolute Ananda that they are all moving and it is in Absolute Ananda that they are ultimately merged." This is the experience of the *Rishi* of the Upanishad. The whole universe is pervaded by Ananda. "Who could have lived, who could have breathed, if the whole space were not pervaded by Bliss?" Not only is there no evil, but also there is no error or deformity in this divine universe. Ananda is its beginning, middle and end. Ananda or the self-enjoyment of the absolutely true, good and beautiful God is at the root of the creation, and is immanent in all the phenomena of the world. What we call evils, what we call catastrophes, what we call miseries and what we call vices, on account of our ignorance and narrow outlook, are also the self-expressions of the Divine Ananda, the Divine Perfection. It is from this highest spiritual point of view alone that the apparently insoluble problem of evil in the divine creation is finally solved, and for the purpose of this final solution of the problem, we have to rise above this present sense-ridden plane of our outlook and learn to participate in the Divine outlook by ascending to the

highest spiritual plane by dint of the necessary intellectual, moral and spiritual discipline. We then actually witness the rhythmic movements of *Siva's dance* in all that happens in the phenomenal world.

(Concluded)

MEDITATIONS

By Anil Baran Ray

[Mr. Anil Baran Ray is a Sadhaka of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, and is a noted exponent of Sri Aurobindo's teachings. In these meditations he sheds much light on several difficult problems of spiritual life.]

I

DIVINE GRACE

I AM my worst enemy, Mother; no one can help me unless I help myself; Thy Grace is always there to respond to sincere and earnest call, it can work wonders in us, but it will not act unless the full support of our own will is forthcoming.

Hostile forces lie in wait all around us; the more they are rejected the more insistent they become; driven away from the front door, they seek to enter by the back; they know only too well our defects and points of weakness, and are always prompt to take advantage of them; they come in all guises and with all gifts and promises acceptable to us. They can overtake the most vigilant, and one can never be wholly safe from their attack unless and until one is fully changed and transformed.

But they cannot hide their falsehood before sincere seeking and aspiration; they cannot bear the light of truth, they cannot stand before resolute will. The Divine Grace is always there to protect those who sincerely seek its protection.

Thou knowest fully my defects and weakness, Mother; I have taken my absolute refuge in Thee. If thou dost not bear with me in patience and save

me from my own ignorance and weakness—to whom shall I turn? Save Thy child, Mother; give me more light, more strength to my will; support me with Thy Grace while I sincerely try to keep my temple clean and pure for Thy abiding Presence.

II

DIFFICULTIES ON THE PATH

All difficulties and obstacles can be so used as to be of great help to us in our *sadhana*. We are tested by difficulties, they point out the defects and imperfections in us, they rouse us from the inert passivity and lethargy into which we are constantly apt to fall; they exercise and strengthen the powers of self-conquest in us.

If our action brings failure or disaster on us, we have only to thank ourselves, for the Divine Mother is always there to help us, to guide us, and it is entirely our own fault if we turn away from Her and obey our egoistic whims and desires.

If we suffer from doubts and misgivings, we can be sure that there are still obscure and dark corners in us where the divine light has not been brought in and we should open these more and more to the Divine Mother. If ever we feel dull or dry, if sorrow or misery overtake us, we can be sure that there are still parts in us which

hanker after the lower joys of life and thus cut us off from the perennial stream of *ananda* that is flowing all around us.

Thus our difficulties and obstacles are our great aids, they can always be utilised as stepping stones in our upward march, and they are often intended to be such by our Divine Friend and Guide, by the kind and Graceful Mother.

Through the touch of Thy Grace, Mother, difficulties turn into opportunities and the very obstacles and defects in our nature turn into aids and virtues.

The inertia of our nature is a great obstacle to our progress; but by sincere aspiration this inertia is turned into deep peace and firmness, established in which we can remain undisturbed by all events and circumstances in life and refuse to be moved by anything else but a direct impulse from Thyself.

The hankering in our nature for constant activity and struggle is a great obstacle to our progress but by the touch of Thy Grace it turns into strength of will and alertness and a determination to conquer absolutely all defects, all falsehood in our nature.

The movements of our thought and reasoning are a great obstacle to our progress and hide the truth from us; but when dedicated to Thy service they serve as a test, as a solvent which will continually help us to distinguish between truth and falsehood.

Thus if we can sincerely dedicate all our powers and activities to Thy service and turn our whole being

towards Thyself, Mother, all our defects will turn into virtues, all obstacles into aids.

III

FAITH

Faith, it is said, can move mountains. The great and difficult task of raising our human nature into the divine can be accomplished only by genuine and living faith.

A flame which flickers at every blast of wind cannot lead us very far. If we do not possess a living faith in our divine possibilities, we shall never rise above our human limitations. A faith that does not enter into every part of our being and does not influence all our life, all our thoughts and activities—a passive, weak and wavering faith is powerless to achieve anything great or glorious.

We must then keep the torch of true and pure faith brightly burning in us at all times. Whenever doubts and misgivings assail us, we must at once recognise them to be movements of falsehood and sternly reject them. Whenever our flame grows weaker we must open ourselves to the Divine Mother who is the eternal source of all fire and light. Doubts and misgivings, desires and attachments to the lower life, egoistic ambitions and selfish narrowness and jealousy are great enemies of our progress—they rule in the lower consciousness; we must rise above them and live continually in the pure consciousness of faith, light and devotion. A man becomes what his faith is. Living constantly in sincere faith and pure aspiration we shall steadily and inevitably grow into the greatness of the divine life.

EXPERIMENTAL PHILOSOPHY

By Ernest Champness

[Mr. Ernest Champness is the author of "The Significance of Life," and is closely associated with the National Adult School Union of London which has under it 29 County Unions comprising upwards of 1,200 Adult Schools. He is also engaged in the preparation of an Indian Adult School Handbook for the use of groups interested in such work in this country. In the present article he voices the increasing distrust of many people in the West in the capacity of science to solve the most intimate problems of life, and pleads for developing a special method of experimenting with the internal life of man. Is not this method described by him as 'Experimental Philosophy' the same as what we in India call *Sadhana* or spiritual practice?]

THE Experimental Method has been used in the West by science workers with striking success. By a combination of theoretical analysis and synthesis and practical experimentation the wonders of modern science and engineering have been achieved. A long procession of thinkers and experimenters have advanced into the secrets of nature and have revealed some of nature's hidden structure. Some of these have been painstaking and cautious workers, while others have been brilliant speculators. The importance of all this work is not only that the aeroplane has made rapid transit possible and by the radio men's voices are conveyed to the distant parts of the earth; but perhaps, even more striking are the results of investigations which at present show small practical results: one thinks of the prediction of the movements of the planets and of our ability to weigh, measure and analyse stars which are thousands of light-years distant.

Such facts as these suggest that the Universe is a rational whole; that the human reason has the power to understand its structure. Kepler, one of the greatest of the early science workers, sums up his work in wonder: "Oh God! I think again Thy thoughts after Thee!" Robert

Browning, in quite another context, sings:

Rejoice, we are allied

To That which doth provide.

Such words, in different ways, express our natural belief in the Eternal Reason, which our finite minds feebly grasp in those disciplined gropings which we call science. We might have expected that the results of scientific research would have led to a deep conviction of the adequacy of reason to solve the problems of life—rationalism in the full and proper sense of the term. During a portion of the 19th century such an attitude was adopted in some quarters, but now in 1935 such a rationalism seems somewhat remote and unrelated to the world and its many unsolved problems, and to some people even a little fantastic. Why this change? Why this failure to accept the implications of our scientific thought? Why do people believe in reason up to a certain point and beyond that profess to be irrationalists? There are many questions which it is difficult to answer, but I believe that the ones which I have just asked are not of this kind. Broadly speaking, I suggest that the following explanations go to the root of this matter:

1. Modern physics rests upon mathematics, and the convic-

tion has come to many science workers that the mathematics which has been so fruitful is a somewhat arbitrary and artificial construction.

2. The failure to create a more enlightened economic order and a more peaceful system of society. The high post-war ideals have met with a most stubborn resistance from human nature, which fact suggests to many the presence of a large non-rational element in our 'make up'. The bombing aeroplane, with its load of poison gas, like a huge note of interrogation rushing through the sky, is the symbol of our disquiet. Why have we used our best brains to create this evil thing.
3. The New Psychology has shown that actions which profess to spring from reason are often dictated by suppressed instincts seeking expression in action.
4. The study of Abnormal Psychology has revealed that there are many phenomena which do not readily fit into any rational scheme known to us.

Thus there has been born in the West a mistrust, often exaggerated, in reason as an instrument of knowledge. At the same time, in spite of much that may suggest otherwise, there is in the West a wistful longing after the things of the spirit: to worship if we cannot know: to have the immediate knowledge of intuition if a more articulated philosophy be denied. It may be noted here that these modern anti-intellectual tendencies have both strengthened and weakened the defences of religion. In the attack on rationalism those defences of reli-

gion which are based on a faith in reason have been undermined. A denial of reason is destructive of any belief in God which is based on the conclusions of our finite thinking. On the other hand, the denial of the validity of our rational thought does relieve religion from attack by those whose instruments of war are taken from the arsenal of reason.

Thinkers in the West are opening their minds to see new vistas leading to a philosophy of life—a philosophy in which there is room for spiritual adventure and in which a spiritual approach is made to spiritual problems. This newer attitude I have described as 'Experimental Philosophy'. To the various sciences its attitude is one of wondering admiration for past achievements and an expectant open-mindedness for the future. The natural sciences have been built up on careful and repeated experiments. This fundamental method must be taken over by the exponents of an Experimental Philosophy, but with a most important distinction. Each particular science uses the thought-forms which it finds most suited to its subject matter. Great limitation and lack of clarity arises when one science borrows the thought-forms of another science. When, for instance, the biologist takes over the concepts of the chemists, he does so at the expense of a restriction of his power to describe biological happenings. Experimental Philosophy must follow the sciences by being experimental, but the experiments which it makes must be its own experiments, and its attempted description of the results must be expressed in language which is the least inadequate for the purpose of describing the Divine-human quest. The Experimental

Philosopher will seek to create the most serviceable forms of investigation and precise verbal expression.

The Experimental Philosopher has to deal with *all* experience; but, in particular, he is concerned with personality within which all experience which can be known to us is known. Any philosophy, in which the emphasis is placed on personality, must be a philosophy of values, i.e., the good, the true and the beautiful. Life to be appreciated and in part understood must be lived as a venture, as a faith. To break through the arid circumference of life and reach the centre a trust in the spiritual is necessary, a free exercise of our intuitions. We ask: "Is the good life worth while?" and the answer can come from those alone who have striven and striven to lead the good life themselves. They know the answer in an inner way which the mere observer fails to discover. He can only see some outward indications of the inward experience—the glow is missed. The experiment is with life itself: the passion for social service raised to white heat; the mother's intense love for her child; the mystic's emptying his mind and will that he may be a vehicle for the Divine are experiments which we can make with the heart of things, seeking to find a true way of life. In natural science we experiment with external objects, but the Experimental Philosopher must experiment with himself, yet without the self-consciousness of an experimenter, for where this spirit of self-consciousness enters the intensity of the Divine Light becomes dimmed, and when the storms come the lamp may be extinguished—extinguished until relit in some overmastering experience. Historically considered, such a view of the human

personality as I have been trying to suggest is deeply indebted to the impression made on Western thinkers by the personality of Jesus.

Two articles of faith are based on the above considerations, which are directly related to the purpose of this article, and at the present time they cannot be described as being more than articles of faith.

1. The hope exists that such an Experimental Philosophy in leading us deeper into life's secrets may also lead us to a justification—from a higher point of view—of that intellectualism which some aspect of scientific research seems to indicate, but which has become so largely alien to the modern mind. It may be found, when viewed in the light of inward experience, that the verdict of the intellect is not dissimilar to that of the devout intuitions.
2. Western thinkers in setting out on such a venture of the spirit do not desire to feel that they are engaged in a quest which separates them from thinkers belonging to other traditions and who follow other methods. In the West there is a most sincere wish to appreciate co-workers in the East. If the centre of our problem is, by the full development of the personality, to see—to some partial extent—into the meaning of life and experimentally grasp its significance, then our quest is never isolated nor lonely. Anyone who has a vision of the Eternal Spirit, whether or not he uses our Western philosophic terminology for its

expression, is a co-worker in the divine quest.

In the spirit of such a faith, it is natural for us on the centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna to express our admiration and affection for this saintly son of India. Engineers, when constructing a long tunnel through a mountain, start at reverse ends and work from each end towards the centre where the two portions of the tunnel meet and form one. Such is the faith and hope that at some central point the thinkers of the East and of the West, seeking to reach the same goal in different ways, may meet and realise the unity of the Spirit inspiring and guiding their varying quests. Such an aspiration for unity stands in no opposition to the cravings of a people for the pre-

servation of what is best in its cultural history. India and the West have much to give each other, and in order that these gifts may be of value to the recipients there is much that is precious in each culture to preserve. In the West a great struggle is taking place in men's souls. What is to be the dominant factor in the West—a hard mechanised civilisation; or a complex whole formed of northern strenuousness, scientific thoroughness, open-mindedness and veracity, and the idealism of Jesus? In the East the problem presents a different outward form, but how far is its inner spirit the same? Should not the thinkers and seekers of the East and the West act as comrades with mutual respect?

THE DIVINE LIFE

By Swami Yatiswarananda

[Swami Yatiswarananda, formerly head of the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, is at present in Switzerland preaching Vedanta in different countries of Europe. The following paragraphs are sections from the introduction to his forthcoming book entitled "The Divine Life," which consists of selections from Hindu scriptures setting forth both the theory and practice of spiritual life.]

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

THE phenomenon of spiritual awakening is witnessed in all the great religions of the world. In the course of man's higher evolution there arises in him a new yearning which may properly be called the hunger of the soul. Because of this new urge the aspirant is not satisfied with the finite and fleeting pleasures of life, physical and mental, but longs for the Eternal and the Infinite which alone can bring nourishment and peace to his hungry soul. We find this fact in some form or other in the Hindu Seer, in the Bud-

dhist Initiate, in the Christian Mystic as well as in the Muslim Sufi. All of them lose the charm for material pleasures and even intellectual enjoyments, and with their whole being hanker after perfection and freedom, although they may follow somewhat different paths of spiritual discipline and culture.

Whether the first spiritual change or 'conversion' is brought about all of a sudden, or by a slow process going on in the soul of the aspirant unknown and unnoticed, there comes to him always a new outlook which was very characteristically expressed in

terms of theism by a great devotee in Ancient India, "Lord, may I think of Thee with that strong love which the ignorant cherish for the things of the world, and may that love never cease to abide in my heart."

In studying the psychology of the spiritual seeker, we find in him not only a new attitude towards the world but also a new outlook on his own self. The worldly-minded identify themselves with the body and care only for the enjoyments of the world. The spiritual aspirant, on the other hand, comes to regard himself as a soul,—whatever his conception of it may be at the beginning,—a spiritual entity dwelling in the body but different from it. And he earnestly wants to come in touch with the "Over-soul", the Divine Principle, the God of the devotee, who, as Sri Ramakrishna realised, is only one but is attainable through many paths of spiritual culture.

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE ETERNAL SELF

The belief in the indestructible and eternal nature of the Self is a most vital point in spiritual life and practice. Empirical sciences, busy with the material aspects of things, are not sufficient to explain life as such. The living body is no doubt a combination of cells as biology tells us, but the principle of life that animates it is something different from the dead matter through which it manifests itself. As Sir Oliver Lodge expressed very clearly, "The behaviour of a ship giving shot and shell is explicable in terms of energy but the discrimination which it exercises between friend and foe is not so explicable. The vagaries of a fire or a cyclone could be predicted by Laplace's calculator,

given the initial positions, velocities and the law of acceleration of the molecules, but no mathematician could calculate the orbit of a common house-fly. Life introduces something incalculable and purposeful amid the laws of physics; it thus distinctly supplements those laws though it leaves them otherwise precisely as they were and obeys them all." There are biologists who go so far as to declare that the brain secretes thought just as the liver secretes bile. Thus according to them mind is a product of matter. But it should not be forgotten that the conception of matter is undergoing a revolutionary change in the thoughts of some of the first class men of science to-day. As the distinguished physicist and astronomer, Sir James Jeans, clearly acknowledges, "The Universe begins to look more like a great thought than a great machine. . . Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder in the realm of matter. We are beginning to suspect that we ought rather to hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter. Not, of course, our individual minds, but the Mind in which the atoms, out of which our individual minds have grown, exist as thoughts."

To the materially-minded the body and the world of matter are realities of the first order. And whatever is taken to be real for the time being, draws the whole soul of man, his thoughts, his feelings as well as his will. As the new factor of Spiritual Consciousness dawns on the seeker after Truth, he comes to doubt the ultimate reality of his body and the world of matter and mind, nay, instinctively he comes to regard his self and the Divine to be more real than the former; and accordingly he re-

acts in an altogether new way in his entire life and thought.

This is pointed out in the Bhagavad-Gita, "The Self is never born, nor does it die. It is not that not having been, It comes into being. It is unborn, eternal, changeless, ever Itself. It is not killed when the body is killed" (II, 20). So the man of Self-realisation gets rid of the fear of death, for having attained to the knowledge of the true Self he has become immortal. Even the sincere believer in the eternal nature of the Self should be free from fear. So says the Bhagavad-Gita again, "This, the Indweller in the bodies of all, is ever indestructible. Therefore thou oughtest not to mourn for any creature" (II, 30). And not only that, "Being steady in the ideal and in the path leading to its realisation, the aspirant should perform his duty, giving up attachment and remaining indifferent to success or failure" (II, 48). Taking refuge in the Lord dwelling in his heart, he should follow the Divine path and approach the ideal more and more.

What is the Self and what again is God? To the theist God is the Indwelling Spirit—the Self of his self. To the monist God alone is his true Self as distinct from the false self he takes to be real before the dawn of the highest spiritual knowledge. In trying to realise his real nature, he finds that what he has been calling his own self is only a shadow of the Reality, that his so-called personality is a reflection of the Eternal Principle and so he becomes one with it. Speaking on this point, Sri Ramakrishna observes, "Know yourself and you shall then know God. What is my ego? Is it my hand or foot or flesh or blood, or any other part of my body? Reflect

well, and you will know that there is no such thing as "I". The more you peel off the skin of an onion, the more skin only appears—you cannot get any kernel; so when you analyse the ego, it vanishes into nothingness. What is ultimately left behind is the Atman (Self)—the pure Chit (Consciousness Absolute). God appears when the ego dies."

GOD, SOUL AND UNIVERSE

The three topics—the soul, God and the universe are the most fundamental in all religions and philosophies. The intelligent spiritual aspirant wants to form a clear conception not only of his own soul but also of the soul's relationship with the Divine, and the Divine's and his own connection with the universe. He wants to find the right solution for the enigma of life. So it was but natural that in ancient India the seekers after Truth, perplexed by the mysteries of existence, asked the question "What is the cause of the universe? Whence are we born? Why do we live? Where is our final rest? Under whose command are we subject to happiness and misery?" (Swetaswatara Up.). They pondered deeply over the riddle of the universe and tried to find explanations about it with the help of the intellect and reason. They took up the various possible explanations as to the ultimate cause—time, chance, matter, energy and so on—but rejected them as unsatisfactory. They realised that the final explanation of things cannot be had on the plane of the intellect. So with a view to arrive at the true knowledge by means of intuition or direct experience, they dived into the depths of meditation, and realised through it that everything has its origin in an eternal Self-conscious

Power, called God or Self in religion and philosophy (Swetaswatara Up.)

This idea is graphically expressed in the Mundaka Upanishad, "As the spider produces the thread and absorbs it again, as herbs grow on the earth, as hairs come out spontaneously from man, so does creation spring forth from the Imperishable" (I. 1, 7).

Both the worlds of the living and the non-living have their origin in the One Great Cause. "As from a blazing fire, there shoot out thousands of sparks of the same appearance, so do the various beings originate from the Imperishable, and into it they go back." "From the Imperishable are born also vital energy, the mind, the senses, ether, air, fire, water and also the earth."

Some schools of Hindu Thought may regard the individual self as atomic while others as infinite in its true nature, but all hold that it represents a pure, conscious, and spiritual existence different from mind, senses and body which are its instruments of knowledge and action. Again, the Hindu thinkers do not consider the Self or Atman to be really a created being. It is eternally existent, according to some as an atomic consciousness or according to others as finite consciousness during ignorance but in reality as infinite consciousness, and the texts that speak of its origin imply only its expression or manifestation in the world of mind and matter. And this Self dwells equally in men and all other beings. Only, animals and other creatures are in a lower stage of growth. All will attain their potential Divinity and perfection in the course of evolution and progress.

THE IDEAL OF DIVINE REALISATION

In Hinduism religion and philosophy have been inseparable and even

almost synonymous. Both aim at the intuitive vision of the Truth, and fulfil each other. As Prof. Max Muller very truly observes, the two have worked together harmoniously in India alone, where religion derives its breadth of vision from philosophy, and philosophy its spirituality from religion. Religion is the practical form of philosophy, and philosophy the rational form of religion. In Hinduism 'Darsana,' the word usually translated as philosophy, means a system calculated to bring about direct vision or experience of the Truth. The Hindu philosophers were primarily men of spiritual realisation. And therefore their systems, based on transcendental experience, lead to the same goal, if followed with sincerity and devotion. Thus the goal of both religion and philosophy is Self-realisation which the aspirant should strive to attain in this very life.

It is not enough if the aspirant subscribes to doctrines and dogmas with a strong faith. He must also live an intensive higher life and attain to Divine experience in its various aspects. So corresponding to dualistic, qualified non-dualistic and non-dualistic systems of thought there are spiritual experiences in which the devotee realises the Divine Being as his Master, Father, Mother, Friend, or Beloved; or as the Eternal Principle of which his personality is an eternal mode or part; or as the One Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute which alone is his true Self and Goal.

Spiritual life is like a never-ending warfare between the higher and lower natures of man. Animal and Divine tendencies are found mysteriously blended in the same individual. And so it is the constant task of the aspir-

ant to eliminate the evil and strengthen the good in him. But he must first of all be able to distinguish the Divine attributes that lead one towards perfection and freedom from the demoniac qualities that increase the soul's ignorance and bondage. In detail does the Bhagavad-Gita speak of this important point—"Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in knowledge and spiritual practice; giving away in charity, control of the senses, sacrifice, reading of the Scriptures and uprightness; non-injuriousness, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, tranquillity, absence of calumny, compassion to beings, non-covetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness, boldness, forgivingness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, absence of pride,—these belong to one born for a Divine State.

"Ostentation, arrogance and self-conceit, anger as also harshness and ignorance, belong to one who is born for a demoniac state. The Divine State is deemed as making for liberation, the demoniac state for bondage" (XVI, 1-5).

THE GUNAS AND HOW TO TRANSCEND THEM

The general classification of men and things into the two groups of good and bad did not satisfy the analytic mind of the Hindu seers. In the course of their examination into the nature of everything, they discovered three primordial stuffs. These three inseparable constituents of Prakriti or Nature transform themselves into ego, mind, senses, bodies and sense-objects. The Gunas manifest themselves both as substance and attributes, something like the primal creative energy expressing itself as both matter and force.

The human personality is a combination of the Self and non-Self consisting of the ego, mind, senses, etc. All that is non-Self belongs to the domain of the Gunas. Knowing the truth that the Self is distinct from the Gunas and their activities, the man of knowledge does not become attached but remains free; while the ignorant man with his understanding deluded by egoism thinks that he is the doer and so becomes entangled in the world (Bhagavad-Gita II, 27, 28). But it is not possible for the ordinary soul bound by the Gunas to get detached all of a sudden. In order to transcend the Gunas one must know their respective natures, their attributes and manifestations, and also the means to go beyond them. As has been said, the three Gunas are inseparable, but one or the other is predominant particularly in the embodied being and determines his nature. Sattwa is associated with purity, knowledge and happiness; Rajas with attachment, activity and pain; Tamas with impurity, ignorance and indolence. The aspirant should overcome Tamas and Rajas by means of Sattwa. In order to do that he should take the food that increases Sattwa, should try also to possess Sattwika knowledge, perform Sattwika worship, gift, austerities and other forms of activities. As his mind is purified of all dross, he beholds no agent other than the Gunas and comes to know the Transcendent Principle which is higher than the Gunas; he is freed from birth and death and attains to the Immortal State. Sattwa is thus nearer to the Truth but is not the Truth which can be realised only by transcending even Sattwa. But no question of going above it will ever arise unless it has first of all been at-

tained by the seeker. And hence he should try to develop the Sattwa or spiritual elements in him to the best of his power, eliminating all that is impure and unspiritual.

SPIRITUAL LIFE—ITS MEANING

Thus spiritual life is one of intense striving. In order to attain to success, the aspirant should be always up and doing. So does the Bhagavad-Gita exhort him—"A man should uplift himself by his own self. So let him not weaken this self. For this self is the friend of oneself, and this self is the enemy of oneself. The self is the friend of the self for him who has conquered himself by this self. But to the unconquered self, the self is inimical and behaves like an eternal foe" (VI: 5, 6).

The life of the seeker after Truth must be dynamic and creative. But this does not mean that it is also to

be standardised in every respect. Freedom being the first condition of growth, he must be able to follow freely the law of his being. According to temperament and capacity, he may pursue the life of selfless activity, or the path of devotion, or the way of sense-control and mental concentration, or the path of self-analysis and knowledge, either singly or jointly. Swami Vivekananda speaks of the ideal of spiritual life thus in his inimitable language: "Each soul is potentially Divine. The goal is to manifest this Divine within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship or psychic control, or philosophy, by one or more, or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrine, or dogmas, or rituals, or books or temples or forms are but secondary details."

SWETASWATARA UPANISHAD

By Swami Thyagisananda

युक्तेन मनसा वयं देवस्य सवितुः सवे । सुवर्गेयाय शक्त्या ॥

देवस्य=Self-luminous सवितुः=of the Self सवे—for the birth युक्तेन=controlled मनसा—with the mind शक्त्या=vigorously सुवर्गेयाय—for the attainment of bliss (प्रयत्नादे=shall endeavour).

With our minds controlled so as to bring out¹ the Self-luminous Soul, we shall vigorously endeavour for the attainment of Supreme Bliss².

Note.—This verse speaks of the necessity for constant and vigorous practice or Abhyasa, which according to Patanjali forms along with Vairagya, the most necessary requisite for the complete cessation of the Chittavritti (modifications of the mind). Cf. Patanjali अभ्यासविरम्याभ्यां तन्निरोधः Their control is by practice and non-attachment (Ch. 1, Sutra 12); तत्रस्थितौ यत्नोऽभ्यासः Continuous struggle to keep them (the Vrittis) perfectly restrained, is practice (Sutra 13); and स तु दीर्घकालं नैरन्तरं सत्कारासेवितो रजमृमिः Practice becomes firmly grounded when observed for a long time with constant and intense zeal (Sutra 14). More pointedly the verse may be taken to refer to Dharana, the

sixth among the eight steps of Ashtangayoga as elaborated by Patanjali. Cf. Patanjali Sutra II, 1 देशबन्धितस्य धारणा Dharana is holding the mind on or confining its activities within a limit. This is the step immediately preceding Dhyana or meditation.

1. *To bring out*—This means to manifest the self-luminous soul immanent in every being and working from inside to remove the obstacles to its manifestation.

2. *For the attainments of Supreme Bliss*—The word Swarga here refers to the Paramatman according to Sankara.

युक्त्वाय मनसा देवान् सुवर्यतो धिया दिवम् ।

बृहज्ज्योतिः करिष्यतः सविता प्रसुवाति तान् ॥

सुवर्यतः=heaven-aspiring देवान्=the senses मनसा=with the help of the mind धिया=with the help of the intellect च=and युक्त्वाय=controlling दिवम्=Self-luminous बृहत्=Infinite ज्योतिः=Light करिष्यतः=manifesting तान्=them सविता=the Immanent Soul or God प्रसुवाति=regenerates.

Controlling the heaven-aspiring¹ senses with the help of the mind and the intellect², the Immanent Soul so regenerates them as to enable them to manifest the Self-luminous³ Infinite Light (3).

Note.—The verse refers to the necessity for Shama and Dama as well as for Pratyahara and Dharana.

1. *Heaven-aspiring*—The reference here is to the natural tendency of the senses to run after external worldly pleasures. According to Sankarananda Swarga or heaven is only the pleasure arising out of the enjoyment of external objects through attachment. It is to be noted on the other hand that the bliss of Atman realisation is quite different from pleasures of this type.

2. *With the help of the mind and intellect*—Cf. the allegorical description in the Katha Upanishad where the individual soul is the rider of the chariot viz., the body, bound for Vishnu's abode, Buddhi the charioteer and Manas the reins to curb the senses which form the steeds.

In other words, senses are by nature attracted to their objects. No external method is ultimately of any avail in checking their natural propensities. The mind and the Buddhi which control the senses have to be purified and transformed by a changed outlook on life. Then alone can sense-control be successfully practised.

युजते मनः उत युजते धियो विप्रा विप्रस्य बृहतो विपश्चितः ।

विहोत्रा दधे वयुनाविदेकहन्मही देवस्य सवितुः परिधुतिः ॥

विप्राः=Wise men मनः=the mind युजते=control धियः=the activities of the intellect or Buddhi युजते=control उत=and वयुनाविद्=the knowing one एकः=single इत्=alone होत्राः=spiritual practices विदधे=undergoes विप्रस्य=all-pervading बृहतः=infinite विपश्चितः=all-knowing देवस्य=self-luminous सवितुः=of the immanent soul मही=great परिधुतिः=glory.

Great is the glory of the Immanent Soul which is all-pervading, all-knowing, infinite and self-luminous. Only that single one¹ who knows², undergoes the necessary discipline and spiritual practices. The wise do indeed control the activities of the intellect and practice meditation and concentration. (4)

Note.—This verse refers to Dhyana and Nididhyasana as necessary steps in the practice of Sadhana, subsequent to the arising of Sraddha in the mind of the aspirant as a result of Sravana and Manana.

1. *The single one*—This shows how only very few alone attempt to practise meditation. See also Gita Chap. VII, 3.

2. *Who knows*—Who is convinced that a higher kind of bliss is attainable through concentration and meditation than through giving free rein to the senses. This conviction arises out of study of the Scripture and advice of the Guru, i.e., Sravana, as well as through Manana or reflection. It is this constant Sravana and Manana that create the working faith or Sraddha in the mind of the aspirant.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

The Thiyas get restive

Quite a sensation has been created of late by the proposed abandonment of Hinduism by the Thiyas, an important section of the so-called untouchable castes of Kerala (Malabar, Cochin and Travancore). The alleged reason for this movement is the social difficulties they are subjected to in the Hindu fold. It is said that they have not yet decided which religion they are to embrace after renouncing Hinduism. Christianity, Sikhism and Islam are the three faiths bidding for the allegiance of the Thiyas, and according to press reports the leanings of many of their leaders are towards Islam. We hear also that many Muslim missionaries from the Punjab, including the redoubtable Mr. Gauba, had been to the West Coast, preaching the glories of Islam to the prospective converts and painting a glowing picture of the transforming influence it will have on the social and spiritual status of the new con-

verts. We wish these missionaries had exerted a little at least of this transforming influence on their old converts for generations, so that other religionists might follow their own religious rites and ceremonies without being disturbed by these uplifted and educated followers of Islam.

The Thiyas of course have the full liberty to give up Hinduism if they are dissatisfied with it, and embrace any other faith that is likely to elevate them. But we, for our part, have a word to say about their alleged reason for their proposed conversion and the religion that is tempting them with promises of social redemption. It is true that the Thiyas are an untouchable caste according to orthodox classification. But they no longer form a Depressed Class. Economically they are in no way worse than the caste Hindus; physically they are much more manly and virile than they; and educationally they are not much inferior to them. The commu-

nity has produced at least one judge of the Madras High Court, and several other highly placed Government officers, lawyers, doctors, and other professional men. There are also quite a good number of Sanskrit scholars among them. More than all this, from the Thiya community came the late Sri Narayana Guru, who is perhaps the only man of originality and high spiritual attainment that Kerala produced in the past two centuries; and among his disciples are to be counted not only Thiyas but many high caste Hindus as well. Thanks to this great man the Thiyas have got many temples, Maths, Sannyasins and educational institutions of their own. Now we ask—if remaining Hindus they could, by their own efforts, achieve all this in the past fifty years, what reason have they to abandon that religion on the ground of social disabilities. Perhaps the only disability they have in mind is the perversity of the Sanatanists and the die-hard caste Hindus in stigmatising them as untouchables and on this ground refusing them entry into the Hindu temples of which they happen to be the custodians at present. Now, from a strong and self-respecting community like the Thiyas, one would have expected quite a different type of reaction to this arrogant attitude of Hindu fundamentalists. If they considered temple-entry a vital question, they could have fought for it until the caste Hindus yielded, or they could have in turn treated caste-arrogant people as untouchables and boycotted the temples and repudiated their sanctity on the ground that holiness can never be associated with a place where the children of God are wantonly insulted and humiliated.

To us therefore the Thiya leaders seem to be moved more by a petulant and revengeful spirit than by any real feeling of social disabilities. This suspicion is strengthened when one hears of their sudden love for Islam; for we feel in a saner moment the Thiyas would have selected some other religion than Islam, even if they wanted to give up Hinduism. We have seen Islam in a way benefiting people who belong to the most oppressed and down-trodden sections of society. It creates in them more of self-respect, infuses more of animal spirit into them, endows them with a better sense of organisation, and makes them capable not only of dealing blow for blow but even kicks where neither blow nor kick has been given. The Thiyas, however, are sufficiently strong and self-reliant, and require the services of no religion to make them so. What is more, they belong to a cultural strata that is much more advanced than the generality of Muslims in Kerala, and are therefore more likely to be culturally degraded than elevated by the proposed conversion. Perhaps the only so-called cultural advantage which conversion to Islam is likely to give them is that they will be required not only to renounce their faith but also much of their indigenous culture and adopt that of Arabia and Persia in its place. A Muslim missionary who visited Kerala recently sought to allay the fears of Thiyas in this respect by declaring that the only implication of conversion to Islam will be the acceptance of the unity of God and the prophethood of Mohammed. But we for our part know that to be an Indian Muslim means much more than that. If it does not make the shutting up of women behind the Purdah compulsory,

it at least insists on one's accepting the "Communal Rewards," namely, separate electorates and weightage of representation in legislatures. And as far as our experience of Muslim converts in India goes,—and it must be remembered 90 per cent of Indian Muslims are local converts—, the process of conversion which begins with the acceptance of the formula referred to before is however complete only after the convert accepts Urdu as his spoken language in place of his previous mother-tongue; Arabic and Persian as his classical languages instead of Sanskrit; becomes a victim to the illusory belief that he is a blue-blooded Arab; comes to feel a greater kinship between himself and an Afghan foreigner or a Pathan hill man than with his Hindu neighbour, as was alleged to have been declared to be the case with himself by one who is both a prominent Muslim leader and a responsible Government officer; and finally begins to consider himself a part of an army of occupation on whose sufferance the rest of India's population is living in this country. The Thiyas ought to consider all these implications seriously before they allow themselves to be carried away by the glib talks of propagandists.

The Depressed Classes of Muslim India

There is, however, a still more important consideration which we have reserved for the last. According to the most liberal computation of the Census Report of 1931 the Depressed Classes among the Hindus number 239,195,140, i.e., 21 per cent of the total Hindu population of that year. Of these about half may constitute the untouchable castes, and therefore

the really oppressed classes; the rest may only be called backward classes from the point of view of their educational and economic conditions. As against this, Indian Islam has got a population of Depressed Classes, which numbers more than half the total strength of the community. That is the *Muslim women* who, shut up behind the Purdah, are denied the two elementary rights of human beings—pure air and life-giving sunlight, of which God has placed an abundance at the disposal of man. It has also to be remembered that whereas powerful movements are at present working for the emancipation of Hindu Depressed Classes, the liberation of the Muslim Depressed Classes has scarcely begun, and when it is started one may be sure that the Mullas and the purists of Islam will oppose the movement with a violence, vehemence and fanaticism that the Hindu Sanatanists are incapable of.

We need not enter here into controversial topics like the alleged denial of soul in women by Islam and the low conception of womanhood it is supposed to foster. These may have no sanction in the Koran as enlightened Muslims contend, and are most likely the fabrications of degenerate Islamic theologians, popularised widely by interested propagandists. But then we must add that this is precisely the contention of liberal Hindus too with regard to untouchability; for they maintain that untouchability has no place in genuine Hinduism. What, however, matters in religion is not the truths contained in books but the way in which they find expression in the lives of individuals and communities. Judged by this standard it will be seen that just as modern Hinduism is guilty of the practice of un-

touchability in spite of all its theoretical teachings with regard to the oneness of existence, modern Islam too, whatever might be the Koranic ideal of womanhood, is guilty in practice of instilling a very low conception of women among the vast majority of its followers. Just as the conservative Hindu masses believe that the untouchable castes are born impure and exist only to work as their serfs, so too the ordinary Muslim in the fields and the streets holds that women exist only for the pleasure of men. That this is not merely our surmise, but the actual state of affairs is amply proved by the wide prevalence of polygamy and loose forms of sex-relationship among Muslims, and above all by the numerous cases of outrages and abominable crimes perpetrated by Muslims against women, especially Hindu women inhabiting predominantly Muslim areas. Such attacks on women have been notoriously prevalent for long time past, but due to various delicate considerations involved in the matter and the disinclination of the conservative Hindus to take back the victims of such attacks into their families, very few of these cases used to be brought before the Police till recently. But thanks to the vigilance of certain associations, an appreciable number of such cases are being brought to light now-a-days. These numbers are so appallingly high that some of the Provincial Governments have felt the need of special measures to cope with the situation. Hence a Bill was recently passed in the Bengal Legislature, introducing flogging as a punishment for crimes against women, and strange to say, a Muslim member opposed the measure on the ground that it was directed against the Mus-

lim community, although the Bill had no such discriminative character in letter and in spirit. What inference are we to draw from this fact about the attitude of many Muslims, including some educated men like the above-mentioned member of the Bengal Legislature, towards women? At least the Thiyas, in place of being misguided by the ready promises and glowing pictures of Muslim missionaries, should ponder over these problems well. They will then find that theoretical liberality and practical hypocrisy are not the privileges of every-day Hinduism alone but a common feature of popular Islam as well, and that a change of faith may in all probability be a change for the worse and not for the better.

The hostility of the Thiyas to Hinduism is perhaps at its bitterest in regard to the right of temple entry which the Sanatanists of Hinduism are arrogantly denying them. It is a just grievance, especially for a progressive and self-respecting community like the Thiyas. But then, is the position of the Depressed Classes of Islam in any way better in this respect? In other words are the Muslim women allowed to pray in mosques either side by side with men or separately by themselves? We do not know what the Koran says on the point, or how the progressive Muslims view the question. But if our opinion is to be guided by practice, as it ought to be in matters of this type, then the unhesitating conclusion that an impartial observer will arrive at is that Islam denies the right of worship in its public mosques to *half of its population* as against Hinduism which does so only with regard to about a *tenth of its population*. And whereas in Hinduism there is at present an

active movement to put an end to this state of affairs, we doubt whether the Muslim leaders have even raised this question relating to this elementary religious right of women. We would therefore ask the Thiya leaders who have suddenly fallen in love with Islam whether they would like to become an Elevated Class by condemning their womenfolk to become a Depressed Class, and again whether they find any greater charm in Islam with about 50 per cent of Depressed Classes, than in Hinduism with only 21 per cent of such classes? If the Thiya leaders would dispassionately consider these points raised by us, they will feel convinced that on the whole conversion to Islam is not in any way going to place them in a better social environment. When all aspects of the question are considered without anger and prejudice, they will find in Hinduism a much better source of help and inspiration in the

promotion of both their spiritual and secular ends.

We must in conclusion add that nothing of what we have stated above should be construed as showing disrespect to the genuine spiritual content of Islam. Islam as a spiritual gospel we value as much as any other religion, and the Koran and the Holy Prophet command our reverence. We only want to counteract the propaganda of unscrupulous men who compare the worst features of a religious community with the best of another, with the deliberate purpose of misleading men and serving their own ulterior motives. Let the preaching of religion be the concern of men who have a glimpse of the Divine Light within; let not electioneering politicians and riot-fostering communalists stalk the land in its name and prey upon the ignorance and impulsiveness of people.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE SECRET LORE OF INDIA AND THE ONE PERFECT LIFE FOR ALL (with a Supplement): By W. M. Teape. Published by W. Heffer & Sons, Ltd., Cambridge, England. (Copies can be had of S. S. Book Emporium, Basavangudi, Bangalore City.) Price 14sh. 6d.

This book is the result of a life-long study of the foundations of Eastern and Western religious thought. The author wants to give a parallel presentation of the main teachings of Hinduism and Christianity and consider their relation to each other. It is however doubtful if Mr. Teape with his evangelistic outlook is fit for a task that demands an unprejudiced mind, breadth of vision and a single-hearted devotion to Truth. For he mentions early in the volume that Hinduism is the great rival that Christianity has to face and conquer, and that his study of the Upanishads was undertaken just to understand the opposing forces from within.

Such is the genesis of the present study. The book consists of three parts. In the first, which is introductory, the author traces the course of Hindu religious thoughts and tradition from the earliest times to the days of the Upanishads. The second part consists of free rendering into English of select portions of ten Upanishads which, according to the author's view, embody the secret lore. This section is provided with profuse notes and a vocabulary of important Sanskrit terms. The third part gives the author's 'conclusion' which we find is nothing but a reiteration of the original hypothesis with which he started, viz., that Christianity alone provides the perfect faith for all mankind and that all other faiths are defective. His opinion about the ancient Hindu seers is that "the Upanishad Fathers are like prospectors who have caught sight in outline and with not a little mist obscuring their view, what has

been revealed in such fulness and clearness to the Christian." He adds with great condescension, "Important as it is for India, ourselves and the world that India should have its due place as a civic entity in the comity of nations, but how much more important for India, ourselves and the world that India have its due place as a spiritual member of the Church of God."

The spirit embodied in the above words condemns the book more strongly than any criticism of ours can do. For it is quite the reverse of religion to hold that God or Truth is the monopoly of any one sect or church and that there is no hope of salvation for those who follow their own personal faiths. We are, therefore, more inclined to pity the author for his blinding obsession than quarrel with him over the wrong conclusion. The sense of pity is only deepened by the evidence in the book of the author's patient labour and industry in trying to master Sanskrit and understand the secret lore of the Upanishads. The author has taken great pains in the third part to give a parallel presentation of the main doctrines of the Upanishads and the Bible, pointing out the similarities between them on the one hand and their striking resemblance to the ideas of modern poets like Walt Whitman on the other. He has also drawn attention to the confirmation which ancient Hindu philosophical doctrines have received at the hands of modern scientists and philosophers like Sir James Jeans and General Smuts. In spite of these interesting features, which invest the book with some value to students of comparative religion, the author's evangelical obsession has vitiated the work and made it a misleading guide for workers in the field. Mr. Teape's strange charge against the sages of the Upanishads is that they suffer from the miasma of sin!

ANTHOLOGY OF VEDIC HYMNS. By Bhuvananda Sarasvati. The Ramlal Kapur Trust, Anārkali, Lahore, India. Pages 326. Price Rs. 1-8, cloth-bound Rs. 1-12 only.

The book contains some of the best hymns of the four Vedas—hymns whose high value has been acknowledged by most Vedic scholars. Some of the important topics of the hymns are "Worship of the One God," "Prayers for Noble Intentions," "The Nature of the Supreme Being and means to attain Him," "Man's Endeavour

after Perfection," "The Soul of the Universe and his Universal Body"—all topics of universal need and acceptance. Each stanza is followed by the Padapatha, Anvaya which is a sort of paraphrase in Sanskrit, notes on each word, English translation of the stanza, purport and comment.

The word-notes are the most important portions of the work, their importance lying in the fact that they are presented entirely from the Indian point of view with the help of Vedic Grammar, Nirukta and the Brahmanas. When western scholars deal with the words they pay more attention to the roots than to the suffixes and translate texts from the point of view of comparative philology. Our present author, however, has gone to the other extreme of rejecting comparative philology altogether, which is a great defect of the book. Bhuvanandaji has applied the rules of grammar with a vengeance, perhaps to make up the defects in the other direction.

His "translation" is not literal, which he himself informs us. It is a compromise between translation and paraphrase, sometimes rising to the rank of explanation. The author is a great admirer of Sri Dayananda Sarasvati, whose views he shares and presents, and consequently rises or falls with him. The attempt at divesting the Vedas of all mythological and historical settings and presenting a pure undiluted spiritual view of each verse, we are afraid, is sure to meet with failure. Sayana might not be always right, but to reject his explanation merely because it is mythological is to refuse to pay Caesar what is his due.

The worst part of the book, however, is the "Comments." What with unduly long quotations from the Sūtras and Smritis and from the writings of English poets and poetasters, and what with the presentation of queer, antediluvian explanations (e.g., the so-called mathematical explanation of Aum) and long uncalled-for digressions, the "Comments" are a dead weight to the whole book. There are a good many evidences of scholarship in the book, some dark passages have been beautifully illuminated, many of the exegetical notes are brilliant; but the lack of a sense of proportion and some queer views ill-suited to modern tastes have partly taken away its worth.

Introduction of comparative philology into the otherwise brilliant "notes" and a substantial cutting out of the "comments" will greatly enhance the value of the book.

RAMAKRISHNA THE MAN AND THE POWER: By Swami Gnaneshwarananda. The Vedanta Society, 120, East Delaware Place, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A. Page 125.

It is on the occasion of the Ramakrishna Centenary that the Swami has brought out this beautifully got up and profusely illustrated little book to acquaint the larger public of U.S.A. with the life and mission of Sri Ramakrishna. In the course of two dissertations, which the book embodies, a very graphic and faithful picture has been drawn which brings out into relief the real man and what he stood for, viz., that man is not a geographically bound creature but an essentially spiritual being, bearing in his very nature the burden of entire humanity. The modern world stands in need of such a life and such a message, and the Swami has done well in presenting the book to it at a time when man's body and intellect are being scientifically trained to play the part of ravenous wolves. When Europe and some parts of Asia are trying to convert their womanfolk into "man manufacturing machines" for a future war, it is profitable to learn how Sri Ramakrishna worshipped one of their representatives as divinity incarnate. When the very booms of commercialism have brought about the present slump, from whose grip there seems to be no escape, it is wise to learn the saints'

evaluation of money and to brood over it if the spirit of man can be saved that way.

VEDANTADINDIMĀ (Sanskrit): By Nrsimha Sarasvati with the Commentary Bhavabodhini. Published by the Adhyatmaprakash Office, 66, 11 Road Chamrajpet, Bangalore City.

The book under review belongs to the class known as Prakaranas in Sanskrit Philosophical literature, and forms a valuable introduction to the study of Advaita Vedanta. Our knowledge of its author is next to nothing. A perusal of the book would easily reveal the fact that he must have been an adept, for he covers within 94 Anushtubha verses of crystal clarity all the salient features of Advaita Vedanta with true effect. The last quarter of each couplet, forming an anaphora, reminds one of the repeated beat of a drum proclaiming the message of Advaita. Though not entirely unknown to scholars hitherto, the work has been suffering from want of a decent and correct edition. Mr. Subramanya Sarma has supplied this want and has besides done a service to students of Indian Philosophy by publishing along with it a lucid and non-technical commentary of his own on the work. At the close of his comment on each verse the learned author has traced the Upanishadic texts that may have given rise to the lofty Advaitic ideas that are garnered in these couplets. Mr. Sarma's emendations of the faulty texts is commendable. The book is rounded off by an alphabetical contents and an index to the first words of the Slokas.

NEWS AND REPORTS

The Sri Ramakrishna Centenary in New York

A correspondent from New York writes:—The Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna has been used by Swami Nikhilananda as an opportunity to bring knowledge of this great Soul to the attention of a larger public, through an interesting program of events and a series of articles contributed to magazines and leading newspapers of this city. The Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center began its celebration in the Chapel, on the evening of February 21st, with a lecture by Swami Vividishananda of Washington,

D.C., on Sri Ramakrishna, illustrated by beautiful lantern slides.

The next evening, February 22nd, two hundred friends and members of the Center participated in the Centenary dinner given in the large private dining room of a well-known restaurant near the Chapel. For the first time five Swamis of the Eastern Coast joined in one great function, to speak on the message of Sri Ramakrishna. It was most inspiring for the many guests to hear the Swamis Paramananda of Boston, Gnaneshwarananda of Chicago, Akhilananda of Providence, Vividishananda of Washing-

ton, and their own beloved Swami Nikhilananda, each in his own sincere and characteristic way tell of the Master, in whose service they had come far from their mother-country to bestow His blessings far and wide. Mr. Salvatore de Madariaga, former ambassador of Spain to France and the U.S.A., and former chairman of the Disarmament Committee of the League of Nations, paid a beautiful tribute to the spiritual flowering of India, saying that he hoped it would soon be grafted on the tree of Western material progress. Many prominent New Yorkers attended the dinner, which received cordial notice from the press.

A week later, on Sunday March 1st, the special Sri Ramakrishna Birthday Celebration was held at the Chapel, an unforgettable event for the crowds that attended it. Many eager souls stood out in the hallway to hear the beautiful service by Swami Nikhilananda, who spoke on the "Religious Experiences of a Great Master."

As the culmination of the Sri Ramakrishna Centennial, through the unstinted efforts of Swami Nikhilananda, a public meeting attended by twelve hundred people was held at the Town Hall of New York, on the evening of March 8. Five eminent speakers representing various phases of public life, besides the Swami, were on the platform to pay their tribute to Sri Ramakrishna. The large portrait from the Chapel, surrounded by beautiful floral decorations, stood on an easel facing the audience. The meeting opened with an organ prelude, a Sanskrit invocation, and the introductory address on Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings by Swami Nikhilananda, which was later distributed in pamphlet form to the many deeply interested members of the audience. After the fine and compelling discourses of the revered Swami, and his reading of messages from His Holiness Swami Akhandananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Romain Rolland and Dr. John Haynes Holmes, Dr. Frederick Robinson, President of the College of the City of New York, spoke in appreciation of both western science and eastern mysticism, showing how both are necessary for the fulfilment of life. Dr. Samuel H. Goldenson, rabbi of the largest Jewish congregation in New York, next spoke on the priceless example of spiritual joy given by Sri Ramakrishna to the world,

as it had been given by prophets and sages of former times, in direct opposition to the modern scramble for sense pleasure, wealth and property. He in turn was followed by Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, who read a scholarly paper on the contributions of the various great religions of the world and of their fundamental harmony. Following Dr. Coomaraswamy, the Reverend Wendell Phillips, rector of the Episcopal Church of New Rochelle, spoke with great feeling about the need of turning to India for a better understanding of Christ, especially to Sri Ramakrishna who so recently manifested that spiritual power, almost forgotten to-day, which is so closely related to the power of Christ. The last speaker, Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukherji, noted Hindu author and lecturer, told some interesting stories of the Master's life. Every one was profoundly moved by the great personality of Sri Ramakrishna, who could unite the thoughts and aspirations of nations and of thinkers on opposite sides of the globe, and who promises to bring a measure of peace and understanding to struggling humanity. This meeting has had a great deal of newspaper publicity which will surely benefit those who have not yet heard the message of the Master.

Swami Nikhilananda has also participated in the Centenary festivals of Boston, Providence, Washington, D.C. and Chicago.

The Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebration in Burma

The Centenary celebrations in Burma commenced on Friday the 27th March 1936 with the opening of the Ramakrishna Centenary Exhibition of Arts and Crafts by Mr. M. M. Rafi, Mayor of Rangoon, at the Ladies' Park, East Rangoon. There was a very large gathering present at the opening function. The Mayor in a neat speech paid a glowing tribute to the Saint of Dakshineswar, and exhorted the citizens of Rangoon, to support the Exhibition by patronising it in large numbers. To enable all classes of people, rich and poor, to attend it, the admission fee was fixed at annas two. In addition to the religious and artistic side of the Exhibition, the organisers arranged a number of interesting side shows, like snake charming, Kirtan and Magic, which all proved very

attractive and popular. The support of the public was uniformly encouraging and about a lakh of people visited the Exhibition. Therefore the Exhibition was extended till the 7th of April. The stall-holders were granted certificates and medals which were appreciated.

The musical gathering for juniors and adults were held on the 6th and 14th respectively. On the first day 21 youngsters took part and on the second 20 artists. To encourage the acquirement of physical strength and stamina an Athletic competition was held among school boys. The competition included efficiency tests and boxing, and boys from half a dozen schools took part. Silver cups, trophies and medals were presented to the successful competitors. Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, and Swami Sharvananda were present at the meeting. Prof. B. K. Sarkar presided over the function and distributed the prizes. He made an eloquent speech and felt glad that an Athletic competition was held under Sri Ramakrishna Centenary auspices.

On Sunday the 5th April a mass procession was organised as part of the celebrations, and the procession with section devoted to various faiths and including Burmans, Indians, Chinese, Buddhists, Mohamedans, Hindus and Christians went round the town through the principal thoroughfares. Symbols and placards, images and photos, of religious teachers and faiths were prominently displayed. More than 10,000 persons joined the procession, which proved to be the most successful and the most effective means of bringing the message of the unity of the religions to the door of the man in the street.

The Religious Convention, which was the central feature of the celebrations started on 8th April and lasted for three days. It was presided over by Prof. B. K. Sarkar of Calcutta University. Lectures were delivered by prominent and well-known authorities on Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism and Zoroastrianism. On the 10th April Prof. Sarkar delivered his presidential address. Speeches were made on various religious movements like Brahmoism, Arya Samaj, Sikhism, Taoism, Sufism and Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement. Swami Sharvananda presided over the meetings on the

11th, 12th and 13th April, and spoke on Hinduism, and Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement. Swami Sharvananda also delivered other public lectures on subjects connected with the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary.

The celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna Centenary in districts were attended by Swami Sharvananda, who visited Pegu, Toungoo, Mandalay, and Maymyo, accompanied by Swami Punyananda, Monk-in-charge of the Ramakrishna Hospital in Rangoon. They started from Rangoon on the 14th and returned on the 19th April. The celebrations in districts were enthusiastic and satisfactory.

On 19th April Swami Sharvananda delivered an inspiring address on the "Message of Sri Ramakrishna to the Modern World" at the Reddiar Hall, East Rangoon. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Anklesaria, a prominent Theosophist. The celebrations came to a close with another lecture by the Swami on the "Significance of the Religious Experiences of Sri Ramakrishna," when a large gathering was present.

Vedanta Society, Providence, Rhode Island

Swami Akhilananda with his friends, Annapurna, Bhakti and Frances, returned from India on December 23, 1934 landing in New York. The following day the Swami spoke on the Incarnation of Christ and next Sunday on the Message of Christ, and thereafter resumed the regular activities of the season.

Services were conducted every Sunday, and classes on Tuesdays and Fridays. Tuesday classes are devoted to Scriptural studies and often to series of lectures on different phases of Practical Psychology. These last are found very constructive and helpful as many pseudo-psychologists have created much confusion in American minds. Friday classes are devoted to the practice of meditation followed by study of the Scriptures.

This year Swami was invited by many prominent clubs and churches in the city and in the State to speak on India as well as on different phases of Hinduism. The Swami regularly attended the meetings and discussions of the Universal Club of Brown University, Union Ministers

meetings, and the sittings of the Williams-town Institute of Human Relations.

The Swami's lectures over the radio, WPRO, were so much appreciated that he is still asked to continue them every week which he has been doing through this year. At intervals of one and a half to two months he also conducts the morning service over station WJAR, where he alternates with ministers.

While the Swami was absent in India, friends carried on the work here by reading on the usual lecture evenings. After the Swami's return several important birthdays were celebrated. Of these Sri Ramakrishna's birthday was a big celebration. Swami Akhilananda spoke after the dinner, as also Reverend Wilmot, Dr. Claxton and others. Good Friday and Easter were also appropriately celebrated. The season closed with a week of festivities on the arrival of Swami Gnanaswarananda of Chicago and of Swami Vividishananda. There was a big dinner with Swami Paramananda and his friends from Boston. On successive nights the Swamis lectured, and Swami Gnanaswarananda showed his moving pictures of India which were much appreciated.

Ramakrishna Mission, Ceylon Branch

The Report of the Ramakrishna Mission, Ceylon Branch, for the year ending June, 1935 is a record of all-round progress in the spiritual and educational activities of the mission in the Island. The Ashram at Colombo has proved itself to be a very valuable centre for the dissemination of religious ideas through its library, book stall and the several classes and lectures by both the resident and the visiting Swamis. The work of erecting a permanent building for the Ashram has been taken up—a piece of land, a quarter of an acre in extent, has been secured, the foundation stone of the building laid and a sum of Rs. 4,793 collected towards the building fund.

The Mission manages 12 schools and an orphanage in the Island. The total number of pupils attending the schools is 2,285 (1,537 boys and 748 girls), and that of teachers 74. The orphanage at Batticaloa, known as the 'Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, provides food, clothing, lodging and education for 42 orphan children.

Although it is not included in the report we may also mention here an important event that took place early in 1936 on the occasion of the celebration of Swami Vivekananda's 77th birthday. This is the opening of "Jerbai Memorial Hall" which is a gift to the Mission by Mr. D. H. Markar in memory of his wife. The opening function was done by Mr. W. L. Murphy, the Mayor of Colombo. He commended the mission's ideal of 'Renunciation and Service' and appreciated its educational activities in the island. It is also happy to note that the Ashram building has been completed and opened on 24th February, 1936.

FAMINE & FLOOD

Ramakrishna Mission's Appeal

Srimat Swami Virajananda, the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission has issued the following appeal:—

Khulna Famine: The public is aware that Bengal is being ravaged by a terrible famine. Even on a modest computation, half a million people are practically going without food. To add to their misery, there is a dire scarcity of water.

From all quarters we are receiving heart-rending appeals for help. Although the funds at our disposal are extremely meagre, we have decided to start relief work at least in one district. We have chosen Khulna as our centre for relief work, and a contingent of workers has already been despatched to the Satkhira Sub-division of this district.

Arakan Flood: Readers of newspapers are also aware that a terrible flood has devastated extensive areas on the Arakan Coast, causing considerable damage to life and property. The reports that have so far appeared in the press give too little indication of the extent of damage done. Considering immediate help necessary, the Ramakrishna Mission, in co-operation with its Rangoon branch, has sent a batch of workers to Akyab for organising relief.

We earnestly appeal to all to contribute promptly to our relief fund. Contributions, however, small, will be gratefully accepted and acknowledged by the President, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dist. Howrah, (Bengal).

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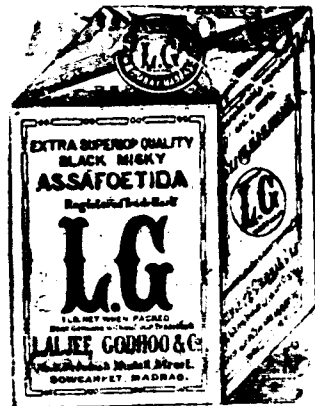
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