

2125

Vedanta Kesari

XXIII

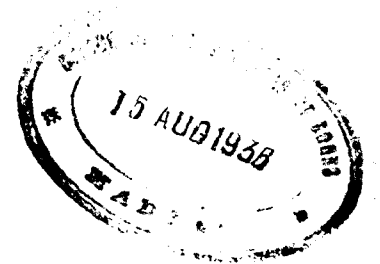
No. 3-5

July - September
1936

JL
265 m 21, N14
N36.23.3-5
123470

Aggressive Hinduism

THE VEDANTA KESARI



July - 1936

GOD IN CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY

BUDDHISM AND VEDAS

REASON AND INTUITION IN VEDANTA

INDIA'S MESSAGE IN STONE

Notes :: Reviews :: News

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH
MYLAPORE, MADRAS.

Indian: Annually Rs. 3
Single Copy As. 6

Foreign: Annually Rs. 5
(\$ 2 or 8 Sh.)

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

(By 'M', a direct disciple of the Master)

IN TWO VOLUMES

It is in the form of conversations and reads like a novel. It presents Sri Ramakrishna's teachings in a dramatic setting, giving a vivid pen-picture of the occasions when they were delivered and the persons who listened to them. There is no problem of Spiritual Life that does not find solution therein.

"Socratic dialogues are Plato all over—You (author) are entirely hidden. Moreover, the dramatic part is infinitely beautiful. Everybody likes it—here or in the West."—*Swami Vivekananda*.

Price Each Volume, Cloth Rs. 2-8, Gilt Rs. 3.

UNIVERSAL PRAYERS

Selected and translated from
Sanskrit Religious Literature

By SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

Contents:—Introduction, viewing Prayer from different aspects Peace chant; Hymns and Stotras from the Vedas, the various Purana and the various Acharyas. Sanskrit on the left page and the English translation on the right page.

Most useful for daily devotions
Flexible Binding Excellent set-up

Foolscap 8 vo. over Pages 250. Price: Rs. 1-4-0.
To Subscribers of the Vedanta Kesari, Re. 1-2-0.

WOMEN OF INDIA

By SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(A Lecture hitherto unpublished in India)

Here the Swami shows how the Indian ideal of Womanhood has perfected motherhood to its zenith in contradistinction to that of the West which has developed wifehood. But the ideal woman in the modern age must combine both of them.
—*Morning Leader*.

Price As. 3.

"The Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore, Madras.

THE VEDANTA KESARI

Vol. XXIII. JULY, 1936.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Hindu Ethics	81
Sri Ramakrishna the Great Master By Swami Saradananda	82
Aggressive Hinduism	86
The Conception of God in Contemporary Philosophy By Prof. Jadunath Sinha, M.A., Ph.D.	93
At the Touch of the Mother By Dorothy Kruger	100
Buddhism and Vedas By Rev. Bhikku Nyanapiya	103
Meditations on Self-discipline By Anilbaran Ray	107
Reason and Intuition in Vedanta By P. Nagaraja Rao, B.A. (Hons.)	109
India's Message in Stone By Prof. K. S. Srikantan, M.A.	111
Reviews and Notices	115
News and Reports	116

Life of Sri Ramakrishna

(In English)

A detailed chronological account of the Master's wonderful life, based on the most authentic sources, with a foreword by Mahatma Gandhi.

With one tri-coloured and several half-tone portraits.
Price: Third Edition, BOARD Rs. 5. CLOTH Rs. 6-8.

HINDUISM

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A collection of five lectures on Hinduism by the
Illustrious Swami

"It gives a clear and succinct account of the greatness of the religion—its all-comprehensiveness, and above all its wide toleranco, in eloquent and illuminating language."
—*Theosophist*.

Every one ought to read it to have a clear idea on Hinduism.

"There can be no better popular handbook to our religion."—*The Hindu*.

Price As. 10.

(To subscribers of "The Vedanta Kesari," As. 8 only.)

(4)

NEW BOOKS

BY

Prof. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., Ph.D.

(1) **EASTERN LIGHTS** :—A book on Indian Life, Thought and Mysticism. Price Rs. 4 only.

(2) **HINDU MYSTICISM** :—A study based on the Upanishads. Price 15s. only.

They throw sufficient light on the spiritual philosophy of India.
To be had of:

ALL PRINCIPAL BOOK-SELLERS IN CALCUTTA.

USEFUL BOOKS.

- (1) Burke's American Speeches Rs. 2-12. (2) Macaulay's Speeches Rs. 2-12.
 (3) Selected Speeches of Great Orators Rs. 1-12. (4) Study of English Idioms and Their Uses Rs. 1-6. (5) How to Write English Correctly Rs. 1-4.
 (6) Helps to Conversation Rs. 1-4. (7) Abbot's Life of Napoleon Rs. 4-8.
 (8) Phrases and Idioms Rs. 2-6. (9) Helps to News paper Readers Rs. 1-8.

DEVANAND & Co., Diamond Harbour (V) via Calcutta.

Saint Durgacharan Nag

(The Life of an Ideal Householder)

The wonderful life of a householder disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, popularly known as Nag Mahashaya—about whom Swami Vivekananda said, "I have travelled far in different parts of the globe, but nowhere could I meet a great soul like Nag Mahashaya."

Price Re. 1.

To Subscribers of "Vedanta Kesari" As. 2 less.

INSPIRED TALKS

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(THIRD EDITION)

The book contains a series of inspiring conversations on various religious and philosophical topics during the Swami's seven weeks' stay at Thousand Island Park, America—recorded by a distinguished American lady disciple who had the rare privilege of sitting long at his feet. A few valuable notes also have been added where the Swami's utterances might appear to be abrupt and unconnected. The present volume is the first to give us the words spoken by him, so long hidden in the intimacy of an inner circle.

With portraits of the Swami and the house at Thousand Island Park
Price Paper Bound Re. 1-4; Cloth Bound Re. 1-12.

(To Subscribers of "The Vedanta Kesari", Each As. 2 less)



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

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXIII]

JULY 1936

[No. 3

HINDU ETHICS

बहुश्रुतं तपस्त्यागः श्रद्धा यज्ञक्रिया क्षमा
 भावगुह्यदिर्घा सत्यं संयमश्चात्मसंपदः ।
 एतदेवाभिपद्यस्व मा ते भूच्छलितं मनः
 एतन्मूलौ हि धर्माग्रवितदेकपदं हितम् ।
 धर्मेणैवर्षयस्तीर्णा धर्मलोकाः प्रतिष्ठिताः
 धर्मेण देवा दिवि च धर्मं चार्यः समाहितः ।
 धर्मो राजन् गुणः श्रेष्ठो मध्यमो ह्यर्थ उच्यते
 क.मो यवीयानिति च प्रवदन्ति मनीषिणः ।
 तस्माद्धर्मप्रधानेन भवितव्यं यतात्मना
 तथा च सर्वभूतेषु वर्तितव्यं यतात्मना ।

The wealth of the soul consists in abundance of learning, concentration, renouncing for a noble purpose, faith, activities for worship or sacrifice, forbearance, purity of conscience, compassion, veracity and self-control. Strive to secure these; let not your mind get unsteady. Righteousness and prosperity are based upon these. They constitute the entire good. Through righteousness alone sages have found their purpose; the universe is rooted in righteousness; the gods shine in the heaven through righteousness, and prosperity is poised in righteousness. Righteousness, O King, is the highest virtue; wealth takes its rank only in the middle while desire for pleasure is the last: this is the verdict of intelligent thinkers. Therefore a man of trained instincts and mind should consider righteousness as the most important duty of life. His behaviour towards all too should be tempered by righteousness.

Mahabharata, Santi Parva, Ch. 165-verses 5—9.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE GREAT MASTER

CHAPTER VIII

THE MASTER AS THE TEACHER OF HIS OWN GURUS

By Swami Saradananda

[In the following sections we get an account of the Master's teacher, Bhairavi Brahmani, and a discussion on the place of supernatural powers in spiritual life.]

I reside in the hearts of all beings. From Me come memory and knowledge, and their obliteration too. I am the Principle to be known through all the Vedas. I am the Revealer of the Vedas and the Knower of them also.

Gita XV, 15.

Spiritual leadership is the birth-right of the incarnations of God

WE have already stated that a born leader shows his inborn aptitude for leadership from his very early days. This is particularly the case with one who is a great incarnation of God. He realises even from childhood the ideal he is born to embody and illustrate before the world. Growth of the body and the senses, convenient time, place and favourable circumstances in other respects may act as conditions helping the fullest perfection of that ideal in him but none of these external factors really implant the ideal in him and thereby make him the Guru of men. It is found, on the other hand, to be an inborn gift with which he sets out in his life's journey. Hence all attempts to trace the realisation of this ideal to some particular cause in his life meets with total failure. Exactly similar is the experience that faces us when we try to investigate the origin of the attitude of the Guru in the Master's life. The investigator will be astonished to discover the manifestation of this attitude in all the stages of his life—whether it be his childhood, his youth or the period of his spiritual practices, and he will

arrive at no conclusion as to how it appeared in him for the first time. We do not like to increase the bulk of the book by referring to the early life of the Master here. But much remains to be said as yet about the incidents revealing the teacher aspect of the Master's personality in his youth and the period of his spiritual practices, when he was in very close association with Mathuranath. We now propose to place these incidents before the reader.

The Master received instructions from many Gurus

The Master would often try to explain to us with the illustration of the story of Avadhuta in the Bhagavatam that although the Guru who initiates the disciple with *mantram* (the mystic formula) is one, he may have many helpers and teachers in the spiritual realm. The Bhagavatam states that the Avadhuta received special instructions from twenty-four Gurus one after another before attaining final realisation. In the Master's life too we find many similar instances of his resorting to different Gurus for receiving instruction in different kinds of spiritual practices that lead to the realisation of diverse phases of Truth. But among them we heard the

Master often refer only to three persons, viz., Bhairavi, the Brahmin lady; Tota Puri, the naked Vedantin; and Govinda, the Mahomedan Fakir. Although he had been instructed in the spiritual practices of other Hindu sects too by other teachers, he would hardly refer to them at all. At best he may sometimes make a general statement that he had been initiated into these cults by different Gurus and that a brief practice of three days gave him the highest realisation in each cult. It is difficult to ascertain now why the Master did not refer to them—whether it was because they had escaped from his memory or because they did not deserve special mention. But this at least is clear that the Master's connection with them was only for a brief period; and hence they were not perhaps worth mentioning individually.

Bhairavi, the Brahmin lady

Of all the teachers of the Master, Bhairavi, the Brahmin lady, spent a very long period in the company of the Master. But it is now difficult to ascertain exactly how long she stayed; because she had left Dakshineswar for good a little before we assembled at the feet of the Master. After her departure the Master received news about her only once. She was then spending her time in spiritual practices at Benares. Since then nothing is known about her.

How Bhairavi helped the Master in his spiritual practices

We have heard from the Master that the Bhairavi lived for a pretty long time in the Dakshineswar temple as well as at other places on the river bank close by the temple, such as, Deva Mandal's Ghat, etc. We are also told that she led the Master

through all the practices prescribed in the sixty-four principal Tantric treatises one after another. She was well-grounded in the Vaishnava scriptures too, and rendered occasional help to the Master when he was practising the attitude of the female friend of the Lord. And even after the expiry of the Master's period of spiritual practices she lived in great honour at Dakshineswar for about twelve years during which time she would sometimes visit Kamarpukur, the Master's birth-place, in his company or along with Hriday, his nephew, and stay there with the Master's family. From now the Holy Mother used to call her 'Mother' and respect her as her own mother-in-law.

The Bhairavi's experience of the Vaishnava attitudes

By following the Vaishnava cults the Bhairavi had to some extent a direct experience of friendly love (Sakhya Bhava) and parental affection (Vatsalya Bhava) towards God. While residing at the Deva Mandal's Ghat in Aria Daha, she would sometimes take a lump of butter in hand and call the Master aloud by the name 'Gopala' ('cow-boy,' a name of Krishna), and simultaneously feeling a strong desire to meet her, the Master would at once run to her, like a child hastening to its mother's arms, covering the intervening distance of two miles at a stretch. He would then sit by her side and eat the things offered by her. Besides this, she would occasionally borrow Benares silk cloths and ornaments from others, and wearing them would go to the Master at Dakshineswar along with other women of the locality, singing devotional songs on the way and

carrying various eatables to feed the Master with. On such occasions, with her dishevelled hair and exuberance of emotion, she would resemble Yasoda, the mother of Krishna, afflicted with the pangs of separation from her beloved Divine Child.

Her personal beauty causes suspicion in Mathuranath

In proportion to her inner virtues, the Bhairavi had extraordinary physical beauty too. We have heard from the Master that observing her beautiful appearance and hearing about her habit of freely wandering from place to place all alone without any one to protect her, Mathuranath at first felt suspicious about her character. He went so far as to remark sarcastically one day, "Well, Bhairavi, where is your 'Bhairava' (meaning 'husband')?" She was then coming out of the Kali temple after worshipping the holy image. Although accosted in this unbecoming manner, she was not in the least perplexed or annoyed. With perfect equanimity she at first looked steadily at Mathuranath and then pointed with her finger to the image of Shiva lying under the feet of the Divine Mother, in the pose of a corpse. Worldly-minded and sceptical as Mathuranath was, he would not let her go so easily. "But is not that Bhairava inert?" argued he still, whereupon came the reply in a deep voice, "Why have I become a Bhairavi then, if I cannot make Him instinct with movement?" Mathuranath, thus outwitted and put to shame by the composed attitude and the apt reply of the Bhairavi, was compelled to remain silent. In course of time, as he became more and more acquainted with the noble life and

the endless virtues of this lady, his initial suspicion gradually disappeared from his mind.

Nothing is known about her ancestry

We have heard from the Master that the Bhairavi was born somewhere in East Bengal, and that from her very look one would be convinced of her high birth. But nothing definite is known about her native village or family; nor is there any information as to whether she was ever married, why she took to the life of a wandering nun and where she acquired her vast learning and spiritual power.

The Bhairavi was an aspirant of a very high order

It is needless to mention that the Bhairavi was an aspirant of a very high order. This is amply proved by the fact of her being chosen by Providence as a teacher of the Master. Further the Master himself had narrated to us several facts relating to her high spiritual attainments. It seems even before her meeting him, the Bhairavi had come to know through her Yogic power that in her life-time she was to help three persons in their spiritual struggle, the Master being one of them. She could also recognise these persons at her very first meeting with them, although she happened to meet them at quite different places and times.

The Bhairavi's vision

When the Bhairavi met the Master for the first time, she spoke to him about her other two disciples, Chandra and Girija by name. "My child," said she, "I have met these two persons already, and have been so long searching for you. I shall introduce them to you some time

later." And actually she did bring these persons to Dakshineswar at a later date to meet the Master. We have heard from the Master that both of them were aspirants of great eminence. But although far advanced in the path of spirituality, they could not reach perfection by attaining God-realisation. They were about to stray from the spiritual path after acquiring certain miraculous powers.

Chandra—one of the disciples of the Bhairavi

Chandra, as the Master used to say, was of a devotional temperament and a true lover of God. He attained the power of making himself invisible to others. After putting on a certain amulet he could disappear from the sight of all people, and in that state could go freely to carefully guarded places which were otherwise inaccessible. But it has to be carefully borne in mind that such supernatural powers fill our little minds with pride and lure us into the meshes of desire, thereby barring our further progress towards the noble ideal and ultimately bringing about our spiritual downfall too. The waxing of egoism results in the increase of our vices, and the waning of it in the attainment of religious merits. To swell our ego is therefore to diminish our spiritual stature while the attenuation of it is tantamount to the enrichment of our spiritual being. Sin is only another name for selfishness, and piety for selflessness. All our troubles cease when the ego dies. The Master would try again and again to impress this truth indelibly on our minds. "It is this ego," he would say, "that has been described in the scriptures as the cord binding together the conscious and the un-

conscious. The conscious principle is the Atman of the nature of knowledge, and the unconscious principle is the combination of the body, mind, senses and the intellect. The ego has knit them together, and has thereby perpetuated in the human mind the illusion that he is a limited self possessing the body, senses, intellect and so on.

"Progress in spirituality is impossible unless this pernicious knot is cut asunder. Therefore, it must be given up. And the Divine Mother has shown me that the supernatural powers are the most abominable things in this world. One should never devote one's thoughts to them. Sometimes they appear spontaneously in the course of one's spiritual practices. But the aspirant who pays any heed to them, becomes stranded there and cannot proceed Godward any further."

Supernatural powers make an aspirant stray from the right path

Swami Vivekananda was essentially a man of meditation. At all times and in the midst of all forms of activity he would keep his mind partially indrawn and engaged in meditation upon God. As the Master used to say, he had reached perfection in meditation. One day in the course of meditation there suddenly appeared in him the powers of clairvoyance and clairaudience. Thenceforth whenever he would sit for meditation, a little concentration would bring his mind to a plane from where he could see persons at places beyond the range of vision and distinctly hear their voices too. Immediately after an experience of this kind he would

feel the desire to verify the truth of it. Accordingly he would stop meditation and go to the persons and places he had seen in the state of meditation. In every case he found his experience true, no part of it failing to correspond with facts. When this state continued for some days, the Swami informed the Master about it, whereupon came his immediate warning. "These are obstacles in the path of God-realisation. Do not meditate for some days."

Chandra's downfall due to his supernatural power

With the attainment of supernatural powers Chandra too became filled with pride. We have heard from the Master how the attachment to lust and gold increased in his mind; how he fell in love with the daughter of a wealthy and highly respectable gentleman and began to frequent her place undetected with the help of his supernatural power; and finally, how he lost that power too owing to the increase of egotism and was humiliated in various ways.

AGGRESSIVE HINDUISM

[Some important aspects of the inter-religious situation in modern India are discussed in the following paragraphs.]

Symptoms of Cultural Decadence

LIFE, as manifested in this world, is never at rest. It must either expand or degenerate. In accordance with this law we find that a culture, when it is in a vigorous condition, goes beyond its geographical limits and, fearless of absorbing ideas alien to it, impresses its stamp on the life of mankind in general. On the other hand when decadence sets in, a culture begins to shrink into itself, and seeks protection behind a wall of taboos, prohibitions and other forms of negative non-essentials. Losing confidence in its own strength and capacity to absorb foreign ideas without surrendering its own individuality, a culture in decadence develops a rigidity of form and conservatism of temperament which gradually reduce its intellectual aristocracy into tradition-bound bigots, and the masses into an amorphous conglomeration of humanity without

any cultural self-consciousness or the capacity to unite together for a common purpose under the guidance of a dominant idea.

This tendency is seen to a marked degree in religion, which forms one of the most important ingredients in the composition of a culture. In the wake of cultural decadence ideals degenerate into mere idols; passivity is exalted above dynamism; purity and holiness are confounded with ceremonialism; the letter of the law gains precedence of its spirit; and the God of the Universe is reduced into the God of castes and cliques. The impressive spiritual monuments of a great cultural past remain buried in the pages of old books, and receive no doubt the lip allegiance of the masses and the idolatrous worship of the classes, but they exercise little influence on the daily life of either.

Such seems to be the condition of Hinduism to-day, or at least it used to be so sometime back. In our last number we tried to place before our readers a detailed analysis of this situation, both in its spiritual and social aspects. Indian culture is said at present to be passing through a period of revival, and if this is so, this revival must also affect religion. In the following paragraphs we shall consider on what lines the reconstruction or rather the re-adjustment of Hinduism is to proceed.

Spiritual and Secular Aggressions Contrasted

Swami Vivekananda described his conception of what a revived Hinduism ought to be by the significant expression "Aggressive Hinduism." In ordinary parlance the word aggressive has a bad odour about it in as far as it implies the use of violence and intrusion upon the rights of others. Especially when it is applied to religion, one at once recalls the accounts of inhuman persecutions and bloody religious wars. But it has to be remembered that aggression in the spiritual sense is quite different from aggression in the secular sense. For secular aggression necessarily means elbowing out others in competing for a limited amount of material goods, but aggression in the true spiritual sense has no such implication. The wealth of the spiritual realm is unlimited, and acquisition of any amount of it by one does not jeopardise the chances of others doing the same. Thus if one man becomes truthful, pure and godly, it does not in the least stand in the way of his neighbours also becoming so. On the other hand it will be of much help to them, as his example will be a source of strength

and inspiration in following the path of righteousness.

How Religions get contaminated

It may, however, be asked why it is that the history of religions which ostensibly embody the spiritual aspirations of men presents such a spectacle of bloodshed, narrowness and bigotry. The answer is that this is due to the unspiritual nature of the agencies and institutions controlling religion, owing to their association with vested interests. These vested interests, when they gain control over religion, torture their pure spiritual content into rigid dogmas which they thrust upon the credulous masses either by holding out threats and rewards for the future or by compulsion exercised through the powers that be. Christ preached the love of God and charity to man, but the church placed itself on the throne of God and declared that unless men followed her dictates and saw things through her spectacles, they will have no salvation. She went further and declared that there can be nothing more meritorious than saving souls, whether the means adapted for that be good, bad or indifferent; and saving of course means essentially bringing men under her control. Under these circumstances Christ disappeared and the Church took his place with consequences that are well-known to all. So also the Prophet Muhammed preached the surrender of the self unto the Supreme Being, but historic Islam elevated the Koran to the place of the Supreme Being and demanded in its name, the surrender not so much of man's ego as of his judgment. The State and religion were jumbled into one, and correspondingly the missionary got amalgamated with the soldier. The re-

sult has been that the religion of self-surrender has degenerated into a religion of head-surrender.

The Two Dominant Ideas of Hinduism

Aggressiveness in the sense described above has never been the motto of Hinduism at any time, but in its healthy days it was aggressive in quite another way. It is a remarkable fact that unlike the other great religions of the world, Hinduism did not emanate from any single founder; it has no system of public worship, no definitely formulated and set creed and no central authority claiming to exercise or actually exercising control over the thought and conviction of all people who call themselves Hindus. For this reason it has been denied the status of a religion by many critics, but we for our part believe that it is a compliment rather than a reproach. Hinduism is not a dogmatic stereotyped creed holding out before humanity a set of clearly defined or finally revealed beliefs, giving man either the option of accepting them and being saved, or of rejecting them and being damned for eternity. It is on the other hand a cultural expression in which diverse systems of creeds, beliefs, world-views and spiritual disciplines are all held together by two dominant ideas—namely, those of toleration and realisation. It is the pre-supposition of such a culture that it should interpret every theology as a symbol devised by the human mind to describe the Supreme Fact which can never be exhausted or fully expressed by any single description. According to the historical, social and intellectual environment in which they are born, and according to the spiritual evolu-

tion of the people for whom they are meant, these theologies may differ in many points even in important respects. This, however, is natural, and need not be interpreted as contradictions disproving the truth of these theologies or detracting their spiritual value. Differences even in symbols meant to convey more or less the same spirit form a matter of common experience in life. A people from the soil of whose culture a symbol has grown will easily catch the spirit behind that particular symbol. Through the medium of the symbol their minds will find it easy to establish contact with the underlying universal principle, and thus the very same symbols which appear meaningless or even abhorrent to an alien, may be a source of inspiration and illumination to the people who have produced them. This is a fact that holds good in all branches of culture, but more so in the field of religion which is essentially a value science. The spiritual genius of the Hindu race has discovered this important principle and has as a consequence shown a spirit of accommodation towards diverse kinds of theologies—a spirit which the protagonists of exclusive theologies can never understand.

If every theology is to be tolerated and accepted, then how can society be safe-guarded against frauds and against systems of thought and practices that are seen to have a decidedly corrupting influence on the minds of men? This is a pertinent question that may crop up in the reader's mind at this stage. The answer is that a tree is to be known by its fruits. The value of a theology is to be judged by the types of character it is able

to produce as well as by the examples of saintliness and God-realisation with which it demonstrates its genuineness. From this has sprung the second dominant idea of Hinduism that religion is realisation. A theology, if it is to be taken seriously, must propound a system of spiritual disciplines that can take a sincere follower to the certitude of God and to the 'peace that passeth understanding.' And as a proof of its promise it must also be able to point to a line of saints and God-men who have followed the path, gained spiritual realisation, and have lived lives of exemplary character and spiritual endeavour. Even a new theology may be accepted, if it comes from a man of this type, and is seen to exercise an uplifting influence on the life of its followers. If men are left to themselves to find their spiritual level, without the interference of priests and organised churches, they are naturally bound to develop this very sane and rational outlook on the religious question. But unfortunately for humanity, the influence of the States, of politicians, of uncultured and ill-informed zealots, and above all of ecclesiastical hierarchies has deflected religions from their true and natural course, and invested them with a sense of cocksureness in regard to the Highest Truth and a spirit of vehement opposition to other theological versions than their own. The only way to lift out religions from this morass into which they have fallen is to make them conscious of the symbolical nature of all theologies and the need of shifting their emphasis from dogma to realisation—in fact to inform them with these two special developments of Hindu thought.

The Ideal of True Spiritual Aggressiveness

The reader may wonder what on earth this has got to do with Aggressive Hinduism, the high-sounding title we used in the beginning. Is this not the same old attitude of the milksop who seeks to hide his impotence behind an imposing philosophy? Or is it not the philosophy of a mere sceptic who feels no earnestness for any religion and gives the pompous name of religious tolerance or religious cosmopolitanism to what is really an attitude of religious indifference? Or at best is it not merely a form of spiritual callousness and inertia which feels no moral urge to bestow on others what one conceives to be the highest good, or a type of spiritual self-centredness which feels jealous of others rising to the same eminence as oneself?

We admit that the attitude we described before can degenerate into one or other of those perverse outlooks, and Hinduism of to-day is having a moribund existence, because such degeneration has actually taken place in it. But what we want to insist on is that true spiritual aggressiveness is possible only through such an attitude and not through the narrow intolerance and militancy of the so-called missionary faiths. In its best days Hinduism succeeded in fearlessly expressing these distinctive features of its spiritual philosophy, and our conception of a Hinduism made aggressive is the same in which it succeeds in recapturing that spirit which enabled her once to weld together the diverse forms of theologies, races and their cultures into a system in so effective a fashion that while they retain their special genius they have ceased to exist as

rival faiths and exclusive social groups with conflicting interests.

How was this achieved in the past is the question we have to consider now. In pre-Muslim days Hinduism had to come into contact with diverse faiths and diverse cultures. There were the great daughter religions known historically as Buddhism and Jainism and then came from time to time various foreign invaders—the Persians, the Greeks, the Parthians, the Yuechis, the Kushans and the Huns, all with distinct habits, customs and religious traditions. But these people together with their religion and culture have been entirely absorbed into what we call now-a-days as Hinduism. Long even before the admission of these extraneous elements there was the contact between the Aryan and the Dravidian cultures, and to-day these have been so indistinguishably blended together that even the desperate attempts of those who want to revive the memories of old and forgotten conflicts have entirely failed in separating the cultural yarns that have gone into the make up of the pattern of modern Hinduism.

Strength as the source of True Religious Liberalism

This remarkable capacity for absorption that our ancestors evinced was the result of their own internal strength and the catholicity of their outlook. Unlike our modern specimens of piety, the pioneers of Hindu culture in the past were never afraid of their holiness being contaminated by the look of one man or the shadow of another. Where strength is, fear is not. Firmly established in the spiritual outlook characteristic of their culture, they could very easily accept the customs, manners and

beliefs of other people without in any way losing their own individuality and distinctiveness. Through mutual sympathy born of such spirit of accommodation, social groups of different affinities were easily drawn into the sphere of Hindu cultural influence, and when they came into contact with the core of Hinduism, they succumbed to its superior spiritual power. Hinduism accepted several elements from their religion and culture and Hindu theologies in turn reshaped them in such a way as to bring them into agreement with their tenets. The whole process went on quite naturally and without any show of unspiritual pride and arrogance on the part of the dominant culture. Perhaps the greatest achievement of India in this respect is the silent absorption of Buddhism, and this has been done by adapting the Buddhist philosophies and Tantric worship in accordance with some of the fundamental principles of Hinduism. The clear signs of this adaptation can be detected in many phases of Hindu philosophy, Tantricism and temple-worship.

Contrast between Hindu and other Ideals

This work of cultural absorption has not, however, been complete, and in a country like India which has been subjected to successive waves of foreign invasion from time to time, this is a problem that perpetually stares us in the face. But for the unsuccessful attempts of Nanak and Kabir, we may say that for all practical purposes the task of effecting a fusion between Hinduism, and Muslim culture and religion has not even been taken up as yet, and the rise of Christianity as another distinctive

type of religion in modern times has increased the magnitude of the problem. Due to the total incapacity of the present generation of Indians to tackle this situation, India finds herself rent asunder by communal conflicts and religious animosities. Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity have all got a long and rich religious tradition and a powerful spiritual appeal. They have attracted minds at all grades of cultural evolution to seek solace in their message. As such none of them is likely to yield entirely to any of the other two, yet the chief aim of both Islam and Christianity in India, as proclaimed by their chief spokesmen in this country, is to convert the whole population of India into Muslims and Christians. Claiming as they both do to be universal religions, they maintain that they have got a mandate from the 'Lord Almighty' through their respective founders, to bring the whole world into line with their dogmatic creeds. Indeed, the 'Lord Almighty' must be either very foolish or dangerously mischievous to be giving mandates to people in such a way as to bring the mandataries themselves into conflict eventually, after they have destroyed the beliefs of poor heathens and kaffirs. Taking the case of India itself, even if the Christianity and Islam succeed in swallowing up the whole of the Hindu population, the adherents of India's indigenous religion, still it will only bring these two religionists into unrelenting conflict which they cannot end until the one destroys the other. We are however yet to know on which side the sympathy of 'Lord Almighty' will be since he is claimed to have given mandates to both the parties. One thing, however, is cer-

tain, and that is that in spite of the letter of authority from the 'God Almighty' the vast bulk of Hindus are not likely to yield to this type of aggressiveness, and give up the convictions that have been bringing spiritual solace to their race for countless generations. Despotie Muslim sovereigns like Aurangzeb wielding unquestioned authority over the whole of India attempted this and failed, and we do not think that there is greater chances of success for such a programme at the present day.

Hence the only type of aggressiveness that may be trusted to bring about a cultural and religious unity in India is India's indigenous spiritual aggressiveness that has performed miraculous feats of absorption in the past. It is an aggressiveness that disdains any parade of superiority and the belittling of other's faith, and its end consists not in destroying the intellectual and material symbols of religion that have been the channels of spiritual inspiration to different people, but in creating in other religionists an outlook that can appreciate the value of religious symbols developed by cultural environments other than their own. In modern times, however, Muslim and Christian methods of religious propaganda seem to have unduly influenced several newly formed Hindu missionary groups, and as a result the latter are showing an un-Hindu zeal in conducting a crusade of abuse and vilification against rival religions, as if they were thereby going to obliterate these from the minds of men. Such methods may succeed among a few uncultured people and may result in some individual conversions. But on the whole, in place of easing the religious situation, it is only going to make matters worse.

The failure of the modern Hindu missionary movement from the broad cultural point of view is largely due to this fact. Unless the Hindu goes out into the Muslim and the Christian camp with a view to make the spiritual experience of these religions his own, and in so doing completely Hinduises the outlook of these religions, there seems to be little chance of absorbing the large mass of their adherents.

The Work Ahead

Such a procedure has two presuppositions. In the first place, Hinduism should become more self-conscious, and its cultural and social heritage must become more consolidated and unified. The genuine cultural content of Hinduism has as yet been absorbed only by the higher castes. There are large numbers of people who have not hitherto been influenced by what may be described as higher Hinduism. There are still larger numbers described as 'untouchables' and 'unapproachables' who occupy only the fringes of Hinduism, and have remained practically untouched by its cultural life. The violent missionary propaganda of other religions has always been directed against this vulnerable spot in the social body of Hinduism. This cannot be adequately checked until these classes are truly Hinduised and made to feel that the best cultural traditions of India are their own. By the expression 'making Hinduism self-conscious and culturally consolidated' we mean this infusing of the spiritual and cultural consciousness of Hinduism into those who are as yet only nominally Hindu, and thereby making Hinduism as a whole aware of its own existence and its mission in the world.

Next Hinduism has to go beyond itself and embrace the spiritual and cultural content of other religions as its own. One of the reasons that makes modern Hinduism hesitant in undertaking this work is the consciousness of its own internal weakness as we have pointed out before, and if this is counteracted by the growth of true spiritual self-consciousness and cultural consolidation, we shall be fit to discharge the great work which our ancestors had once accomplished. We shall have to give up the isolation we have been maintaining from Muslim and Christian communities and develop a genuine appreciation of their culture and spiritual standpoint. Hindus often blame the Muslims now-a-days for being communally minded and outlandish in their cultural outlook. But the blame for this rests as much on the Hindu as on the Muslim. The Hindu looks down upon the Muslim as a Mlecha, as an impure person unfit to be associated with in any way, and his culture too is viewed as something foreign which ought to have no place in this land. Under such circumstances one cannot but expect hostile reactions on the part of the Muslim, as we find it actually to-day. Those, whose bodies one hates and despises, cannot be expected to co-operate with one in thought and action. Hatred will be answered only by hatred, never by love.

The remedy against Muslim communalism lies more with the Hindu than with the Muslim. If the Muslim refuses to give up his Turkish cap, let Hindus accept it and give it a place side by side with the turban and Indian cap. If the Muslim persists in his preference for Arabic names for his children, the Hindu

also can adopt them and have in his family Alis, Rahmans and Abduls by the side of Ramas, Krishnas, and Govindas. Along with Dasra, Pongal, and Krishna Jayanti, he can also observe Ramzan, Mohorum and the birthday of the Prophet. These suggestions, which we consider to be true implications of cultural absorption, may appear preposterous to many a Hindu but that only shows how far we yet are from the ideal of cultural unification?

More than all this the Hindu race has to absorb and Hinduise the spiritual message of the Quran and the Bible. The English language has familiarised the Hindu mind to a great extent with the Bible and the personality of Jesus, and large numbers of Hindus have got genuine regard for both, although they may not subscribe to the dogmatic creeds of the churches. But with reference to the Quran and the personality of the Prophet Muhammed, the Hindu outlook requires a radical change. For want of first-hand knowledge and

due to the study of the writings of unsympathetic scholars, a thick cloud of misunderstanding shuts out the Hindu mind from appreciating the personality and teachings of the Prophet. Therefore we want today a batch of saintly Hindu scholars, versed in the Quran and the Bible, who could interpret these books in the light of Hindu religious experience, and a set of intrepid missionaries of great spiritual calibre who could preach a Hinduised Islam and Christianity to the Muslims and Christians, and an Islamised and Christianised Hinduism to the Hindus. That the spiritual content of these religions can coalesce has been amply demonstrated in the life of Sri Ramakrishna; and in addition to liberal scholars and missionaries, we require in furtherance of his experience an inspired prophet-poet in the crucible of whose genius may be melted the cultural and spiritual legacies of all these religions to be recast into a new Gita that may appeal alike to the Hindu, the Muslim and the Christian.

THE CONCEPTION OF GOD IN CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY

By Prof. Jadunath Sinha, M.A., Ph.D.

[Dr. Sinha is the Professor of Philosophy in Meerut College. In the following article he gives us a masterly survey of the idea of God in the writings of contemporary philosophers. The general reader, unacquainted with European philosophy, may not follow the writer in all the details, but he can without difficulty grasp the main currents of thought that are shaping the modern conception of God. In the past philosophers and theologians could never think of Him except as changeless, infinite and perfect. To-day in the writings of the philosophers treated below we find that change, finitude and limitation are the essential features of the Deity. What is more, we come across conceptions of God as a member of the society of selves, of God who forms a fraction of the Absolute, and God who is not but is to be. It is hazardous to point to any Indian conception of the Deity as parallel to these. But is there not a rough resemblance between the God of the Yoga philosophy and God as a

member of a society of selves ; and between Ramanuja's conception of an organic absolute consisting of Iswara, souls and matter, and the Absolute of the Personal Idealists which is God plus the world ?]

RATIONALISM or intellectualism was the characteristic sign of the last century. It reigned supreme in the first half of the last century ; but in the latter half there were certain rebellious tendencies against rationalism. Till the middle of the last century Hegel's Absolute Idealism was the reigning philosophy in Europe. Kant was a master-mind. His Idealism was developed by Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. According to Hegel, the Absolute Spirit is the beginning and the end of all reality. It manifests itself in the world of objects and reduplicates itself in finite spirits. The world of interconnected objects is the expression or manifestation of God ; and finite spirits are the finite reproductions of God. God is the immanent essence of the world and finite spirits. The whole reality is spiritual. Everything real is rational. Evil is a necessary stage in the evolution of God. Man is not absolutely free ; he cannot do whatever he likes ; he can only carry out that ideal which God has chalked out for him and reveals to him. Everything in the world is inevitable ; all events,—even human actions,—are predetermined by God ; nothing can happen contrary to His plan. Man cannot revolt against the plan of God. Man's freedom is practically reduced to nothing ; morality consists in the realisation of that ideal which has already been realised in God. Man cannot create anything new ; he can simply acquire that perfection which is already embodied in God. God is an eternally fulfilled reality ; He is a self-complete, all round, and all comprehensive reality. This is

the sum and substance of the philosophy of Hegel. He approaches the reality through reason or intellect, and posits the Universal Reason or Absolute Spirit behind everything. Hence his doctrine is called by the modern critics Intellectualism, Absolutism, Monism, and Determinism.

Can such a philosophy satisfy the human soul ? In such a world is there any scope for novelty, free creation, adventure and romance ? Is not God supreme everywhere ? Does He not swamp the freedom and individuality of man and make him a passive instrument in His hand in the world-drama ? Such a "block universe" can never satisfy the rebellious, adventurous spirit of the modern man. He wants absolute freedom, absolute self-sufficiency. He frets and fumes at the idea of the absolute monarchy of God ; this he can never bear ; so he is eager to overthrow it either to take the reign of the world-government in his own hands or to recognise the limited monarchy of God. He is eager to deny the very existence of God or at best to recognise Him as a finite, struggling and toiling spirit co-operating with other finite spirits. Democracy is the order of the day. So, the absolute monarchy of God is an anachronism to-day. Moreover, democracy in its extreme form (I mean,—mobocracy) does not listen to the voice of reason ; it is guided by blind impulse, primitive instinct, feeling, will, and imagination. So, the modern philosopher does not worship the Goddess of Reason : he has dethroned the long-worshipped deity and enthroned the lesser deities of instinct, intuition, aesthetic experi-

ence, love, will, action, utility and so on. The ruined shrines of the Goddess of Reason have been invaded by these rebel forces of our nature. Thus contemporary philosophy has sounded the death-knell of Absolutism and Intellectualism.

The greatest objection against Absolutism is that it cannot reconcile the existence of evils and imperfections with the infinitude and omnipotence of God. So Hartman thought that the ultimate reality, which is the ground and source of the universe, must be an Unconscious Will, not Self-conscious Reason. Schopenhauer thought that it cannot be even unconscious, it is an irrational blind will groping in the dark for realisation of its object. This doctrine naturally prepared the way for naturalism. Herbert Spencer thought that the ultimate reality is an unknown and unknowable force which has given rise to matter, life, and mind. Haeckel also derives the whole universe from one unknown and unknowable substance, of course material in nature. Thus Hegel's intellectualism gradually degenerated into naturalism and agnosticism.

But how to escape from the toils of agnosticism ? Agnosticism means the poverty of the intellect. So we can avoid the pitfall of agnosticism if we shake off our allegiance to intellect or reason and fall back on other elements of our nature which give us unmistakable signs of the reality. Such an attempt has been made by certain French philosophers. Secrétan holds that the essence of the world is an act of unfettered expansion,—an act of love and infinite benevolence ; hence the real tool of philosophy is artistic inspiration and religious devotion, not logical definition

or scientific analysis. "Beauty," as Ravaisson says, "and more especially beauty in its most divine and perfect form, contains the secret of the world." The cosmic process is the spontaneous creation of a marvellous work of art. Wilbois unites the aesthetic sense with the sense of progress to apprehend the spontaneous self-expansion of the reality. Blondel holds that in love and sacrifice will be found the fullest revelation of Being : without love there can be no understanding. Love is the organ of perfect knowledge ; it puts us in loving communion with others, whereas selfishness isolates us and makes us impenetrable. In this supreme act of self-abnegation,—in this absolute surrender of will to the true Being,—the true and intimate experience of the absolute reality will be found. These are certainly very elevating thoughts fraught with deep significance. Such a moral and aesthetic conception of the universe more satisfies the cravings of the human heart than the "block universe" of the Absolutist. But these romantic philosophers do not bring out the full significance of their doctrine ; nor do they base it on the solid foundation of philosophical speculation. Even the so-called moral or aesthetic sense, love or benevolence must be strengthened and supported by reason ; otherwise it will give us unwarranted dogmas or ill-digested half-truths.

An attempt has been made by Bergson, the greatest French philosopher of the present day, to give us a systematic philosophy of Intuitionism. He is an out and out anti-intellectualist. He discredits intellect in this way. Intellect gives us an external view of things. It can never

give us the inner kernel. It hovers about the reality, it can never enter into the heart of the reality and feel its life-pulse. It is only in intuition that we feel at one with the object, enter into its inner life, and know all its secrets. So intuition is the true organ of our knowledge. Intellect is evolved by life; and so it cannot take hold of life; it can apprehend matter alone. It is intuition alone that can embrace life, because through it the knower becomes the known. And what does it intimate to us about the nature of the reality? The reality is in perpetual flow and flux; it is constant change and movement; it is life-current—*elan vital*. There is nothing fixed, permanent, eternal and immobile in reality; all is change, novelty, creation. The world is neither determined by the past nor by the future; there is neither mechanism nor teleology in the world; there is neither any cause of anything, nor any end or purpose of anything. The reality is creative evolution or free spontaneous self-expansion, absolutely undetermined and free. It is all change, novelty, creation, evolution. Every change is a unique creation; nothing repeats itself in nature. Creative evolution may be compared to the spreading of different branches from a single root. The *elan vital* goes on spreading out new branches, creating new novelties. Matter, life, and consciousness are such branches. The life-current now and then meets obstacles and is congealed. This is called matter. Matter is imprisoned or arrested life. Life is dynamic while matter is static. Just as growth and development of the self are due to conquest over material obstacles which thwart the evolution of the self, so the evolution of the cosmic life

requires the resisting medium of matter. But why life meets obstacles in matter Bergson cannot say. The dualism of life and matter is an enigma to him. But is there any God in his system? If the dualism of life and matter is the last word of his philosophy, then the over-surg-ing life-current itself may be regarded as a kind of God opposed by matter, the evil principle. Bergson's reality is unceasing evolution of something new—incessant creative work. It cannot be considered to be God, since God cannot be 'a continuity of shooting out.' But Bergson does not confess that his system is atheistic. He feels that his system gives us a free and creating God. God is the universal flux and is the only reality. He encounters obstacles in matter which arrests his progress. Bergson exalts the flux of the world with all its defects and discards to the high position of divinity. But such an incomplete, imperfect God in the making can never satisfy the spiritual cravings of man. Sometimes Bergson suggests that God is the source of both life and matter. But he is not a free, creating, moral, and intelligent God. Muirhead truly remarks, "If all this is movement, incessant life, action, liberty, what room is there for the fixed thoughts and purposes that theists attribute to the Creator?" Bergson's God is inadequate to the needs of the religious soul. Thus Bergson's intuitionism is a reaction against the intellectualism and absolutism of Hegel and his followers.

There is another reaction against Hegelian intellectualism and absolutism in Anglo-American pragmatism. According to pragmatism, utility, practical efficiency, or serviceableness

is the test or criterion of truth. An idea is true when it works, i.e., when it is successful, when it fulfills its function, or performs what is demanded of it. The idea of a knife, for example, is true if it actually leads to the fruition of its purpose, if it actually leads to cutting. The idea of an object is true if it actually leads to the attainment of the object in living, concrete, immediate experience. Thus utility is the test of truth. Bergson takes his stand on intuition, while William James, his great American admirer, takes his stand on immediate sense-perception. Bergson takes intuition in the sense of higher immediate experience *above* the intellect. James takes intuition in the sense of lower immediate sense-perception *below* intellect. The intuition of Bergson gives us one central life-current at the heart of the universe; the immediate sense-perception of James gives us an ever-changing "pluralistic universe." Absolutism gives us God as the all-embracing reality. Absolutism is monistic. But monism is fatalistic. To it human freedom is an illusion. Whatever is, is necessary or inevitable, and anything else is impossible. The iron hand of necessity grips the universe. But pragmatism gives us a pluralistic universe of unconnected objects. Its world is yet in the making, and depends for its fulfilment on man's efforts. The whole is in the course of realisation. The sum-total of things is not yet a simple system but a totality of conflicting individuals. The world is plastic; it is moulded and fashioned by spirits. God has a place in the pluralistic universe of James; but his God is an elder brother of all spiritual beings, vaster, wiser, and more powerful, but not essentially different from

them. James offers us a God who is finite and limited, but still lends his ears to our prayers and looks after our wants.

But what is the necessity of God at all in a pluralistic universe? To James, the ideas of God and the immortality of the soul are true because they are useful ideas; they make our life better and worth living; without them we cannot live a harmonious life. "I believe in God," says James, "not because I have experienced his presence, but because I need it so that it must be true. If there is not God there would be a great hush, a great void of life." "On pragmatist principles, if the hypothesis of God works satisfactorily in the widest sense of the word, it is true." (*Pragmatism*, p. 299.) James believes in a finite and limited God who struggles with evil in co-operation with finite spirits. James regards us all as friends and collaborators of God. God and men are fellow-soldiers in the struggle to banish evil from the world. In the struggle with evil, James feels sure that God will triumph over evil in the end. Evil is real and positive. But it is only temporary and partial. It is not the last word of life, though it is an essential phase of its existence. The God of James is not the Absolute of the Absolutist. If the Absolute exists, it is the whole of which God is an ideal portion, but the Absolute or the whole is devoid of the attributes ascribed to it by the theist or the Absolutist. The Absolute is not a religious Being. James says, "God in the religious life of ordinary men, is the name not of the whole of things, heaven forbid, but only of the ideal tendency in things, believed in as a superhuman person, who calls us to co-operate

in his purposes, and who furthers ours if they are worthy. He works in an external environment, has limits and has enemies. The only God worthy of the name must be finite. If the Absolute exists in addition, then the Absolute is only the wider cosmic whole of which our God is but the most ideal portion, and which in the more usual human sense is hardly to be termed a religious being at all." (*Pluralistic Universe*, p. 125.) Thus James' pluralism overthrows the monarchy of God and leaves man absolutely free to realise his ideal in the elastic world full of opportunities for the play of his freedom.

Another pragmatist of England, Dr. Schiller gives us a similar conception of the universe. Schiller holds that self is an ultimate reality. No philosophy can dissolve it away. The world has been evolved by the co-operation of God and other finite spirits. The final goal of the world, towards which it is moving, is the formation of perfect individuals in a perfect society. The final state of the world is the eternal and perfect activity of perfected individuals. The eternal state is not one of inaction and stagnation. Perfection is not rest but activity. Schiller also admits only a finite God. He does not believe in the omnipotence of God. He says, "Omnipotence becomes impotence in the absence of resistance." (*Riddles*, p. 355). God is force, and force implies resistance. God, in order to enforce his will against the world, requires a world which limits him. God is not all; he is only a factor in all things. Thus God is finite. In fact, an Infinite God cannot be the God of religious communion. Schiller says, "An in-

finite God can have neither personality nor consciousness, for they both depend upon limitation. Personality rests on the distinction of one person from another, consciousness on the distinction of Self and Not-Self. An all-embracing person, therefore, is an utterly unmeaning phrase, and if it meant anything, it would mean something utterly subversive of all religion." Again he says, "The attribute of Infinity contradicts and neutralises all the other attributes of God, and makes it impossible to ascribe to the Deity either personality, or consciousness, or power, or intelligence, or wisdom, or goodness, or purpose; an infinite Deity does not effect a single one of the functions which the religious consciousness demands of God." (*Riddles*, p. 306). Schiller is dead against the conception of an infinite God. "The attribute of infinity," he says, "so far from exalting the Deity, would rather make him into a devil, careless of, and even rejoicing in, evil and misery, infinitely worse than the Devil of tradition, because he is armed with omnipotence." (*Riddles*, p. 311).

So according to Schiller, religion and philosophy demand a belief in a personal and limited God. (*Riddles*, p. 316). He makes the finite spirits uncaused and uncreated; they are co-eternal with God. Schiller's God is only an ego among egos, a One among many, and not One underlying the many. He is a finite being limited by the existence of other individuals.

The doctrine of finite and limited God is to be found even among certain Idealists of the present day, who are called Personal Idealists. They are not Absolute Idealists. Professor Howison emphasises the reality of

selves, human freedom, and the existence of a personal God. He resolves the universe into a number of self-subsistent individuals. The temporal world is not evolved and sustained by one Eternal Mind but many eternal minds. The world is a real multiplicity of spirits. The spirits are absolutely free; they are uncaused and uncreated; God is not their efficient cause or creator; God is their final cause; finite spirits are moving towards the perfection of God to establish the City of God. In the society of selves there are all possible grades of spirits from the lowest to the highest; and at the top of them all there is a supreme self which is free from all temporal imperfection. This supra-temporal supreme self is God, the pure Eternal. Man and God are co-eternal with each other. God as personal is a member of the society of selves; as supreme, He is the central or dominant member. God is limited by other selves; but still He is infinite, for all minds are infinite in the qualitative sense.

Rev. Rashdall, another Personal Idealist, also is an advocate of the current conception of a finite God. He draws a distinction between God and the Absolute. God is a person, and personality implies distinction and limitation. A person should distinguish himself not only from other objects but also from other persons. Thus a person can exist only as a one among many. God is

a supreme person to whom the world of things and persons is an object. The supreme spirit is not the whole since it is limited by other finite selves. The Absolute is the whole, which is God *plus* the finite spirits. God is a part of the Absolute. Rashdall says, "God and the spirits are the Absolute—not God alone. Together they form a Unity, but that Unity is not the unity of self-consciousness; nor can it be thought of as even analogous to personal unity." (*Theory of Good and Evil*, Vol. II, pp. 240-241). "The Absolute cannot be identified with God, so long as God is thought of as a self-conscious Being. The Absolute must include God and all other consciousnesses, not as isolated and unrelated beings, but as intimately related (in whatever way) to Him and to one another and as forming with Him a system or Unity. And, in so far as God is not any of these spirits, however they may be ultimately related to Him, He is not, in the most obvious sense of the word, infinite. The term 'infinite' would seem properly to belong to that Absolute which includes God and other spirits." (*Ibid*, pp. 239-240). Thus God is a member of the society of selves. He is finite and limited by other selves, but this limitation of God by finite spirits is a self-imposed limitation. Martineau also believes in the self-imposed limitation of God to make room for human freedom which does not compromise the sovereignty of God.

(To be continued)

AT THE TOUCH OF THE MOTHER

By Dorothy Kruger

[We postpone publishing "The Reminiscences of the Holy Mother" this month, and give in its place the following short but striking article on the Mother by one who is an enthusiastic reader of the Reminiscences. Miss Dorothy Kruger of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, New York wrote this article in reply to our query—what it is that makes women in the West interested in the Holy Mother and her ideal of life. Her reply which is both pointed and precise speaks for itself, and helps one realise how the very simplicity, unostentatiousness and dignified feminineness of the Holy Mother can facilitate what may be described as the process of soul-making. To those in this country, who find nothing worth preserving in the Indian ideal of womanhood, it will be a revelation to know that there are aspects of it deemed supremely valuable by people outside.]

MUCH has been written about the cultured family woman whose predominant interest is the sacrifice of self for the well-being of her husband and the perfect development of her children. Still more has been said about the society woman who whirls from one sense pleasure to another, in a state of nervous helplessness. But the potent force of womanhood to-day is the working girl—the thousands and thousands of women, who, through economic conditions, are forced to assume the responsibilities of men.

New York is hard. These steel-granite structures, of which we are so proud, rising higher and higher until all sunlight is shut out of the streets of lower New York, are but symbols of the concerns they house. Corporations fattening at the centre reach out tentacles and gather into themselves the lesser concerns. Competition is the keynote. Even within the organisation itself, branch offices in various cities strain against each other in competition.

Without sufficient mental and emotional training, out of the common strata of society, girls are thrown into these business machines. In many cases the father of the girl is dead or

incapacitated, the brothers married, a younger child at school. She and a sister or two maintain the home and the dependents. With only a public school and a six-months business school training behind these girls, their plastic minds assimilate the greed and jealousy and competition around them. Each girl learns to strive against the other in output of work and efficiency and favour of superiors. Each girl competes with the other in acquisition of smart-looking clothes, beauty culture, and attention of men. Day after day, enervated by endless subway riding, they exhaust themselves under the relentless drive of efficiency experts. After a few years there are some who to escape make any kind of marriage. Others, emulating the moral standards of their masculine co-workers, in the name of freedom, plunge into unrestrained sense pleasures. Still others, stifled by their environment at home and business, study. The colleges and universities in the City are crowded with girls, who after the day's work, taking advantage of special courses offered at night, study some art or science or business organisation. Intellectually sharpened, they assume more and more the

responsibilities of their employers. They identify themselves completely with the man with whom they work. Thus, during their formative years, completely under the influence of men, they become masculine minded.

Their attitude towards the home? It is a place where one sleeps, and occasionally eats a meal. It is a place where exhausted nerves are constantly flayed by demands for money, for explanation of late hours, for an insight into the girl's personal life. The girl has no energy and time for, or interest in, the small details of the home. There is no meeting ground for mother and daughter. Individuality and self-centered interests are stressed and independence flaunted by the girl.

Fewer and fewer successful business women marry for having tasted the wine of economic freedom. Being constant victims of male selfishness and egoism they have no illusions. Having witnessed too many betrayals they have lost faith in all things. Stronger than their desire for children is the desire to shield such potential beings from the pitiless road they themselves have had to walk, and alone.

Suddenly there is the awareness of the utter futility of their lives. They realise they are living in a vortex. They cry out and they hear not even an echo of their cry. They think of God. But what is God? Long ago has vanished their idea of an extra-cosmic God. The sky-scrappers themselves destroyed the illusion. All these years these women depended solely upon themselves and now they themselves appear meaningless. On a business day, during a lunch hour, they perhaps go into a church—to listen to a talk on economics or poli-

tics. Another day they perhaps try a church of a different denomination. The church insults their intelligence. Christ they do not know.

Into such lives is coming the influence of the Holy Mother. Into the darkness we have screamed our rebellion, and Swami Vivekananda, being the essence of compassion, has reached out and taken us by the hand. Now he is pouring into our arid hearts the ideals of Sri Ramakrishna. For the first time we are learning about love. For the first time we are being taught the meaning of God. Immortality is at last being made reasonable.

Swami Vivekananda has brought us to the Holy Mother. We stand in awe and reverence before such self-effacement and humility and wisdom. We are enchanted by the beauty of her face. For the first time we want to be *feminine*. Like burning sand we are drinking in the sweetness and passivity of the Holy Mother. Our center of consciousness is shifting from the material to the spiritual. We no longer see our business environment as a mill to grind us but as a training ground. And as we understand more and more the Holy Mother's steadiness of purpose, her great humility and overflowing gentleness, we are unwittingly radiating peace. Amongst ourselves we are co-operating instead of competing, we are giving instead of grasping, we are becoming passive instead of assuredly aggressive. We are welcoming each experience, no matter how secular, as the means of unfoldment of our higher self. We no longer see our home as anything but a safety zone to which we come each night out of the noise and confusion of the City. We are learning

127420

to use, instead of abuse, our freedom. We no longer experience friction, and the more objective our previous life becomes the more clearly we see that we ourselves were the generators of all the friction we ever experienced. Now, with lowered head, we realise we were to the mother who bore us, not an object of economic utility but a part of her very being gone hopelessly beyond her power of understanding. We were her own blood which refusing to flow through her heart, congealed in her veins and froze her to loneliness.

Out of the complexity of our lives the Holy Mother is making simplicity. She is leading us not *beside* the still waters but into the calm and cool of our being, from whence, poised, we emerge, our hands and intellect to business and home, our heart and mind to her. She is leading us, as fast as we ourselves permit, into our heritage; and into that *femininity* we are taking with us all the *masculine strength* of mind we so dearly bought.

We are not deluding ourselves that, economically speaking, our lives will ever be different. We work just as hard. We become just as exhausted.

But this, now, is of no import. Before, whichever way we turned there was nothing but a blank wall of futility. Now, whichever way we turn there is an avenue of purpose. And we have learned, under strain, how the remembrance of the calm face of the Holy Mother acts as a benediction and an impetus to rise mentally above all external circumstances.

What is true of us holds equally good for every woman of the West regardless of social position; for, who, being constantly restless with the burden of power and selfish love, will not become a greater woman for living immersed in the ideal of service and renunciation? Who, having tasted emotional solitude and self-restraint, does not know these things to be good? Who, thinking herself wise, will not, at the slightest intellectual contact with the wisdom of the Holy Mother, know herself to be foolish and sit humbly before the lotus feet of that divine ideal? Before heart's hunger there is no question whether an ideal is of East or West; there is but feast or starvation of the soul. Too long were we hungry. Now we feast. Salutations to the Holy Mother.

BUDDHISM AND VEDAS

By Rev. Bhikku Nyanapiya

[Rev. Bhikku Nyanapiya, formerly known as Mr. J. Pistor, is a German Buddhist monk, who is at present in Ceylon and will shortly be going over to his fatherland to preach the Dhamma. In this article he draws our attention to a line of thought which both Hindus and Buddhists may very well accept with advantage. We in India can make an immediate beginning by evincing more enthusiasm in the celebration of the Buddha's birth-anniversary. It is scandalous that while we observe festivals connected with innumerable Gods and Goddesses, we do nothing to honour the memory of one of the greatest, according to some the greatest, of Indians and of men ever born in this world. Such great ones are the highest symbols of the Deity.]

BUDDHISM and Hinduism are as it were the two oldest branches of the immortal Vedic tree of knowledge. Both spring from the common source like twin-currents of the mighty Ganges of Indo-Aryan thought. It was the supreme vision of the Oneness of Truth illumining the hearts of the ancient Rishis of India that poured down from the sylvan silent height of the Himalayas as the lofty revelations set forth in the Vedas. It was again this vision that made it possible for Buddha, the greatest son of India, to go out and conquer Asia by giving to the world the greatest ideal of love, and to be called the Perfectly Enlightened One.

But it is for every seeker after truth a matter of deep regret that the modern adherents of these two sister faiths are in blissful ignorance of their common source. Each has very unjustly misunderstood the other and has created artificial barriers between them by laying emphasis on minor details which have been exaggerated out of all proportion. But now in this Age of Synthesis and Unity, we know very well that the light of sympathy and unifying wisdom is far more important than the subtleties of showy Pandits and hairsplitting intellectuals. Both the Hindus and

the Buddhists should make it a point to find out common bases on which they can again unite and embrace each other; for the one cannot live without the other, and both form a complete set and agree essentially in principles. The non-essentials or the different ways of presenting metaphysical conceptions are due to ethnologic and temperamental distinctions and to the free use of symbols to express the Inexpressible. We can be united and yet have different opinions.

If we adopt the right standpoint in a connected historical study of Indian thought as an organic cultural entity and penetrate deeply into the heart of Buddhist and Brahminical thought, it will be perfectly clear that it is difficult, if not absurd, to draw a hard and fast line of demarcation between them; for the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Tipitakas form the classical, undivided background for the mind and thought of India. Only blind devotion and narrowness of mind after the manner of sectarians and dogmatic scholars are capable of showing divergences between these currents of thought.

Professor E. B. Havell, perhaps the greatest authority on Indian Art, has made an epochal discovery

which he declares in his "Ideals of Indian Art" and "Indian Sculpture and Painting." He states that the golden thread of Vedic Idealism not only runs as a common basis of Hindu and Buddhist cultures but also of Sikh and Jain, Moghul and Saracenic, Chinese and Japanese, Javanese and Balian as well as Arabian and Persian, i.e., of the whole Asiatic thought and cultures. That learned scholar finds a hint in the Mahabharata, the Volksepos of India, to the effect that even Egyptian and Cretan cultures were indebted to old Aryan ideal (Surya, ancient Vedic Sun God). "The relation between Hinduism (the religion of the Veda) and Buddhism of the present day" says Swami Vivekananda "is nearly the same as between Judaism and Christianity. But with this difference, while the Jews rejected, nay crucified Him (Christ), the Hindu exalted the Sakya Muni to the seat of Divinity and worships Him. Buddha came not to destroy anything, but He was the fulfilment—the logical conclusion of Hinduism. Vedanta has no quarrel with Buddhism." Buddhism did not die a premature death, as it is held generally, but as Dr. A. Coomarasamy says in his "Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism" it gradually got merged into Hinduism from which it once issued. Vedic genius for expansion and assimilation absorbed it. It entered into the being of the purified Brahmin philosophy and became one with it.

The eminent Indian thinker, Prof. Radhakrishnan, in his book on Indian philosophy says that "the violent extermination of Buddhism in India is legendary. Buddhism and Brahmanism approached each other so much that for a time they were confused

and ultimately became one." The Nirguna Brahman of Sankara and the Sunya (tathata) of Nagarjuna are nearly the same. The true Atman or Self is the one undivided Existence and is not-self (Anatta, Sunya); "Nirvana is!" (Nagasena). The Buddhist teaching of Anattata, is the criticism given to the ego-essence of the Indian philosophies, and at the same time is the outcome of Enlightenment experienced by the Buddha. Nirvana also signifies the state in which there takes place the identification of Egolessness and Great Self. In this we see the realisation of Brahman which transcends the dualism of "to be" (sat) and "not to be" (asat). It is because of the similarity existing between the doctrines of these two great schools that the rivals of the monistic Vedanta have dubbed Sankara as a Prachhanna Buddha, hidden Buddhist. Slow absorption and silent adaptation, and not priestly fanaticism and methodical destruction, are the causes of the fall of Buddhism.

Not only was the Buddha, who appeared at a time of most hideous and wide-spread materialism, born and brought up a Hindu, but he also lived and died a Hindu. He re-established and perfected the Sacred Order of Monks in its full purity; and he himself was a monk as he is the Buddha. "You must not imagine" says Vivekananda "that there was ever a religion in India with temples and priests of its own separated Order! Nothing of that sort. The idea was always within the Sanatana-dharma, only the influence of Buddha was paramount at one time and made the nation monastic." Mrs. Rhys Davids, a great living authority on Buddhism, who has spent about 40

years of her life in this study, writes in her "Sakiya Origins" that Sakiya Muni fulfilled, not destroyed, expanded not opposed the central teaching of the Upanishads. But he emphasised the concept of Man not as Being but as Becoming." "History of Pali Pitaka evolution," she says "is not unique and something new, but reflects an analogous history in the evolution of the Upanishads." Oldenberg justly points out in his "Buddha" that there was nothing in Buddha's attitude, generally, which could be regarded by his contemporaries as unusual and un-Indian. "The greatest Man ever born had not introduced anything fundamentally new." If there are differences, they are merely in small things, in different methods of expressing the one Truth, which have some value from the standpoint of men at certain levels of evolution; in fundamental ideas they are really one and the same. The Buddha was emphatic in declaring that the eightfold path of good living along which he led his followers was the ancient Aryan way of all the Buddhas of all time past and of all time yet to come. Even the metaphor of the eightfold path was borrowed from the fortified Aryan settlement. In the course of time the original message of the Blessed One had so much been twisted, deformed or rather 'smothered in the ritual and celebrant' by shrewd intellectualism and astute scholasticism, that in order to know the true Gospel of Buddha, we have "to winnow in the Pali Pitakas the grain from the chaff."

"I am convinced with Garbe and Jakobi that Buddha, as a philosopher, is doubtlessly dependent on Kapila and Patanjali" (T. W. Rhys Davids). Ashvaghosha in the Buddha Charita

says: The city of Kapilavastu, the birth-place of Buddha, received its name in honour of the great Kapila, the founder of the Sankhya Philosophy. Buddha was not only influenced by Sankhya but also by Yoga system whose Dhyana was taken up by the early Buddhists as 'Jhana' (Pali) from which the Chinese 'Ch'an' and the Japanese 'Zen' have come into being. The spiritual exercises of the Buddhist contemplative are taken over from the Brahminical sources. "Both the Sankhya and the Buddhist systems (Hinayana and Mahayana)" says Sir H. S. Gour in his 'Spirit of Buddhism' "have taken Vedantism as their basis." This basis, the quintessence of Indian thought may be summed up by saying that life and existence are One and that at the heart of the Universe is the One Ultimate Reality, the true Atman of everything, which is not self, free from all change and duality, outside all mean and miserable care for self. The two systems are like a stream that after flowing through its Vedic bed have burst its banks and have cut for themselves new channels but after taking an independent course to some distance have become reunited as the main stream from which they had become parted.

Buddha was a Vedic Protestant in the sense he stood against the degraded selfish belief in Atman (individualised soul), against blind worship and the sacrificial rites of the Vedas. It was his unique greatness that, prompted by his wonderful sympathy for everybody, he brought out the truths from the hidden Vedas and threw them broadcast all over the world. His was a protest and a challenge to the ritualism of the Brahmins. In his religion there is no caste, caste

is simply a social institution. "To my mind the great point about the teaching of Buddha is his insistence on applying religion to life." (Radhakrishnan). He only warned his followers not to waste time in vain intellectual speculation, but to help the evolution of life by being good and doing good to others. As Max Muller has to concede: "The most important element of the Buddhist reform has always been its social and moral code, not its metaphysical theories. That moral code, taken by itself is one of the most perfect which the world has ever known. On this point all testimonies from hostile and from friendly quarters agree." Gautama knew the futility of argument and metaphysical discourse—the detailed discussions in the Pali books are largely later interpolations in favour of some favourite theory—and he taught his followers in the simplest possible way. He brought them to know Truth by means of direct, intuitive experience and Enlightenment. Certainly his knowledge was not limited to his teaching, but caution prompted by great wisdom made him hesitant to divulge conceptions which if misunderstood might be disastrous.

A living and active religion and culture is great for the men it makes. It is man-making religion and man-making education all round that we want but not any astute palliatives,

evasions and apologies for that. We have, comparatively speaking, only few such real men. The mark of a truly living nation is that it produces great men in every sphere of life. Judged by this standard India is alive; for in every century it has produced spiritual geniuses, not to speak of leading men in secular fields. The modern age has witnessed in India the vigorous creative life of Vedic culture in the advent of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, Rabindra and Aurobindo, Gandhi and Rammohan. But it must truly be admitted that for the last one thousand years the Buddhist world has not produced a great man of world-renown as it used to do before. So Buddhism must again be reconciled to, and closely acquainted with, its Holy Mother, the Universal Sanatana-dharma, so that it may again become a creative, dynamic, living, civilising power; for Buddhism is the very salt of India and the whole earth.

We want for India and Ceylon the bright sun of Vedanta-intellectuality joined with the heart of the Compassionate One, the wonderful combination of thought and feeling, wisdom and love, so that we may avoid imminent atrophy and fossilisation. In this age of scientific thought and mutual exchange of ideas among peoples, there is no place for static and dogmatic conceptions of religion.

MEDITATIONS ON SELF-DISCIPLINE

By Anilbaran Ray

[Mr. Anilbaran Ray is a Sadhaka of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. In these meditations he sheds much light on several difficult problems of spiritual life.]

I

WE must not give any more indulgence to our lower nature; every time we yield to a lower impulse, we make it more difficult for us to conquer it; every lower suggestion that we reject leads us a step forward. We have a great and difficult task to achieve, we must not increase our difficulties by carelessness or slackness of our will.

In our Sadhana every moment we either gain something or lose something. Every lower movement, however small, insignificant or plausible, that we indulge in takes us backward and gives a hold, a footing in us to the ever-watchful hostile forces. Even if we do not go lower and remain where we are, that is a loss of time and opportunity, because simply by keeping up our aspiration and silent will for transformation, we can make steady progress every moment of our life.

Every victory that we achieve over our lower nature helps us to know and realise the truth of our being, for in our true nature we are the masters and not the slaves of nature. Every temptation, however small, that we successfully resist strengthens our will, clears our intelligence, gives us true and genuine joy. Circumstances are always coming up where we can do or achieve something in the matter of our own transformation. We must always keep ourselves in close and intimate touch with the Divine Mother, so that every moment and with the help of every circumstance

that we meet, we can take a step forward towards divine life.

II

One who has not controlled his own self and has not conquered his own defects, cannot expect to conquer and control the forces of the world. It is by practising self-conquest that we learn how to conquer the world.

As long as we have not removed our imperfections and transformed our instruments, our work in the world is bound to be full of mistakes and failures. The intuitions we receive from above will be confused by the wanderings of our mind, the impulses we receive from Thy Will, Mother, will be distorted by our egoistic desires and attachments, and though Thy divine force descends into us, through our own obstruction and rigidity it may lead to disasters instead of victory. So we must not meddle with the affairs of the world until by practice and discipline we have made ourselves free, pure and plastic instruments of the divine Will; we should confine ourselves only to such work, Mother, under Thy direct guidance and control as will serve to mould and transform ourselves.

Before we venture to work upon the world, we have plenty of work and more to do within ourselves. We can easily recognise the false and lower movements in us and can constantly invoke Thy will and force and light, Mother, in order to correct and transform them. It is thus that we can

practise our union with Thee and steadily turn ourselves into perfect instruments in Thy hands, for the victorious performance of Thy will in the world. It is by practising self-conquest under Thy help and guidance that we learn how to conquer the world.

III

We are the real masters of our nature and the more we realise this truth, the more the lower movements cease in us giving place to the higher.

Nature binds us in her meshes only because we allow ourselves to be bound. We take interest in the lower movements of nature, so they go on indefinitely. The more we yield to her promptings, the more inextricably she lays her hold upon us and uses us as her bond-slaves. But the moment we take a strong attitude, nature begins to throw away her mask and accept us as her master.

There is no temptation nature can bring before us, that we cannot resist by a strong will; there is no pain or sorrow which we cannot bear; there is no disturbance in which we cannot keep ourselves calm; there is no situation, however bad or hopeless, out of which we cannot raise ourselves by a strong determination. Infinite and indomitable strength is in our Self, we have only to realise it and nature will cease to trouble us and will yield to us her richest treasures.

We take refuge in Thee, Mother, so that we may know our true Self and realise our true strength. The more we devote ourselves to Thee, the more we find Thee to be our own higher Self, we get strength from Thy strength, life from Thy life. The

moment of our complete identification with Thee, Mother, will be the moment of our highest conquest and self-realisation.

IV

It is by obedience to Thee, Mother, that we hope to discipline our lower nature. By resolving to obey Thee instead of our desires and attachments, we really start on the path to a higher divine life.

Desires and passions hold a tyrannical sway over us and it seems well-nigh impossible to subdue or control them by our unaided will. But the consciousness that we are obeying Thee, Mother, gives us great strength, and we can easily conquer them supported by Thy will and Thy force. We must constantly seek to know Thy will and obey it—there is no other way of getting out of our bondage.

A forced obedience, an obedience from hope of gain or reward or from fear of loss or punishment is of little use. We must consciously and willingly offer our obedience to Thee, knowing Thee to be our higher Self, and with the faith that only by obedience to Thee we shall rise to the divine life. And our obedience must be enthusiastic and joyful,—an expression of our love and devotion to Thee as the Divine Mother. By a free and willing and joyful obedience to Thee, Mother, a harmony will be gradually established between Thy will and ours, all our desires and passions will be controlled and vanquished, no impulse will rise in us unless it be directly from Thee, and thus we shall steadily grow into Thy own Self and our obedience will be ultimately merged in a blissful harmony and identification with Thee.

REASON AND INTUITION IN VEDANTA

By P. Nagaraja Rao, B.A. (Hons.)

[Mr. P. Nagaraja Rao is a research scholar in the Philosophy Department of the Madras University. Many a critic has denied the status of philosophy to Indian thought because it includes revelation as an instrument of knowledge. Mr. Rao's article is a brief, yet bold and convincing answer to the criticism.]



COMMON charge levelled against Vedanta in particular and against Indian philosophy in general is that they are purely based on revealed scripture. No doubt scripture, (Sruti) is the final authority in matters concerning the "spirit." All other instruments of knowledge (Pramanas), such as inference, perception, etc., are subordinated to the explication and substantiation of scripture. Such an advocacy of scripture and its unimpeachable authority does not sound as a truly philosophical attitude. "The authoritarianism of Indian philosophy and Vedanta in particular is unphilosophical only on the face of it."* There is abundant place for the exercise of reason (Upapatti) in the art of interpreting the scripture.

Scripture after all is a cluster of words. Words have their own import. The import of scripture is determined by our capacity to interpret. Vedanta does not accept the whole scripture as authoritative. Only the purportful part is taken into consideration. The Indian theory of scriptural interpretation is governed by six determinative marks of purport (Lingas of Tatparya Nirnaya). They are:—1. The initial passage (Upakrama); 2. the concluding passage (Upasamhara); 3. repetition

(Abhyasa); 4. Novelty (Aparva); 5. Fruitfulness or glorification by eulogistic passages and condemnation by deprecatory passages (Arthavada); 6. Reasoning (Upapatti). Even though the application of reason is only one of the determinative marks of purport, still it is "reason" that has to judge which is the "initial passage" and which the "concluding passage." It is "reason" that has to test which is "valid repetition" and which is "eulogistic". The charge that Vedanta is unphilosophical on the face of it proves to be a theory of the first look and not a product of mature thought.

Theistic schools of Indian philosophy, especially the Nyaya school, has made elaborate attempts to prove the existence of God with the help of inference. Students of philosophic thought may with profit refer to the incontestable proofs adduced by Udayana, the prince of Indian logicians, in his "Nyaya Kusumanjali," (fifth Sthabaka) for the existence of God. The proofs adduced by many a modern Gifford Lecturer for the existence of God pales into insignificance before Udayana's remorseless and unassailable logic.

We shall, however, confine our attention here to the application of reason to Advaita metaphysics only. The genius of Sankarite Advaitism lies in its critical examination of the categories of knowledge. They have

* Refer to S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri's introduction to Bhamati T. P. H. publication.

scrupulously examined the telescope before turning it on the sky. The "Dialectic literature" in Advaita has proved to the hilt the unintelligibility of most categories of knowledge such as substance, quality, action, relation, causation, time and space. We should not forget to note that the Advaitin only denies ultimate reality to them. He grants their factuality and their relative reality. Thus through his sheer logical acumen he arrives at a "secondless reality" (Advitiya) and at the indeterminable nature (Anirvachaniya) of the phenomenal world.

His Brahman is the sole reality. It is Knowledge, Bliss and Existence. If it becomes an object of knowledge it loses its selfhood. It is self-manifest (Svaprakasa). But for its luminosity the whole world would be blind. It is non-relational. All relational knowledge is finite and it is only an appearance of the real. Thought can only point to this Brahman, it cannot have a grasp of it. The function of reason here is negative. Thought and reason tell us what the Brahman is not. It is a mistake that most upholders of the "coherence theory" in the West should think that "reason is constitutive of Truth." The invincible metaphysician, Sankara, recognises that he has no right to vary the game and he plays it according to the rules of logic. As a strict metaphysician he is pledged to truth and seeks it at all cost. His mind is not encumbered with religious prejudices or moral vagaries. He makes reason test everything, though he knows that it cannot build. "We discover by intuition but we prove by logic. Explanation is only an adventure of the mind." The vociferations of a hundred Srutis cannot establish what is

opposed to reason. Through the negative aid of logic and the positive flame of intuition Sankara arrives at the "Chidrupa Brahman." Logic after all proves its own imperfection and ineffectiveness. The failure of many an intellectual rationalist in the West is not their failure as the failure of intellect in general to grasp a truth which is proved on our pulse.

This Brahman can be intuited by constant meditation and concentration. Adherence to scripture-ordained duties is only an accessory to that final realisation, "Akhandartha Jnana"—the last psychosis. This is realisation perceptual and indeterminate. It is not the same as the cognition of a new-born baby. The cognition of the child is infra-rational. As it grows old the child's cognition gets relational.

The cognition of Brahman-realisation is final, it is trans-relational and has its own certitude, and it never again returns to its relational level. The immediacy of the cognition and the non-attributive nature are the only two characteristic features common between the new-born child's cognition and Brahman cognition. Let me conclude: "Maunavyakhyaprakriti parabrahmatattvam—" the truth of Brahman is revealed by the commentary of silence. "Gurostu maunam vayakhyanam sisyaistu chinnaamsayah." Indian scripture gives cases of teachers who dispel the doubts of pupils by assuming an attitude of silence on the question of the ultimate.

As F. H. Bradley remarks: "Such a scepticism, I would add, if not the best issue, may serve at least as a deliverance from oppressions. For it may free us on every side from the

tyranny of intellectual prejudices, and in our own living concerns, from the superstitious idolatry of abstract consistency. For such a scepticism, all our truths without exception are mere working ideas." "Outside of spirit, there is not, and there cannot be, any reality, and, the more that anything is spiritual, so much the more is it veritably real."

INDIA'S MESSAGE IN STONE

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

[Mr. Srikantan is the Professor of History and Economics in the Madura College. He is a well-known author and journalist. In the following article he gives a simple exposition of the ideals that have actuated the sculptors of India, and shows how the handiwork of the master craftsmen of India truly reflect the spiritual genius of her culture.]

THE soul of India is still in her temples. Who can forget the sun-kissing towers and Sikkharas of her magnificent temples which greet the pilgrims from a distance. Verily, India is a land of the Gopuras and Vimanas. To realise the insignificance of man and the omnipotence of God, one has only to stand before one of these mighty towers and look up at their massive structure with a profusion of images and carvings. Every image in the tower has a message to give; unfortunately our interest in these are so little that few of us care to understand what these silent speakers have to say.

The city of Madura affords ample opportunities for research to a keen student of Indian sculpture. It is justly known as the Athens of South India and as such it is attracting thousands of pilgrims every year. "Even to-day," says Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswami, "it is far easier to lecture to an ordinary European audience on Indian art and find some understanding, than it is to secure this understanding from an Indian audience." In fact the glory of Madura Temple is better known to the tourists than to the students of any of India's

educational institutions. It is indeed unfortunate that the educated young men of India should pay so little attention to the glories of Indian art. The Western savants of Indian culture are surprised to note the ignorance of our students about the architecture and iconography of their own temples. The reason for this is not far to seek. In the words of Havell, "in modern times, the influence of Western education, with its purely commercial ideals, has been even more depressing to Indian art than the iconoclasm of Aurangzib. Educated India, under British rule, while affecting to exchange its own culture for that of the West, has remained entirely aloof from those vital movements in British Art and Craft which in the last half century have derived so much impetus from the study and exhibition of oriental art. Western methods of education have opened a rift between the artistic castes and the 'educated' such as never existed at any previous time in Indian History. The remedy lies not in making the Indian artists more literate in the European sense, nor in teaching them anatomy, perspective and model drawing but in making the literates, edu-

cators and educated, conscious of the deficiencies of their own education which render them unable to appreciate the artistic wealth lying at their doors."

We have still to realise that the Indian coins and temple-buildings have not only an aesthetic but also a historical value. Many a knotty problem in Indian History can easily be solved if Indian art and sculpture were studied with a historical bias. Art always has been a mirror of history, and to those who approach her with care and respect, she yields information that they could never have dreamt of. As it is, there are several gaps in Indian History on account of lack of literary and archaeological materials. There was, however, hardly a century when the Indian artist was quiet. It is therefore easy to bridge some of these dark gulfs of our history, if only our students take a little more interest in the historical interpretation of Indian architecture and sculpture.

The recent excavations in Harappa and Mohenjo Daro have carried back the history of Indian art to the beginning of the Chalcolithic period (3,000 B.C.). The old controversy whether image worship existed in the Vedic period or not is almost settled; for the history of Hindu Iconography can now be carried back to even pre-Vedic period. It is art that is now establishing the contact of the Hindus with the dwellers on the far off Islands. The influence of her art can clearly be traced not only in Byzantine art, but in the Gothic Cathedrals of the Middle Ages and also in the temples of Java and Bali Islands.

To students of Indian history, the interest is not merely in the figures themselves, but in the cultural synthe-

sis which most of the figures reveal. An understanding of Indian art for purposes of interpreting her history, requires a knowledge of the motives that prompted that workmen. Indian art is so closely connected with her history and religion that several scholars have been led altogether to strange conclusions on account of their incapacity to understand the religious background of Indian Iconography. Thus V. A. Smith says in his article on the subject in the Imperial Gazetteer, Vol. 2: "After 300 A.D., Indian sculpture, properly so called, hardly deserves to be reckoned as an art. The figures, both of men and animals, became stiff and formal and the idea of power is clumsily expressed by the multiplication of members. The many-headed, many-armed gods and goddesses, whose images crowd the walls and roofs of medieval temples, have no pretensions to beauty and are frequently hideous and grotesque."

V. A. Smith here is condemning what he is unable to understand. Indian sculptors never erected a statue for mere enjoyment. It was never based upon sensual worship like Hellenic art. The artists always regarded Nature as a manifestation of one great Universal Law. They always sought for,

Tongues in trees, books in the
running brooks,

Sermons in stones and God in
everything.

The sculptors never attempted to be realistic although, if they wanted, they could. Except in Gandhara, nowhere are the creations true to nature. In the words of Matsya Purana "to worship Gods and to sing their praise is the best of Karma Yoga and it will

bring salvation to men." They were prohibited from creating a human likeness on stone. It was considered as a prostitution of art. In the words of Sukracharya, the author of Sukra Niti, "The images of Gods yield happiness to men and lead to heaven; but those of men lead away from heaven and yield grief."

In Bharhurd and Sanchi we have the figures of Pasenadi and Ajata Satru, in Madura we have the figures of the rulers of the Nayak dynasty. But they occupy a very subordinate place. Sculpture in India has been throughout religious. Its aim has been superhuman perfection of character and equanimity. With such aims, the artists could have had nothing to do with facial expression in the ordinary sense of the term; nay, on the other hand, the more human in expression, the less does Hindu sculpture approach its own perfection. Only qualities like graciousness, nobility and peace, which involve in their perfection a superhuman balance of intellect and emotion can be expressed in our images. Action without attachment is the core of Indian philosophy. The Indian icons clearly exhibit this motive. To them, we can apply the statement of Leonardo da Vinci: "That drawing is best which by its action best expresses the passion that animates the figure." The images are wonderfully expressive. One cannot but be struck with the breathless eagerness and rapturous surprise of the boy-god Sundaramoorthy in the Madura temple. Who can resist admiring the serenity and unshaken peace exhibited in the face of Dakshinamoorthi? The aim of Indian art is suggestion and not imitation.

The sculptors, being anxious to impress the worshippers with the superhuman nature of the God they worshipped, attached some symbols to signify His superiority. If a man has two arms, naturally a god like Brahma or Vishnu must have four or more arms. In representing the gods, the sculptor also took into consideration the tradition behind them. In making the image of Vishnu the symbols of Sankha (conch), Chakra (disc), Gada (club) and Padma (lotus) were always added. The capacity of the sculptor was judged by the spirit of meditation the image infused in the heart of the on-looker. The chief characteristic of an image is its power of helping forward contemplation and Yoga. The human maker of images should therefore be himself meditative. To Indian sculptor proportion was not so important as Dhyana and Yoga. While Greek images are graceful, and Egyptian ones natural, it is only Indian images which can claim to be contemplative. The importance of this aspect of Indian sculpture would be clear if one realised the qualifications necessary for this profession. Foucher, in his *Iconographia Buddhique* writes, "The sculptor must meditate on the emptiness of (Shunytva) or non-existence of all things, for by the fire of the idea of the abyss, it is said there are destroyed beyond recovery, the five factors of ego-consciousness. Then only should he invoke the desired Divinity by the utterance of the appropriate seed-word (Bija) and should identify himself completely with the divinity to be represented. Then, finally, on pronouncing the *Dhyana Mantra*, in which the attributes are defined, the Divinity appears visibly like a reflection or 'as

in a dream,' and this brilliant image is the artist's model. The artist in brief was enjoined to become one with Divinity (Devo bhootva devam yajet).

Besides being a practical philosopher, the sculptor was also expected to be proficient in several other sister arts. In the Vishnu Dharmottara, we are told that he who does not know properly the rules of Chitra (painting) can by no means be able to draw the characteristics of images (Pratimalakshana). Again without a knowledge of the science of dancing, the rules of painting are very difficult to be understood. Moreover, the science of dancing is difficult to be understood by one who is not acquainted with music. Lastly without singing, music cannot be understood.

The Silpasastra lays down several interesting rules regarding the making of an image. To them several others have been added by later works like Sukraniti, Brahatsamhita and Maya Sastra. According to Sukra "one should not construct an image that has eyes directed upwards, downwards or closed, nor should design one that has vehement eyes, but eyes bespeaking satisfaction." Again Varahamihira in his Brahatsamhita says, "If the image has excess in its arms, the sculptor will suffer from the fear of the king; if it is less, ill fate will befall him; if it is thin, he will suffer from loss of money. If the image has a wound from the fall of weapons, it indicates the death of the maker. If it inclines to the left, it bespeaks of the death of his wife, and if to the right, death of his own self. If its eyes are directed upwards, it makes him blind, if the eyes are cast downwards, it will bring evil

thought to him." The technique of an icon was of national importance. The author of the Pratimalakshana observes, "If the image is deficient in length, there would be famine and national breakage."

If Indian sculptors cared, they could easily excel the Greeks in imitating the anatomical proportions of the body. The bronze figure of a dancing girl recently discovered in Mohanjo Daro shows a sense of naturalism of modeling, rare even among the Greeks. It is particularly conspicuous in the treatment of the back and legs and in the expression of general alertness, force and refinement. Several images in the temple of Sri Meenakshi and Madana Gopala Swami in Madura, point to the perfection of Indian sculptors in representing human life. We cannot but refer in this connection to the famous Kambattadi Mantapam in front of God Sundareswara. The carving on the pillars, to say the least, is superb. Each pillar has a story to tell. The workmanship is so fine and the chiselling so delicate that one is lost in silent admiration. Particularly noteworthy among these figures is a bas-relief on the south western pillar representing Ravana in penance with the sacred Mount Kailasa on his back. The execution is as grand as the conception is noble. Equally fascinating is the pillar depicting the marriage of Sri Meenakshi with Lord Sundareswara. The serenity in the face of Brahma, the shyness and suppressed smile in the face of the bride and the affectionate expression in the face of the bridegroom cannot but captivate the attention of even a casual visitor. Indeed the message of India has been impressively translated in stone.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Sri Ramakrishna and St. Francis of Assisi. By Sister Devamata. Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, Los Angeles County, California. Page 88.

This little book is a comparative study of the lives and mission of the two great personalities whose names it bears. A look at the table of contents will give the readers an idea of its scope and features: Parallels in Method and Mission, Differences and Points of Unity, The Ramakrishna Mission and the Early Franciscan Brotherhood, St. Francis and the East, Contemporaneous Conditions, Their Message, Admonitions of St. Francis, Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. The picture that we get in these few pages is not one drawn by a mere historian or biographer but by a devotee who has rightly entered into the spirit of both without turning into a fanatic. One might not see eye to eye with the authoress in some points of comparison, still there is no gainsaying that her observations are largely true, and have fairly succeeded in taking away the odium that is unavoidable in such cases. The beautiful style of the Sister and the fervour of her heart have put an additional zest to the ennobling theme. The "admonitions" and the "teachings" have eternal values for all spiritual aspirants, whereas the parallelism in method and mission, though very brief and cursory, is interesting to those who are working in the same fields.

The Chatussruti Bhashya of Sri Madhvacharya (Sanskrit) : Critically edited by B. N. Krishnamurti Sarma, M.A., Lecturer in Sanskrit, Annamalai University. Pp. XXXII + 136. Price Rs. 2-8-0 or 6 sh.

The first four aphorisms of the Brahmasutras take us to the heart of the problem set before all philosophy and religion. Hence the numerous commentaries and expositions that crowd and cluster around the tiny text of the Sutras in a genealogical relation to it, rightly lay special emphasis on these four crucial aphorisms. Not long ago we had the pleasure of noticing in these columns another edition of this Chatussruti portion with Sankarabhashya, Bhamati and

up-to-date critical appurtenances by two eminent scholars and published by the Theosophical Society. We are glad to welcome in its wake another almost similar edition of the same four sutras with Madhvabhashya and three of its commentaries. The introduction and notes constitute the most distinguishing features in both the publications. They are really beneficial to the students of philosophy for the new light they shed on textual and allied matters. However, apart from the unity of topic and similarity in general appearance, one fact which has called to our mind the former publication is the jarring difference in the composition of the present introduction and notes. In the first they were strictly objective, thoroughly dispassionate and scientifically critical. In the work before us, on the other hand there is an express vindication of the supremacy of Madhvabhashya. To confront the three important Bhashyas and to assess their relative merits was an idea foreign to the first. But the edition under review shows a different spirit. The author of this introduction strays into disputable grounds and looks to Madhvacharya's laurels by instituting odious comparisons between the Bhashyas, specially their method, style and interpretation. The work, therefore, is apt to meet greater appreciation at the hands of the loyal adherents of Madhvasiddhanta than of scientific critics who view facts in strictly chronological perspective and whose judgments are not surrendered to authority. Nevertheless Mr. Sarma's endeavour to shed new light on several points of interest and his microscopic criticism merit appreciation even though one may not agree with them all. His understanding of texts of this realistic school in the spirit in which they were written, and his procedure in the orbit of the masters of the school in interpreting them strictly from within, are praiseworthy. We owe him the rescue of two valuable commentaries on the Bhashya which for the first time appear here in print. The work on the whole is an addition to Indian Philosophy, especially to the slender output of Madhva literature available in modern form.

The Dhammapada : Text in Devanagari with English translation by Prof. N. K. Bhagawath, B.A.

This brochure is a publication of the Buddha Society, Bombay, founded by the late Dr. A. L. Nair,—a very welcome addition for those who desire to possess in handy form this glorious scripture of the Buddhists. The Pali text in Devanagari serves a very useful purpose.

The Nature of Mysticism : By C. Jinajadasa (Vice-President of the Theosophical Society 1921-1928). Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, 2nd Edition.

This is a small book of eighty pages, neatly printed and containing a lucid and striking presentation of a difficult subject. Many writers on mysticism have felt it almost impossible to define it. One of them has stated, "It is one of those things which are most nearly understood through, 'Those intuitions, grasps of guess

Which pull the more into the less,
Making the finite comprehend infinity.'
Maeterlinck

Mr. Jinajadasa in his book observes, "So universal is the mystic life, so all-inclusive of life's processes, that it is not easy to say what exactly constitutes mysticism," and later on "Mysticism is a life of the spirit which cannot be held within the boundaries of the religions." He has there-

fore approached the subject with reference to the modes of mystics generally and the main types of mysticism. As introductory to his main theme, he has classified men as belonging to three types, Practical Scientific and Mystic. The chief characteristic of the mystic has been put into the finely condensed style characteristic of the author, as follows, "The outer world is continually transmuting itself into an inner world of feeling; he lives for that inner world and his values to life in the outer world are derived from it." The life and conduct of some mystics are a puzzle to many people. The statement quoted above and the elaboration thereof in subsequent pages of the book are bound to throw considerable light on the ways of mystics and the life of mysticism.

Having described the chief characteristic of the mystics, the author proceeds to take up six main types of mysticism—mysticism of grace, mysticism of love, pantheistic mysticism, nature mysticism, sacramental mysticism and theosophical mysticism. Each of these has been considered under four heads, the theme, the method, the obstacle and the ideal. Without undue elaboration and within a brief compass the author has done his best to convey right knowledge and provide ample food for thought to those who are eager to learn something of the inwardness of mysticism and the ways of the mystics.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary in Chicago

A celebration commemorating the Centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna was held in Chicago on March 20, 21, and 22, by the friends and followers of the Vedanta Society, under the leadership of Swami Gnaneshwarananda. The festivities opened with a banquet in the beautiful Grand Ball Room of the Medinah Club in downtown Chicago, where more than two hundred guests assembled. The occasion was blessed and honoured by the presence of Swami Paramananda of Boston, Swami Vividishananda of Washington, D.C., Swami Nikhilananda of New York, and Swami Akhilananda of Providence, R. I.

For this celebration were received a message from Swami Akhandananda, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Belur, offering his peace and blessings; a greeting by cable from Mahatma Gandhi; a poem dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna from Rabindranath Tagore; and a letter from Romain Rolland of France expressing his hope that the present chaotic condition of the nations of the world is the darkness before the dawn of a new era of universal brotherhood. Mr. Rolland is convinced that in the character of the saint of Dakshineswar is found a composite of the qualities and ideals needed to unite the peoples of the earth, without merging

them or moulding them into the same pattern. These communications were read by Swami Gnaneshwarananda.

On the program of the evening was an internationally known speaker, Dr. Preston Bradley, pastor of the Peoples Church, Chicago. Dr. Bradley militantly supports the modern age, not as it is, but as he believes it should and can be, spiritualized. He is a man whose heart and soul is dedicated to obtaining the greatest good for the greatest number. Dr. George L. Scherger of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, a well-known scholar and historian, drew interesting and instructive analogies between the philosophy of ancient Greece and that of ancient India. Each of the visiting Swamis spoke briefly on different phases of the life and teachings of the great Master.

On the evening of March 21, at the Masonic Temple, some of the local students presented a very unusual performance, consisting of a concert of Hindu sacred music in Bengali and Hindustani languages, Hindu romantic and temple dances and a marionette production. All the players were attired in authentic costumes, and the musicians sitting on the floor of the dais, with pillows scattered about, gave to the whole scene an entirely oriental aspect. On the centre wall of the platform hung a garlanded picture of Sri Ramakrishna.

The marionette theatre, designed and assembled by the students, portrayed the "Descent of Ganga" in three acts. The village Kathak seated on the stage recited the story of Shiva and Parvati. The puppets were realistic from every standpoint, and seemed to be capable of all the emotions known to human life. Each episode was accompanied by the proper scenery, painted by the students from original portraits. Behind the curtain trained voices repeated the dialogues between the mythical characters. Several dramatic incidents took place during the course of the play, as for instance, a thundering noise and a terrible blaze that reduced Madan to ashes. The last scene was a picture of Sri Ramakrishna and an epilogue comparing this God-man with the cleansing and purifying waters of the Holy Ganges.

The celebration concluded on Sunday, March 22, with a symposium held at the

Masonic Temple where the Society holds its regular meetings. Swami Paramananda, Swami Vividishananda, Swami Akhilananda and Swami Nikhilananda, presented by Swami Gnaneshwarananda, spoke eloquently upon the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna as the solution for the ever-growing unrest and turmoil of modern society. Swami Vividishananda gave an illustrated lecture of lantern slides showing familiar scenes in the life of the Master and his intimate disciples.

Much publicity has been given this occasion by articles and pictures published in the leading Chicago newspapers, and the attendance at each function was beyond all expectations. On Sunday, especially, scores had to go away for lack of accommodation.

In the month of February the book "Ramakrishna the Man and the Power," so admirably written by Swami Gnaneshwarananda was off the press. No doubt this little volume influenced to a great extent the widespread interest in the formal celebration.

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations in C. P. & Berar

The Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna is being celebrated with remarkable success in almost all District towns, Tahsil places and a number of villages of C. P. & Berar. People of different communities have been sincerely joining hands everywhere.

Nagpur : The holy function, amidst Bhajans, was inaugurated at the Nagpur Ramakrishna Mission when His Holiness Sri Shankaracharya of Karvir Peeth, Dr. Kurtakoti read out the "Peace Message" of Swami Akhandanandaji Maharaj, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. From February 24th to March 15th, the celebrations went on with great eclat. Altogether 50,000 people of all creeds gathered to pay homage to the great Master. Bhagwatbhakta Tukdoji Maharaj, Vinayak Maharaj Masurkar, Mrs. Andharey, Mahadeo Bowa, and Pandit Telang Shastri delivered very inspiring Bhajans, Pravachans and Kirtans dealing with the invaluable contributions of the Saints of India and their catholic religious principles.

The most interesting and instructive feature of the celebration was the "Conven-

tion of Religions" held from March 1st to 3rd, under the presidency of His Holiness Jagatguru Sri Shankaracharya of Karvir Peeth, Dr. Kurtakoti, M.A., Ph.D. In the Convention, Hinduism by Prof. G. R. Malkani of Amalner; Islam by Moulana L.A. Hydari of Lucknow; Buddhism by Dr. C. D. Deshmukh, Nagpur; Jainism by Prof. Hiralal Jain of Amraoti; Sikhism by Prof. Teja Singh of Amritsar; Christianity by Rev. Gardiner of Nagpur; Vaishnavism by Kumudbandhu Sen of Puri; Bahaism by Mrs. Sirin K. Fouzdar of Bombay; Theosophy by Mr. W. L. Chiplunkar of Akola and Sri Ramakrishna and Universal Religion by Swami Bhaskarashwarananda were impressively represented, whereby a very pleasant atmosphere of religious fellowship was created and felt by the audience of all creeds who crowded everyday in thousands.

Sri Shankaracharya in his Presidential Address referred to the significance of the Life of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna, his practical harmony of religions and beauties of Hindu Dharma. At the commencement of his inspiring address, the learned and liberal Shankaracharya gave out, in frank terms, his sincere appreciation of the works of the local Ramakrishna Ashram in particular and of the Ramakrishna Mission in general, with a remark that had he not been entrusted with the responsibilities of the Gadi of Shankaracharya, people would have seen him as one of the Sanyasins of the Ramakrishna Order, and although circumstances had kept him away, he always had taken himself as one of the monastic members of the Ramakrishna Mission and had been trying throughout his life, to carry out the message and work of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda.

A special meeting for ladies was also held when Mrs. Parvatibai Patwardhan of Amraoti presided and Mr. A. G. Sheorey, Mr. J. U. Bhalerao and Swami Bhaskarashwarananda spoke on "Place of Women in the Making of Indian Nation" and "Sri Ramakrishna and his Ideals. The last two addresses were delivered with the aid of magic lantern slides.

Special editorials and articles on the life and message of Sri Ramakrishna were published in the local and outside papers viz., *Swachhanda*, *Dharmarajya*, *Daily News*, *Hansa*, *Vishwodhar* and the *Maharashtra*.

The Nagpur Ramakrishna Mission, in commemoration of the centenary of the Great World Prophet, has published (1) a comprehensive Marathi life of Sri Ramakrishna complete in two parts; (2) a short Marathi Life of Sri Ramakrishna; (3) Sri Ramakrishna Vak-sudha which is a verbatim Marathi translation of the Bengali Sri Ramakrishna Upadesha by late Swami Brahmananda. There are three other memorial publications which are under preparation.

Bhandara: From 24th February to 2nd March, Bhandara wore a gala appearance with puja, procession, magic lantern demonstrations, kirtan, etc. Great enthusiasm was evinced by the public who thronged in thousands everyday to chant the holy name of Sri Ramakrishna and to receive his message. Mr. Dixit, Mrs. Andharey, Swami Bhaskarashwarananda, Dr. Patwardhan and Principal Pandharipande were among the important speakers. Daridra Narayan Seva was one special feature.

Wardha: Thanks to the special efforts of Dr. Londhe, the worthy Principal of the Wasudeo Arts College, the College Literary Society celebrated Sri Ramakrishna Centenary with great faith and devotion at Wardha. A meeting was held in the town hall with Rai Bahadur Chhotelal Varma, Deputy Commissioner in the Chair. Dr. Londhe gave a very nice and critical appreciation of the Prophet. Pandit Brijlal Sarat also spoke on the significance of Ramakrishna's life. The President in his remarks specifically encouraged the idea of students to hold Jayantis and Anniversaries of such great saints.

Among the other important town in C.P. where celebrations were held may be mentioned Arvi, Chhindwara, Mohpa, Saugor, Drug, Jubbulpore, and Bilaspore. In all these places besides Pooja and Bhajana, there were several largely attended meetings where distinguished speakers delivered lectures on Sri Ramakrishna and on subjects of general religious interest. In some places feeding of Daridra Narayanas also took place. In addition to the above-mentioned towns, the villages of Khappa, Khamla, Ambazari, Telankhedi and Somalwada also celebrated the Centenary with special puja, bhajana and lantern lectures.

BERAR

Amraoti: From February 24th to March 14th Amraoti celebrated the Birth Centenary of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna. At the Brahma Vidya Mandir crowds gathered every evening to listen to the learned discourses. Mr. R. V. Dixit of Nagpur Ramakrishna Mission with the aid of magic lantern slides explained the life of Sri Ramakrishna and works of Ramakrishna Mission in India and abroad. Also renowned speakers like Rao Saheb G. S. Sardesai, a famous historian, Prof. Kolte Jain, Mr. Ramnathan, Rev. D'Souza, Rao Bahadur Brahma, Mrs. Pradhan, Dr. Londhe and Dr. Patwardhan spoke on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna as also on different religions with their bearings on varied problems of individual and national life.

The Ramakrishna Math Charitable Dispensary, Mylapore, Madras,
(Report for 1935)

The dispensary came into existence in 1925 when Dr. B. Raghavendra Rao, Retired Civil Surgeon of Madras, offered his professional services and also undertook to bear the expenses that would be incurred for the work. Since then with the co-operation of some doctor friends and others interested in the work, the dispensary has developed into one of the important and popular centres of medical relief in the city. It is gratifying to note that several experienced and well-known doctors are taking a good deal of interest in the well-being of this charitable institution. The attending doctors are assisted by three monastic workers, a paid clerk and some friends. The institution had been working till 1933 in thatched sheds, and the accommodation was too insufficient for the crowd of patients that came for relief. In that year through the help of friends and supporters of our cause the Math was able to purchase the present premises. After the necessary repairs the new spacious building is being used for the dispensary.

It need hardly be said that the dispensary has been fulfilling a long-felt want of the poorer section of the locality. The enormous rise in the number of patients from about 5,109 in 1926 to 6,667 in the present year bears testimony to this fact.

Needs of the dispensary:—The work of the dispensary has increased by leaps and

bounds during the brief period of its existence. The number of patients and the workers attending on them has gone up considerably, and the necessity is being daily felt for putting the institution on a sound basis financially and securing the permanence of its work for the benefit of the poor. The following are some of its needs:—

(1) Besides the medicines we get free, we have to purchase a good deal of drugs, bandages, etc., for daily use. To meet their cost as well as to defray the expenses for maintaining three workers, the salary of the paid clerk, doctor's allowance, etc., we require a sum of at least Rs. 250 every month. (2) It is unfortunate that owing to the want of many modern appliances and outfits, the institution has often to deny adequate service to a number of poor people and cannot fully utilise the talents and experience of the doctors-in-charge. This want should be removed for the sake of rendering more efficient relief to such patients.

The authorities of the institution therefore appeal to the generous public to come forward with liberal contributions for fulfilling the immediate needs of the institution. Donors wishing to perpetuate the memory of their friends or relatives may do so by creating memorial endowments for the maintenance of the Charitable Dispensary. A tablet bearing the names of the persons whose memory is to be perpetuated will be fixed in a suitable part of the building. The institution's appeal goes in the name of suffering humanity and it is fervently hoped that it will evoke hearty response. Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by Swami Amriteswarananda, President, the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Mylapore, Madras.

Ramakrishna Mission, Barisal

This institution has completed the twenty-fifth year of its useful existence. Its activities are three-fold, viz., educational, charitable and missionary. In the Students' Home attached to the centre there were 13 boys, of whom 8 were free, 4 concession holders and 1 paying. It tries to impart a true cultural, moral and spiritual training to the students who are under the

direct control and guidance of the monks of the Order. The centre maintains a Library and a Free Reading Room which are open to the public. During the year under report, temporary help or monthly aid was given to 236 persons; 22 helpless patients were nursed in their homes; and a few were treated with medicine and diet or were taken to the local hospital. The Home boys went for house to house collection in aid of Bankura Flood Relief Fund. Weekly religious classes were conducted and lectures were delivered by the Swamis under the auspices of other associations and public bodies in the town. The present need of the Ashrama is to construct a verandah to the Prayer Hall at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,500 for seating ladies on special occasions. Funds for the up-keep of at least 18 poor students and a gymnasium with the necessary apparatus are also necessary. The management hopes that the public support and sympathy will be forthcoming to meet these urgent demands.

Among the note-worthy events of the year are the completion of the Prayer Hall; the visit of Swami Vignananandaji Maharaj, the Vice President of the Mission; and the formation of a Committee to celebrate Sri Ramakrishna Centenary in Barisal and other places.

FAMINE & FLOOD : An Appeal

Swami Madhavananda, the Acting Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, has issued the following report and appeal :—

Khulna Famine : In our last report we have acquainted the public with the gravity of the situation due to famine in the Satkhira sub-division of the Khulna district. Men, women and children are starving by thousands. Over two-thirds of the population can barely manage to get a meal every other day. A small percentage is fortunate enough to have one meal a day. The rest have nothing to eat and have to fill their stomach with anything they can get. Naturally, cholera and other epidemics have broken out, with none to attend upon the sick. The earning members of most

families have deserted their dependants, being unable to stand the sight of misery that knows no redress. Women are in rags, which forces them to keep indoors, although they are starving. There is not an iota of exaggeration in this picture. Rather many ugly features have been omitted.

From our Gabura centre in Thana Shyamnagar we distributed on the 1st June 27 mds. 24 srs. of rice to 552 recipients belonging to 14 villages, and on the 9th June 43 mds. 26 srs. of rice to 873 recipients belonging to 16 villages. In addition to this 9 mds. 38 srs. of rice were distributed as temporary aid.

Bankura Famine : Bankura district is also badly affected by famine. Reports of the piteous condition of its inhabitants have been frequently reaching us. We have therefore decided to start relief work in the Kotalpur Thana of that district with the small amount of money at our disposal, relying on the sympathy of the public. Details of the work will be published in due course.

Arakan Flood : At Cheduba, a small island on the Arakan coast of Burma, a centre has been started under the auspices of our Rangoon branch for the relief of the flood-stricken people of the Kyaukpau district. The first distribution of food-stuffs have already been made. Extreme difficulty of communication in this monsoon season has delayed our receiving the report in time.

Considering the appalling extensity of the distress, we have been able to touch only a fringe of it. The relief must be continued, and for this we need the hearty co-operation of the large-hearted public. We earnestly hope that in the coming month the response to our appeal will be more encouraging, so that we may serve these thousands of hungry Narayanas with at least a few mouthfuls of food, and remove their nakedness in howsoever imperfect a way. All contributions will be gratefully accepted and acknowledged at the following address :—The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Dist. Howrah.

To be shortly out

THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDIA

THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY MEMORIAL VOLUME
IN TWO PARTS.

Will contain about 2,000 pages, D. Crown Octavo.

Profusely illustrated with more than 100 plates.

About thirty eminent scholars of India representing fifteen Indian Universities have contributed.

Part I.—THE FUNDAMENTAL UNITY (Introduction)

The main sections which again contain several chapters in each are :—(1) The Vedas and the Upanishads, (2) The Epics, (3) The Smritis and the Puranas, (4) Buddhism and Jainism, (5) Systems of Hindu Philosophy, (6) Systems of Hindu Philosophy (Vedanta Schools), (7) Other Schools of Thought, (8) The Saints of India.

Part II.—The SPIRIT of INDIAN CULTURE (Introduction)

Sections : (1) Landmarks in Indian Culture, (2) Institutions, (3) The Pursuit of Science, (4) Arts, (5) Literature, (6) Faiths other than Indigenous, (7) Hinduism, (8) Sri Ramakrishna Movement.

PRICE :

Inland (India, Burma and Ceylon) :	Rs. 16	Foreign :	\$ 10 or 40sh.
For Members of the Centenary Committee :	Inland : Rs. 14	"	\$ 9 or 36sh.
Pre-publication Price :	Rs. 13	"	\$ 8 or 32sh.
for Members :	Rs. 12	"	\$ 7.50 or 30sh.

Those who want to avail themselves of the pre-publication price must send the price of the book before 1st July, 1936.

N.B.—Mussell subscribers are advised to send the postage, Inland Rs. 3-8, Foreign \$ 2.50 or 10 sh, along with the price while ordering.

For India delivery at our office Rs. 1-8 will be charged as Railway freight from Calcutta to Madras.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MYLAPORE,
MADRAS.

No presents!

No coupons!!

For quality, taste and
lasting sweet flavour

use our famous

**L G Brand
ASAFOETIDA**

Look for this mark on the packet.

Price Rs. 1-14-0 per lb.

Head Office:

Yadgadi, Bombay.

Laljee Godhoo & Co.

Branch Office:

Kumbakonam

SOWCARPET, MADRAS.

ONE LAKH AND THIRTY THOUSAND SOLD

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

WITH THE TEXT IN DEVANAGARI AND AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION

By Dr. Annie Besant

Among the priceless teachings that may be found in the great Hindu Epic of the Mahabharata there is none so rare and precious as this—THE BHAGAVAD-GITA. Innumerable translations of this great classic have appeared since the days of Warren Hastings, but Dr. Besant's rendering is designed to preserve the spirit of the original, especially its deeply devotional tone, while at the same time it gives an accurate translation reflecting the strength and terseness of the Sanskrit. Over a lakh and thirty thousand copies of this book have already been sold. *The Modern Review*:—"Mr. Natesan is bidding fair to be the Indian Routledge. This finely printed edition of a well known and excellent translation has been here offered at an impossibly cheap price, and it should make its way to every Indian home and heart."

TENTH EDITION

Price per copy Annas Four (Foreign 5d.)

Price of a single copy by V.P.P. is As. 8 (Eight).

Two copies As. 13—Four copies Re. 1-7.

Six copies Rs. 2-1—Eight copies Rs. 2-11.

G. A. NATESAN & CO., PUBLISHERS, G. T. MADRAS.

Swami Vivekananda's Works

Complete Works in Seven Volumes.

Each—Board, Rs. 3.

Cloth, Rs. 3-8.

Index to Complete Works 0-10-0

	Rs. As.		Rs. As.
Hinduism	0 10	Epistles,	
Raja Yoga	1 4	I, II, III & IV series,	
Jnana Yoga	1 12	each	0 10
Bhakti Yoga	0 12	Do. V & VI each	0 8
Karma Yoga	0 12	crown size	0 8
The Science and Philo-		Do. III & IV	
sophy of Religion	0 12	Pocket Edn. each	0 6
A Study of Religion	0 12	The Vedanta Philoso-	
Realisation and its		phy	0 6
Methods	0 10	My Master	0 8
The East and the		Chicago Address	0 4
West	0 12	Modern India	0 6
Religion of Love	0 12	Christ the Messen-	
Indian Lectures		ger	0 3
(Colombo to Almora)	2 8	Pavhari Baba	0 3
Inspired Talks	1 4	Reply to Madras	
Do. Cloth	1 12	Address	0 4
Women of India	0 3	India and her Problem	0 10
Thoughts on		Religion and Philoso-	
Vedanta	0 10	phy, Part I	0 12

JUST OUT!**SPIRITUAL TALKS**

By the first disciples of Sri Ramakrishna

(THE HOLY MOTHER AND SWAMIS BRAHMANANDA, PREMANANDA, TURITANANDA, SHIVANANDA AND SARADANANDA).

Contains rare spiritual counsels given by these great Souls to the spiritual aspirants and as such invaluable for all those who sincerely search after God.

Cloth-bound. Excellent get-up. Price: Re. 1-12

MESSAGE OF OUR MASTER

By the first disciples of Sri Ramakrishna

(SWAMIS VIVEKANANDA, BRAHMANANDA, PREMANANDA, TURITANANDA, RAMAKRISHNANANDA, TRIGUNATITA, SHIVANANDA AND SARADANANDA).

Gives in a comprehensive way the spiritual message of the Master.

Cloth-bound. Excellent get-up. Price: Re. 1-4

Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mysore, MADRAS.

WORKS BY SISTER DEVAMATA

Days in an Indian Monastery—Indian life has been described and interpreted in a very charming way by the writer who lived for some time in an Indian monastery.

Excellent get-up. With 10 Illustrations. Price Rs. 4—8—0.

Sri Ramakrishna and His Disciples—Will be read like a story book. Fluent style and nice get-up. Price Rs. 4.

The Open Portal—A large number of soul-stirring poems. Excellent get-up. Price Rs. 2-8-0.

The Habit of Happiness—Deals with the Technique of Meditation. Price Re. 1—8—0

Building Character—In this age of construction the many build houses, the few build character. Price Re. 1-8-0.

HEALTH AND HEALING & THE PRACTICE OF DEVOTION Price 7 As. each

(1) Sleep and Samadhi; (2) What is Maya; (3) Robert Browning & Vedanta; (4) Development of the Will; (5) The Indian Mind and the Indian Culture; (6) Eastern and Western Religious Ideals.

At Four Annas each

Sri Ramakrishna and St. Francis of Assisi Price Re. 1-8-0

Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna

(Third Edition)

This is the most exhaustive and comprehensive collection of the Master's sayings and parables. 1003 in number. Contains a valuable glossary. They are most Universal and Catholic in spirit and will suit all people irrespective of their creed or religion.

The sayings elucidate in a simple and forceful manner the fundamental truths of religion.

Crown 8 vo. pp. 340

—The Hindu.

Original Price Cloth Rs. 2.

Present Price (Concession rate) Re. 1

The Vedanta Philosophy (Brahma Sutras)

By Sridhar Majumdar, M. A.

With original Sutras, their word for word meaning, explanatory quotations, and an unbiased and thoughtful exposition in most clear and lucid English, highly spoken of by the Press, 'The Vedanta Kesari', 'The Prabuddha Bharata', 'The Modern Review', 'The Statesman', 'The Amrita Bazar Patrika', 'The Indian Daily Mail', 'Peace' as well as by the eminent scholars of the world, Drs. Barnett, Kelth, Jacobi, Jolly, Rapson, Hopkins, Winternitz, Thomas, Jackson, S. N. Das Gupta, Rabindranath Tagore, P. Narasimhaiah, Moreno, Lord Ronaldshay, Mahamahopadhyayas, Pramatha Nath Tarka Bhushan and Durga Charan Sankhya Vedanta Tirtha, Pandits Kokileswar Sastri, S. Radha-krishnan and Gopi Nath Kaviraj, Brajvidehi Mohant Maharaj Santa Das Babaji, etc. Most attractive and useful to beginners, over 800 pages in all, cloth bound with title inscribed in gilt letters. Price Rs. 5 only, postage extra.

To be had of The Author, Hastisunda Barisal, Bengal, India.

SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS

OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

It is a book of rare spiritual counsels, giving practical instruction about meditation, worship, continence, good company, mind control, ecstasy, Yogic practices, search for God, God vision, Tapas and the like. An invaluable handbook for all spiritual aspirants.

"Helps one to pass from Darkness to Light."—The Hindu.

"The seeker after truth, according to every faith and church, will find in the book light, hope, encouragement and inspiration."—*Bombay Chronicle*.

"The entire book is most practical and invaluable to seekers of truth of every phase and character."—*Liberty*.

"The book will be useful even to the more gross among laymen."—*Swarajya*.

Neatly printed in large types on good paper and attractively got-up.

With one portrait of the Swami, pp. Dc. 234. Price Rs. 2

TELUGU PUBLICATIONS

Life of Sri Ramakrishna
(In Telugu)

A comprehensive chronological account of the wonderful Life of the Saint of Dakshineswar. Very beautiful language. Excellent get-up. Demy 878 Pages, with many pictures. Price Cloth Rs. 5.

Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna
(In Telugu)

It is a series of conversations in which the highest spiritual truths were expounded by the Master in simple language with homely illustrations.

Price Re. 1-8-0.

Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna—The most exhaustive and comprehensive collection of sayings and parables. Price Board Re. 1-8.

The Life and Teachings of Swami

Vivekananda	...	...	...	0 8 0
Chicago Address of Swami Vivekananda	...	...	...	0 6 0
Words of the Master by Swami Brahma-nanda	...	...	...	0 6 0
Karma Yoga	...	...	...	0 12 0
Bhakti Yoga	...	...	...	0 8 0
Narada Bhakti Sutras	...	...	...	0 4 0
Path to Perfection	...	...	...	0 2 0
My Plan of Campaign	...	...	...	0 3 0

"The Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore Madras.

"The Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore, Madras.

TAMIL PUBLICATIONS

Life of Sri Ramakrishna
(in Tamil)

A comprehensive account of the wonderful Life of the Saint of Dakshineswar.
Beautiful language—Excellent get-up—Demy 970 Pages with many pictures.

Price : Cloth Rs. 5.
(To Subscribers of "Ramakrishna Vijayam" Rs. 4-8-0)

Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda

(Vivekananda Jnana Deepam)

(in Tamil)

Contains Chicago lectures,
Karma yogam & Raja yogam.

Excellent get-up

VOL. I Price Rs. 2.

	To subscribers of R.K. Vijayam	
	Ordinary	Rs. A. P.
Sri Ramakrishna Vachanamritam Part I ...	1 8 0	1 6 0
Karma Yoga by Swami Vivekananda ...	0 12 0	0 10 0
The Universe and Man (By Swami Ramakrishnananda. ...)	0 12 0	0 10 0
Bhakti Yogam ...	0 10 0	0 8 0
Life Sketch of Sri Ramakrishna by Swami Chidbhavananda ...	0 8 0	0 7 0
Epistles of Swami Vivekananda Part I ...	0 8 0	0 6 0
India and Her Problem ...	0 8 0	0 7 0
Words of the Master by Swami Brahmananda		
Do: Cloth ...	0 8 0	0 7 0
Paper ...	0 5 0	0 4 0
Path of Devotion by Swami Paramananda ...	0 5 0	0 4 0
Chicago Address by Swami Vivekananda ...	0 5 0	0 4 0
Baghari Baba ...	0 8 0	...
My Plan of Campaign by Swami Vivekananda ...	0 3 0	...
God in Everything ...	0 2 0	...
Path to Perfection by Swami Ramakrishnananda ...	0 2 0	...
Nataraja Vadivam and Thillai Thirunadanam by Swami Vipulananda ...	0 2 0	0 1 6
Vidhivasam ...	0 0 6	...
Raja Yogam by Swami Vivekananda ...	1 4 0	1 2 0
Balabodha Vivekananda by Swami Kedaraswarananda ...	0 7 0	...
Parada Devi Charitam ...	0 8 0	...

The "Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore, Madras.

Editors: Swami Anantasharananda and Swami Tejasharananda.
Publisher: Swami Hrishikesananda.
Printed by: Mr. V. Sundaram Iyer at the Kesari Printing Works, Madras.

THE
VEDANTA KESARI

August-1936

GOD IN CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY
HINDU SPEAKS TO CHRISTIANS
IS INDIAN CULTURE OTHER-WORLDLY?
THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE INFINITE

Notes :: Reviews :: News

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH
MYLAPORE, MADRAS.

Indian: Annually Rs. 3
Single Copy As. 6

Foreign: Annually Rs. 5
(\$ 2 or 8 Sh.)

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

(By 'M', a direct disciple of the Master)

IN TWO VOLUMES

It is in the form of conversations and reads like a novel. It presents Sri Ramakrishna's teachings in a dramatic setting, giving a vivid pen-picture of the occasions when they were delivered and the persons who listened to them. There is no problem of Spiritual Life that does not find solution therein.

"Socratic dialogues are Plato all over—You (author) are entirely hidden. Moreover, the dramatic part is infinitely beautiful. Everybody likes it—here or in the West."—*Swami Vivekananda*.

Price Each Volume, Cloth Rs. 2-8, Gilt Rs. 3.

UNIVERSAL PRAYERS

Selected and translated from
Sanskrit Religious Literature

By SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

Contents:—Introduction, viewing Prayer from different aspects Peace chant; Hymns and Stotras from the Vedas, the various Purana and the various Acharyas. Sanskrit on the left page and the English translation on the right page.

Most useful for daily devotions
Flexible Binding Excellent get-up

Foolscap 8 vo. over Pages 250. Price: Rs. 1-4-0.
To Subscribers of the Vedanta Kesari, Rs. 1-2-0.

WOMEN OF INDIA

By SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(A Lecture hitherto unpublished in India)

Here the Swami shows how the Indian ideal of Womanhood has perfected motherhood to its zenith in contradistinction to that of the West which has developed wifehood. But the ideal woman in the modern age must combine both of them.

Price As. 3.

"The Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore, Madras.

THE VEDANTA KESARI

Vol. XXIII. AUGUST, 1936.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Hindu Ethics ..	121
The Place of Caste in Modern Hinduism ..	122
Reminiscences of the Holy Mother ..	131
By a Disciple ..	134
The Conception of God in Contemporary Philosophy ..	140
By Prof. Jadunath Sinha, M.A., Ph.D. ..	143
A Hindu speaks to Christians ..	148
By Swami Prabhavananda ..	151
Is Indian Culture Other-worldly? ..	153
By Dr. V. Raghavan, M.A., Ph.D. ..	155
The Individual and the Infinite ..	157
By Sister Devamata ..	
Words of Chinese Wisdom ..	
By Sri Sivasuta ..	
Swetaswatara Upanishad ..	
By Swami Thyagisananda ..	
Reviews and Notices ..	
News and Reports ..	

Life of Sri Ramakrishna

(In English)

A detailed chronological account of the Master's wonderful life, based on the most authentic sources, with a foreword by Mahatma Gandhi.

With one tri-coloured and several half-tone portraits.
Price: Third Edition, BOARD Rs. 5. CLOTH Rs. 6-8.

HINDUISM

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A collection of five lectures on Hinduism by the
Illustrious Swami

"It gives a clear and succinct account of the greatness of the religion—its all-comprehensiveness, and above all its wide tolerance, in eloquent and illuminating language."—*Theosophist*.

Every one ought to read it to have a clear idea on Hinduism.

"There can be no better popular handbook to our religion."—*The Hindu*.

Price As. 10.

(To subscribers of "The Vedanta Kesari," As. 8 only.)

Works By Swami Ramakrishnananda

Complete Works, Vol. I. Contains The Universe and Man, The Soul of Man, Path to Perfection, and Necessity of Religion.

A few remaining copies of the Old Edition.

Original Price Re. 1-8. Reduced Price As. 8 only.

Sri Krishna, the Pastoral and the King-maker.

(FOURTH EDITION)

This book gives a clear idea of the full and varied life of the Incarnation, Lord Sri Krishna. It reproduces faithfully and accurately the glowing narratives of Srimad Bhagavatam with all its wealth of descriptive detail. Price As. 12.

To Subscribers of V. K. As. 10.

Path to Perfection (3rd edition)	...	...	As. 4
(To Subscribers of V. K.)	...	...	3
True Self of Man	...	...	4
Wisdom and Devotion	...	...	4
Search after Happiness	...	...	12
"The Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore, Madras.			

An Entirely New Publication.

BHEDABHEDA

OR

THE PHILOSOPHY BETWEEN SANKARA AND RAMANUJA

By P. N. SRINIVASACHARI, M.A.,

Professor of Philosophy, Pachaiyappa's College, Madras.

The author is a well-known writer on Indian Philosophy and his book, *Ramanuja's Idea of the Finite Self*, is recognised as a masterly introduction in English to the Philosophy of Ramanuja. In this book he has covered a new ground altogether and has given an exposition of the *Bhedabheda* Philosophy, a work which has not been attempted so far by anybody. The book is divided into two parts—(1) The Philosophy of Bhaskara; (2) Other schools of *Bhedabheda* Philosophy represented by Yadava, Nimbarka and Bhartriprapancha, and a comparison of *Bhedabheda* with similar Western systems. Prof. M. Hiriyanna of Mysore contributes an appreciative Foreword.

Printed on Superior Antique Paper. Cr. 8vo. about 400 pages Rs. 5.

SRINIVASA VARADACHARI & Co.,
PUBLISHERS, 190, MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS.

CHYABANAPRASH)
Rs 3 PER SEER

ADHYAKSHA MATHUR BABU'S (MAKARADHWAJA
Rs. 4 PER TOLA

SAKTI OUSHADHALAYA-DACCA

Estd 1901. Has brought about a new era in the Ayurvedic world

The premier, the cheapest and the most reliable Ayurvedic Medicinal concern in India.

Factory & Head Office—Dacca. Calcutta Head Office—52/1, Beadon Street. Calcutta Branches—Bowbazar, Shambazar, Barabazar, Chowrangi, Bhawanipur, Khidirpur. OTHER BRANCHES—Patuatuli, (Dacca) Netrokona, Mymensing, Sirajganj, Madaripur, Muttra, Sylhet, Berhampur, Chittagong, Kustia, Jalpaiguri, Rangpur, Midnapur, Khulna, Rajshahi, Bogra, Gauhati, Allahabad, Delhi, Gorakhpur, Gaya, Patna, Cawnpur, Bhagalpur, Cuttak, Lucknow, Benares, Kashi Chawk, Madras, Rangoon, Dacca Chawk, Narainganj, Jamshedpur, Chaumuhani (Noakhali), Tinsukia (Debrugarh), Bessein, Mandalay (Burma), Bombay Branch—411, Kalbadevi Road &c.

AMRITARISHTA--

Killer of Malaria and all kinds of fever. Rs. 3 per seer.

Shiddha Makaradhwaja

Cures all kinds of diseases such as Impotency, Typhoid and Typhus fevers &c., &c. Rs. 20 per tola.

Saragunabali jarita

Makaradhwaja

Rs. 8 per tola.

Mahabhringaraj

Taila

The best Ayurvedic hair oil.

Rs. 6 per seer.

H. E. Lord Lytton, Ex-Governor, Bengal, wrote:—

I was very interested to see this remarkable factory which owes its success to the energy and enthusiasm of its proprietor Babu Mathura Mohan Chakravarty. The preparation of indigenous drugs on so large a scale is A VERY GREAT ACHIEVEMENT. The factory appeared to me to be exceedingly well managed and well equipped, and I hope that it may continue to prosper." 11-8-22.

H. E. Sir Henry Wheeler, Ex-Governor of Behar and Orissa, wrote—".....I

had no idea that the manufacture of indigenous drugs was carried on upon so large a scale. The whole thing bears marks of enterprise and success." 29-7-20.

Saribadyarishta

(Saribadi Sarsa)

The best blood purifier and Tonic.

Rs. 3 per seer.

Asoka Ghrita—

Cures Leucorrhoea, Dysmenorrhoea, Dysmanorrhagia, Amenorrhoea, Menorrhagia, &c.

Rs. 6 per seer.

Basanta Kusu-

makar Rash—The best remedy for diabetes of all kinds.

Rs. 3 per week.

MRITASANJIBANI SURA (duly licensed by the Government) available in all our Tele. 'SAKTI' Dacca.] Branches. [P. B. No. 6, Dacca.

Branches—All over India & Burma.

Proprietors—Mathura Mohan, Lal Mohan & Phanindra Mohan Mukhopadhyaya, Chakravarty.

Managing Proprietor: Mathuramohan Mukhopadhyaya, Chakravarty, B.A.

All letters, Money Orders, etc., should be sent in the name of the Managing Proprietor.

Treatise on Ayurvedic Treatment & Catalogue sent free on application.

THE LIFE OF
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA
BY HIS EASTERN AND WESTERN DISCIPLES
COMPLETE IN TWO VOLUMES
NEW EDITION

A fascinating, inspiring life-story of a mastermind, the Prophet of the age.
Excellent got-up, Profusely Illustrated
PRICE EACH VOLUME CLOTH Rs. 4

Saint Durgacharan Nag

(The Life of an Ideal Householder)

The wonderful life of a householder disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, popularly known as Nag Mahashaya—about whom Swami Vivekananda said, "I have travelled far in different parts of the globe, but nowhere could I meet a great soul like Nag Mahashaya."

Price Re. 1.

To Subscribers of "Vedanta Kesari" As. 2 less.

INSPIRED TALKS
BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(THIRD EDITION)

The book contains a series of inspiring conversations on various religious and philosophical topics during the Swami's seven weeks' stay at Thousand Island Park, America—recorded by a distinguished American lady disciple who had the rare privilege of sitting long at his feet. A few valuable notes also have been added where the Swami's utterances might appear to be abrupt and unconnected. The present volume is the first to give us the words spoken by him, so long hidden in the intimacy of an inner circle.

With portraits of the Swami and the house at Thousand Island Park
Prices Paper Bound Re. 1-4; Cloth Bound Re. 1-12.

(To Subscribers of "The Vedanta Kesari", Each As. 2 less)

NEW BOOKS

BY

Prof. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., Ph.D.

(1) **EASTERN LIGHTS**:—A book on Indian Life, Thought and Mysticism. Price Rs. 4 only.

(2) **HINDU MYSTICISM**:—A study based on the Upanishads. Price 15s. only.

They throw sufficient light on the spiritual philosophy of India.
To be had of:

ALL PRINCIPAL BOOK-SELLERS IN CALCUTTA.



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

—Swami Vivekananda

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXIII]

AUGUST 1936

[No. 4

HINDU ETHICS

पश्य भूतानि दुःखेन व्यतिष्ठितानि सर्वशः ।
उत्तमाधममध्यानि तेषु तेष्विह कर्मसु ॥
आत्मापिचार्यं न मम सर्वा वा पृथिवी मम ।
यथा मम तथान्येषामिति मत्वा न मे व्यथा ।
एतां बुद्धिमहं प्राप्य न प्रहृष्ये न च व्यथे ॥
यथा काष्ठं च काष्ठं च समेयातां महोदधौ
समेत्य च व्यपेयातां तद्गद्गूतसमागमः ॥
सुखस्यानन्तरं दुःखं दुःखस्यानन्तरं सुखम्
सुखदुःखे मनुष्याणां चक्रवत् परिवर्ततः ॥
सुखात्त्वं दुःखमापन्नः पुनरापत्त्यते सुखम् ।
न नित्यं लभते दुःखं न नित्यं लभते सुखम् ॥

Behold, here in this world creatures of all grades, highest, lowest and middling, engaged in their respective works, are consumed by misery in every way. But to me there is no pain because I reflect that this very self does not belong to me or that the entire globe is mine, and that just as it is mine it does belong to others too. Just as two floats wafted on the heaving waters of the sea would join together and subsequently separate, so also all beings meet and part. Misery dogs the heels of happiness and happiness follows a spell of misery. Man's happiness and misery ever turns like a wheel. From a happy state you have fallen to a miserable one; once again happiness shall be yours; neither happiness nor misery is eternal.

Mahabharata, Santi Parva, Ch. 173, verses 14, 15, 16, 20 & 21.

THE PLACE OF CASTE IN MODERN HINDUISM

[Caste is not to be identified with the essence of Hinduism. The controversy referred to below is the result of such wrong identification. In the following paragraphs we present the conflicting views on caste and make an attempt to state its proper relation to Hinduism.]

I

STUDIES in contrasts are often very interesting and instructive, if not for anything else, at least for the chances they give for acquainting oneself with the divergent points of view. The caste system, the hoary social system of India, both idealised and condemned by different sections of Indian opinion, has recently been the subject for comment and reflection for two well-known persons representing divergent and conflicting schools of thought. We shall give below extracts from the writings of both these distinguished personages, and express our own thoughts in the end.

We shall first state in substance the views on caste expressed by Dewan Bahadur K. S. Ramaswami Sastri in an article entitled 'Caste system in the light of modern thought,' appearing in the May and June issues of the *Hindu Mind*. According to Mr. Sastri both Varna and Ashrama are essential features of the Hindu Dharma, and the newborn prejudice which accepts the second while rejecting the first is only a sign of "ignorance and selfishness and childish impatience of discipline." Dharma is eternal and is graduated according to birth. That does not, however, connote any inferiority or superiority but implies only diversities of action along with the oneness of the soul. The Hindu scriptures maintain that all who claim human status must possess tenderness to all human beings, patience, absence of

jealousy and hate, purity, serenity, dispassion and auspiciousness of thought, word and deed.

Mr. Sastri remarks, "According to the Hindu idea—and that is which is entitled to the greatest weight when dealing with a Hindu institution—the caste system has a divine origin and sanction. The Purusha Sukta states this in the clearest terms. It has a divine origin, a sociological basis and an economic and industrial manifestation. The chief thing about it is that it is the social means to attain a spiritual end. It is a unique attempt in the history of humanity to organise society on the basis of co-operative and non-competitive mutual service towards a definite spiritual aim, *viz.*, personal salvation through a Dharmic social life. Inter-dining and inter-marriage were prohibited in the interests of the richness of diversity leading through harmony to unity. Inter-dining and inter-marriage have not prevented social hatreds within a nation or racial hatreds between nations in Europe. The Indian attempt was to secure unity by attending to the higher centres of life and providing for interaction and inter-thought and inter-worship."

One may ask in this connection why then do the Sanatanists support untouchability and un-approachability, and deny Harijans the right of temple-entry?

Mr. Sastri continues to state that the economic basis of the caste

system is to replace competition by co-ordination, the struggle for existence by the struggle for the life of others, the social chaos by the social cosmos. Until the inroad of Western civilisation, it gave India economic self-sufficiency and endowed the Indian craftsmen with great hereditary aptitude.

The caste system has never been opposed to unity though nowadays those who foster "communal hatreds from other motives try to fasten on it the defects of their evil hearts." "Where is the incompatibility between a territorial political basis of social life and its communal religious basis? The two aspects of the national consciousness have no more antagonism than the love of the larger group known as the joint family and the love of husband and wife are antagonistic to each other." The caste system is in harmony with true democracy, for it recognises the equality of all as children of God and lifts up the lower to the level of the higher by the hand of love in place of postulating an equality which does not exist. It has not been opposed to patriotism; for the Rajputs have been the most patriotic of Indian communities and among the most loyal of Dharma's followers.

But the question will be raised whether the Rajputs ever subordinated their clannishness and family pride to the larger interests of the country?

Various foreign religions like Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Islam from without, and protestant movements like Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society, the Deva Samaj, and the Theistic Endeavour Society from within have

tried to shatter the caste system but failed. It has Hinduised and civilised the aborigines without enslaving or exterminating them. In regard to greater India, it allowed foreign travel to ascetics, but others who went were to re-attain purity after returning home. Because the cosmopolitanism and the nomadic life of the detached sojourner might weaken the instinctive sense of the sanctity of social bonds, it does not encourage the fetish of foreign travel without any safe-guard to preserve our distinctive social purity and spiritual culture. If the entire social order could be transplanted abroad, there is no objection in foreign travel. The writer very much appreciates the wisdom of this arrangement and asks others to ponder over it.

The most melancholy feature about modern caste system is the absurd multiplication of sub-sects and sub-castes. This is as opposed to the original social scheme as to the best interests of efficiency and progress. "The ideal caste system turns upon three pivots none of which can be displaced without utter ruin to the whole, *viz.*, the regulation of daily life, the preservation of caste Dharma and the observance of Shastric injunctions as to marital choice and marital duty. Especially important is the place of womanhood in the caste system. "When the women of India leave the sanctuary of the home and get drunk with the wines of the new irreverent knowledge and the new indiscriminate freedom, then will begin the decline and fall of India and not till then."

Many will be tempted to ask whether we are now at the meridian of our glory and greatness?

As regards the place for the reclamation of the fallen in the caste system, purificatory ceremonies are prescribed for certain defections from purity but not for all. "No society can exist in a state of purity without such rules of inclusion and exclusion. If one born in another faith or converted to another faith from Hinduism wants the Hindu faith, he can have it but he cannot enter the Hindu caste system. The caste system is an institution for preserving racial purity, to enable re-incarnating souls of a certain level of spiritual attainment to find fitting embodiment, and hence it cannot allow ingress into it of other elements merely because outsiders or converts believe in the truths of Hinduism."

A host of questions are likely to arise in one's mind at this. How is this ideal different from pure racialism? Will not Hinduism thereby be reduced to an ethnic religion and denied the position of a universal religion? If caste is of divine origin, how is it that it is applicable only to India and not other countries? Are people outside India and Hinduism so poverty-stricken spiritually that not a single individual is to be found among them, who has attained that level of spiritual attainment required for being included in the Hindu caste system? If foreigners are not to be taken into Hindu castes, how were the foreign invaders and large sections of aborigines absorbed by Hinduism?

The writer further says: "Otherwise our society will dwindle in numbers and Hinduism will be lost by the non-existence of Hindus. What strange fears people have in these days when the only fear which is a saving fear, *viz.*, fear of transgressing

the laws of God has fled from their hearts! If we look to our duties, God will look the rest. We are not like other races of men priding ourselves upon our religion having the largest following. That a religion has a large following is no passport to human praise or divine grace."

II

The above is an uncompromising defence of all the social ideas of Hindu fundamentalism. We shall now give extracts from an equally uncompromising condemnation of the caste system by Dr. Ambedkar in his recent booklet entitled "Annihilation of Caste." He opines that economically caste has led to social inefficiency, eugenically it has produced a C₃ race, "a race of pigmies and dwarfs stunted in stature and wanting in stamina" nine-tenths of which is unfit for military service. "Caste has, however, done one thing. It has completely disorganised and demoralised the Hindus."

Dr. Ambedkar is of opinion that caste does not permit the growth of a united society or nation. He says: "The first and foremost thing that must be recognised is that Hindu Society is a myth. (?) .. It is only a collection of castes. Each caste is conscious of its existence. Its survival is the be-all and end-all of its existence. Castes do not even form a federation. A caste has no feeling that is affiliated to other castes, except when there is a Hindu-Muslim riot Indeed the ideal Hindu must be like a rat living in his own hole and refusing to have any contact with others. There is an utter lack among the Hindus of what the sociologists call 'consciousness of kind'." There are, however, many

patriotic Indians who insist that underlying the apparent diversity there is a fundamental unity which marks the life of the Hindu inasmuch as there is a similarity of habits and customs, beliefs and thoughts, which obtain all over the continent of India. But neither physical proximity nor similarity in habits and customs, beliefs and thoughts is enough to constitute men into society. "For that purpose what is necessary is for a man to share and participate in a common activity so that the same emotions are aroused in him that animate the others. Making the individual a sharer or partner in the associated activity so that he feels its success as his success, its failure as his failure, is the real thing that binds men and makes a society of them. The Caste system prevents common activity and by preventing common activity it has prevented the Hindus from becoming a society with a unified life and consciousness of its own being."

All Hindus may not accept this statement but many may be disposed to take it as the exaggeration of a truth. The reader can profitably compare this statement with Mr. Sastri's view that caste does not stand in the way of national unity.

Speaking about the cultural clannishness of the Hindus, Dr. Ambedkar says that the question of the exclusion of the aboriginal tribes from the new reforms has drawn the public attention to the fact that these number 13 millions, if not more. That such large numbers of men still live in a savage state in a land that boasts of a civilisation thousands of years old should be a matter of shame to the Hindus. The Hindus will contend that this is due to the congenital

stupidity of these people and that they have done their best to civilise them. "But supposing a Hindu wished to do what the Christian missionary is doing for these aborigines, could he have done it? I submit, not. Civilising the aborigines means adopting them as your own, living in their midst, and cultivating fellow-feeling, in short loving them. How is it possible for a Hindu to do this? His whole life is one anxious effort to preserve his caste He can't consent to lose it by establishing contact with the aborigines—the remnants of the hateful Anaryas of the Vedic days. Not that a Hindu could not be taught the sense of duty to fallen humanity. But the trouble is that no amount of sense of duty can enable him to overcome his duty to preserve his caste. Caste is therefore the real explanation as to why the Hindu has let the savage in the midst of his civilisation to remain a savage without blushing or without feeling any sense of remorse or repentance."

This may be compared with the two contentions of Mr. Sastri that the caste system elevates the fallen with a loving hand, and that for the preservation of purity, prohibition of foreign travel under ordinary conditions is highly desirable. One may be tempted to question Dr. Ambedkar if Hinduism has never been capable of absorbing aboriginal people, what has happened to the rest of them besides the present 13 millions.

Dr. Ambedkar characterises caste as immoral. "The effects of caste on the ethics of the Hindus," he says "is simply deplorable. Caste has killed public spirit. Caste has destroyed the sense of public charity. Caste has made public opinion impossible. A Hindu public is his caste. . . .

Virtue has become caste-ridden and morality has become caste-bound. There is no sympathy with the deserving. There is no appreciation of the meritorious There is charity but it begins and ends with the caste. There is sympathy but not for men of other caste..... The capacity to appreciate merit in a man apart from his caste does not exist in a Hindu."

The Hindu conscience has to answer this challenge of the Depressed Classes by action in life.

It is often said that the survival of the Hindus as a cultural group through millenniums of vicissitudes testifies to the soundness of their social institutions. To this Dr. Ambedkar replies: "I fear that this statement may become the basis of a vicious argument that the fact of survival is proof of fitness to survive. It seems to me that the question is not whether a community lives or dies; the question is, on what plane does it live. There are different modes of survival. But all are not equally honourable. For an individual as well as a society there is a gulf between merely living and living worthily. To fight in a battle and live in glory is one mode. To beat a retreat, to surrender and live the life of a captive is also a mode of survival. What we must consider is what is the quality of that survival .. The Hindus' has been a life of continuous defeat and what appears to them to be life ever-lasting is not living ever-lastingly but is really a life which is perishing ever-lastingly. It is a mode of survival of which every right-minded Hindu who is not afraid to own up the truth will feel ashamed."

How is caste to be abolished then? Says Dr. Ambedkar, "Make every man and woman free from the thralldom to the Shastras, cleanse their minds of the pernicious notions founded on the Shastras you must have courage to tell the Hindus that what is wrong with them is their religion. . you must destroy the authority of the Shastras and the Vedas."

III

To our mind what appears strange and surprising is that both a friend and a foe of caste system should proceed on the common assumption that caste system is of the very essence of Hinduism. There is as much truth in this statement as in confounding Medieval Feudalism or modern capitalism of Europe with Christianity. Hinduism without caste is neither a theoretical nor a practical impossibility. In fact what the Buddha did was to liberate the spiritual ideals of India from the yoke of any particular form of social organisation, and his movement cannot be called unsuccessful, even though there is no separate religion as Buddhism in India to-day. The same was attempted by many reformers in Medieval India, and two very successful of these movements still persist in our midst as Sikhism in the North and Virasaivism in the South. It is therefore no new-born prejudice of modern Hindus.

To our mind neither Mr. Sastri nor Dr. Ambedkar has shown any necessary and inseparable relation between Hinduism and caste, unless it be that such a notion prevails in the minds of vast numbers of Hindus. Even a superficial observer of Hindu society today will find that the forces of modern life have in almost irrepara-

ble a manner battered the three main pillars of the caste system—hereditary determination of occupation, restriction regarding inter-dining, and marriage in one's own caste. Even Hindu fundamentalism has become reconciled to the first of these and we never hear of any protest against men of the most orthodox families selecting the most heterodox of professions. Cosmopolitanism in dining has become very familiar in these days, and even in the matter of marital choice cases of violation of caste rules are not very rare at present. It may be said without fear of contradiction that in the case of the majority of educated men observance of caste rules, as far as it still obtains, is more a matter of convenience than of conviction. The sense of sin, which past generations of men used to feel when breaches of caste rules were made, has now become either blurred in, or totally erased from, the conscience of modern educated Hindus.

The modern movement for the abolition of untouchability is an attack directed against the most vulnerable nerve-centre of the caste system; for besides being a humanitarian movement, it is also a challenge to the notion of congenital purity and impurity which Hindu fundamentalism has been maintaining by what appears to our mind, a misapplication of the doctrine of Karma and transmigration. That is why we find to-day Hindu fundamentalism in deadly opposition to the anti-untouchability movement—not because fundamentalists are devoid of humanitarian sentiments, as it is sometimes supposed.

The weight of educated opinion to-day seems to be on the side of these caste-breaking tendencies. There

is no use condemning people of this school of thought as impious, irreligious or ungodly. Some of them may be so, but quite a large number of them are as pious and devoted to Hindu spiritual ideals as any representative of Hindu fundamentalism. If we pooh-pooh or disregard this increasing volume of opinion in the country, we shall only fail to notice the symptoms of the revolution in thought that is taking place in modern Hinduism. This change consists in the recognition that the pure spiritual content of religion has no inevitable or even necessary relation with any social system, except in so far as it is to leaven the latter with the principle of Dharma, the universal law of righteousness. We believe it is proper to characterise this change as the recapture of the old Buddha spirit by the modern Hindu conscience.

It is also to be remembered that this divorce of caste consciousness from the spiritual ideal is symptomatic of a still deeper change in the Hindu outlook. For many centuries past, Hinduism has practically been an ethnic religion, and the Hindu conceived as one so born and never so made. It was an extension of this idea that resulted in the notion that salvation can be obtained only after one passes through the discipline of the caste system, and is finally born of Brahmin parentage. Even in the writing of Mr. Sastri we get a faint echo of this tenacious belief prevailing among many Hindu fundamentalists. But the belief outrages the facts of history and need not be taken seriously; for no one can deny that men of exemplary piety and spiritual illumination have been very often born in lower castes and out-castes of Hinduism in spite of serious cultural

handicaps, and among societies in and out of India belonging to non-Hindu religions. In fact caste is no indicator of man's spiritual level. An uncompromising recognition of this is necessary if the ethnic Hinduism of the old law codes is to develop into the universal Hinduism of the Bhagavad Gita. That alone can claim to be a universal religion whose beliefs, practices and institutions are open to all who are duly qualified, irrespective of hereditary or other extraneous considerations. Now caste system, according to Hindu fundamentalism, is closed to all who are not born in it. The idea is quite sound if caste is admitted to be only a social experiment having either a eugenic or economic value alone. Hindu fundamentalism would, however, assertively claim more for it and go so far as to urge that caste system is essentially spiritual in principle, universal in application and strictly hereditary in its organisation. The only way of reconciling these incompatible claims is to invoke the doctrine of Karma. To our mind this is only to take shelter in obscurantism. For one is at a loss to see why men of evil, selfish and unspiritual tendencies are born in high castes also, if only souls distilled into purity by Karmic laws are admitted into them. The issue is sufficiently plain to a mind free from pre-conceived theories: either separate caste from Hinduism and reduce the former to the position of a *social institution*; or make caste an essential part of the spiritual content of Hinduism and reduce Hinduism to the position of an ethnic religion. Modern Hindu conscience seems to favour the former course, and that is why the gradual development of the passive Hinduism of the

previous centuries into the "Aggressive Hinduism" of our times synchronises with caste-breaking tendencies.

We for our part consider Hinduism to be a universal religion, and we cannot therefore admit that caste is anything more than a social system produced by a combination of causes, racial, economic and political. It is not divine in any special sense, as Mr. Sastri contends, but purely human, and reflects in it all the virtues and failings of human nature. If both the fundamentalists and the virulent critics of Hinduism recognise this fact, the former will cease to be an obstructive and the latter a disruptive force in Hinduism. None will then look askance at a new social experimentation. People will also cease to praise or censure Hinduism for both the real and imaginary virtues and failings of caste system, even as they do not praise or censure Christianity for the similar effects of feudalism or industrialism.

IV

Once we thus separate caste from Hindu religion, we shall be in a position to take a thoroughly objective view of it, and judge it purely as a social institution. It is neither to be idealised as Mr. Sastri does, nor condemned downright as Dr. Ambedkar does, however much their personal experience and observations in life may justify their conclusion. To deny its services in the past is as unjust and idle as it is to glorify it as a godsend, perfectly valid for all time and all conditions. If it failed to Hinduise 13 million aboriginal tribes as Dr. Ambedkar points out, it has also to be said that it succeeded in doing so with regard to a much larger number, which accounts for the presence

of numerous sub-castes in Hindu society to-day. This does not, however, entitle it for preference over new social institutions that can do the same work in a better, quicker and more efficient manner. Mr. Sastri is substantially right when he contends that it stressed the co-operative principle, smoothened the wheels of competition and preserved the technical skill of Indian workmen. But on this ground, to hope that it will continue to do so under thoroughly altered world conditions is quite futile and un-warranted. There is no use calling for co-operation when men are consciously unwilling to co-operate. If the cruelty of competition is bad, equally so is the stagnation, lethargy and exclusiveness into which co-operation imperceptibly degenerates. Reliance on hereditary skill will be disastrous in an age when diversity of trade is enticingly innumerable and fitted to all aptitudes, when industrialism is dominated by machinery, large-scale organisation, and scientific research. Again the defensive mechanism of caste has done much to preserve Indian culture when it was threatened with insuperable dangers. But you cannot for ever live in hiding places without prejudice to your dignity as human beings. For merely to survive is not to live well, as Dr. Ambedkar points out. The virile elements will sally forth even into danger zones, and if they are endowed with the true quality of life, absorb the dynamic factors in their environment without surrendering their own distinctiveness. The embankment of taboos and prohibitions cannot for ever imprison the expansive tendencies of racial life.

In fact this dissatisfaction alone can sufficiently explain why many

men, Hindu to the core of their being in other respects, fail to see eye to eye with Hindu fundamentalists in their reverence for caste. For to recognise the services of the bullock bandy for business and communication in the past is one thing, but to advocate its retention as an ideal means of conveyance even in an age of cheap motor and railroad transport is quite another. Efficiency in self-defence, though not in aggression, is what justifies a social system and makes it acceptable to a people. As long as caste proved its worth in this matter people clung to it, but when pitted against Muslim and European social systems it has proved its inefficiency in many respects in spite of its survival value. Unwillingness to contact foreigners has not saved us from foreign influences. For even though we may not wish to contact them, they have come to contact us—first as travellers, then as merchants and finally as conquerors. Bitter experience has taught the modern Hindu that it is not with the aid of taboos but by a greater tightening of the social consciousness alone he can keep himself alive and honourable in this world. In the principle of nationalism which the West has perfected in all its constructive and destructive phases, the best brains of India too seem to recognise the system of organisation which can mobilise the popular will into a unified and dynamic force. The jingoistic and imperialistic tendencies of Western nationalism may not find favour with anyone here, but its healthy principles are accepted by men of awakened political consciousness, and it is generally admired as a higher and more efficient form of social life. Caste mentality is found

to stand in opposition to this process of nation-making ; for it is the parent of communalism, the irreconcilable foe of nationalism. This ugly fact cannot be set aside by simply abusing the communalists. They are but products of the system, and are bound to live or die with the system. Mr. Sastri's analogy of compatibility between joint family life and conjugal love is not quite true even with regard to the example cited ; for to-day under the altered conditions of life the experience of most men proves just the contrary. In the organisation of the herd instinct a division of loyalties between communalism and nationalism leads to disastrous inefficiency—to what may be described as an element of dissociation in the national psychology. For the appeal of both is directed to the same instinct, and the surrender demanded by both is equally unreserved and exclusive. In the social life of to-day there is as little chance of reconciling their claims, as there is of harmonising nationalism and internationalism under the aegis of competitive principle. That is why with the growth of nationalism we meet with increasing condemnation of communalism and its parent caste.

But let no self-respecting Indian join Dr. Ambedkar in his campaign of vili-

fication. If we are to give up the caste system, let us do so not with curses but with grateful recognition of its services—in fact with blessings on our lips for a storm-tossed and weather-beaten institution that aimed high but failed, because men were yet unfit for it. For it was man's first attempt to apply the co-operative principle in social life, and as in the case of all first attempts, especially when they relate to such higher laws of life, we practically made a caricature of it owing to our own unfitness for it. If in future humanity is to find happier and better times, a little relief from the struggle, stress and cruelty of unbridled competition, it is going to do so only through the application of the co-operative principle in the collective life of the world as a whole, avoiding at the same time the big mistakes which caste system made in its *actual working*—exclusive reliance on heredity, exaltation of privileges over duties, and apotheosis of self-complacent passivity into a spiritual principle. For the implication of a world-wide system of co-operation is not caste in any sacerdotal sense but *equity* and *security* in the distribution of world's natural resources, and in the organisation of its political and social life.

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 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 the simple talks of every-day life.]

AT that time, the Holy Mother was living at Kothar, in Orissa. Though I had a vague idea about Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother, I did not know anything in detail about them. At the request of my brother, I came to Kothar to pay my respects to the Mother. It was then about midday. After reaching the place I discovered that my enthusiasm had waned considerably. Other devotees were invited for their lunch and I accompanied them. After our lunch, Rambabu announced that the Mother wanted to see me. An elderly monk said that I should pay my respects to her later in the afternoon ; but Rambabu insisted, and informed us that the Mother was waiting for me. She had not taken her noon-day meal and would do so only after I had visited her. Therefore I accompanied Rambabu and saluted the Mother. We did not exchange many words. Next day I returned home.

I again felt the same enthusiasm to visit the Mother and came back to Kothar. One morning I went to see her, and said that I would like to return home the following morning. The Mother said, "Stay here tomorrow. You may go home the next day." After a while a monk came to me and said, "The Holy Mother has been gracious to you. Be ready

tomorrow morning after your bath." I did not realize the meaning of the word 'grace'. Next morning I was alone after my bath when Sister Radhu came there and said, "Who is Vaikuntha Babu? The Mother is waiting for him." "My name is Vaikuntha," I said in reply. "Has she sent for me?" Sister Radhu nodded in the affirmative, and I came to the Mother with her. The Mother said, "Come inside the room." Next she asked if I would like to learn the sacred Mantram* from her.

Disciple : You may instruct me if you please. I do not know anything about it.

Mother : Very well. Sit here. What aspect of God do you like most ?

Disciple : I do not know.

Mother : Good. You repeat this sacred word.

Thus I was initiated by the Holy Mother. One day I asked her, "Mother, can I accept another teacher to learn Yoga?" The Mother said in reply, "Yes, you can accept a teacher to learn other things, but the teacher who gives initiation is only one."

I fixed a day for leaving Kothar. During the previous night at about

* A sacred word which the disciple repeats at the instruction of his spiritual teacher.

twelve o'clock, Rambabu awakened me from sleep. He had some sweets in his hand. Rambabu said, "Vaikuntha, Mother has sent these sweets for you. Eat them on the way. She has asked me to tell you not to purchase any food from the roadside stores."

Next time I visited the Mother at Kamarpukur. On the second morning of my stay there, as I came to salute the Mother she asked, "When are you going home?"

Disciple: I have never been to the Belur Math. It is my intention to visit the Math first and then go home.

Mother: You need not go to the Math this time. Please go home to-day.

Disciple: Mother, I have come so near the Math, I do not like to return home without seeing that holy place.

Mother: No. You should go home directly and not disobey your teacher's injunction.

I could not make any further objection, but I thought that after leaving Kamarpukur, I would go straight to the Belur Math. The Mother would not know anything about it. At that time, two devotees from Allahabad, a man and a woman, came to Kamarpukur. The Mother initiated them that day. The Mother asked me to go with them, but as the devotees did not like this suggestion, I remained behind. I accompanied them as far as the main road to see them off. I had left my money-bag in the outer apartment. The Mother saw it there and put it in a secure place. Later on she asked me about my money-bag. I could not find it. The Mother said to me, "One should not be so unpractical in the world. Without a little carefulness,

life becomes impossible. Your money-bag is with me. Why did you not go with the two devotees from Allahabad?" I explained the reason, but the Mother expressed her displeasure. I said to her, "Why are you so worried about it? I will return home to-morrow." After this, the Mother entered her own room.

The same day at noon, she sent for me and said, "Please open these letters and tell me what they contain." I read the letters. I remember particularly the content of one of them. It was from the Udbodhan Office. The substance of the letter was as follows: Revered Swami Ramakrishnananda† wanted to see the Holy Mother, and he would follow any treatment for his illness, suggested by her. The Mother said, "What treatment shall I suggest? There are Sarat, Rakhal and Baburam. Let him follow their advice. My presence in the house would disturb the patient. That will not be good for him, so I shall not go. It will be extremely difficult for me to be a witness if something terrible happens to the patient. You explain the whole thing and tell them the reason of my inability to go there."

Next day after the noon-day meal, I was going to take leave of the Holy Mother when she asked me if I had visited the shrine of Raghuvir.‡ I answered in the negative. The Mother said, "It is proper to give some offering in the shrine. If you have no money with you, please take

† He was one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and was in charge of the monastery at Madras. The Swami at that time was suffering from an attack of tuberculosis and had come to Calcutta for treatment.

‡ An epithet of Rama, the family God of Sri Ramakrishna.

it from me." I said that I had enough. I went to the shrine and prostrated before the image. When I was about to take leave of the Mother, she suddenly said, "Vaikuntha, remember me." But the very next moment she added, "Remember Sri Ramakrishna. He will fulfill all your desires."

Lakshmi Didi was present there. She said, "Well, Mother, what is this? This is not right on your part. Why should you delude your children in this way?"

Mother: Why? What have I done?

Lakshmi Didi: You told Vaikuntha a minute ago to remember you, and now you ask him to pray to Sri Ramakrishna.

Mother: Sri Ramakrishna is everything. All his desires will be fulfilled if he only prays to Sri Ramakrishna.

Lakshmi Didi: But it is not right to confuse your children in that way.

Lakshmi Didi then turned to me and said, "Look here, Vaikuntha. This is the first time I have heard the Mother exhorting her children to pray to her. Do not forget this. Who is Sri Ramakrishna after all? You had better pray to her. It is your great fortune that the Mother told you to do so. I again repeat that you should always pray to the Holy Mother." Next, addressing the Holy Mother she said, "Mother, have I said the right thing?" The Mother by her silence indicated her assent.

As I was about to take leave, the Mother again said to me, "You had

better go straight home. You need not visit the Belur Math or any other place on the way. Serve your parents at home. It is good for you to look after your father." I followed her advice and returned home by way of the Koalpara Math. Before I left home, I had seen my father in good health. But after my return I found him bed-ridden with a fatal disease. After a week my father passed away.

I was again going to Kamarpukur to visit the Holy Mother when one of my brother disciples gave me a letter addressed to her. There were two questions in the letter. The first question was: "I am going to accept a job. Will that involve me in worldliness?" The Mother said in reply, "How does the acceptance of a job involve one in worldliness?" The second question was: "Will it be good for me to marry?" The Mother kept quiet over this question and asked me if I were married. I answered in the negative. The Mother said in reply, "That is good. Don't marry. It brings lots of complications."

One day I asked the Mother "Is there anything wrong in eating fish and meat?" She said, "Here it is a custom to eat fish; you can also do so." During this visit I requested the Mother to give me her footprint some day. She said, "It will not be convenient to do so now. People here do not look upon me in the same way as you do. Many neighbours come to see me. They will criticise the red paint on my toes. I should have to keep myself away from them."

CONCEPTION OF GOD IN CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY

By Prof. Jadunath Sinha, M.A., Ph.D.

(Continued from last issue)

[In this instalment of Prof. Sinha's article the reader will come across Alexander's bold conception of a Deity who is in the making or who is the ideal God in embryo. Is not this conception comparable to the Buddhist idea of a Bodhisattva or imperfect man developing into the Buddha, the Perfect Being? In the philosophy of values and in Eucken's message of universal spiritual life, the religious mind will recognise some ideas congenial to its tastes and inclinations.]

DR. WARD also gives us a pluralistic theism. The world, according to him, is an indefinite variety of psychic existences, of different degrees of perfection, all tending to self-realisation. Each of them is a self. No two of them are exactly alike. The world is a system of inter-acting selves. The world is not a unity differentiated into plurality, but a plurality organising itself into a unity. If the whole world is psychical, how is it that we have apparently self-less beings in the world of matter? With Bergson, Ward argues that matter is only the arrest of spirit. Ward is a pluralist: he believes in the plurality of finite selves which are absolutely free and carve out their own destiny. He brings in the conception of God only to direct the evolution of the world. But his God is a member of the kingdom of persons; he has his limitations, though his limitations are self-imposed. He has no fore-knowledge. How can he know the future of the world? It depends not merely on God but also on other free agents whom he sustains but never constrains. God is the *primus inter pares*—supreme among equals.

Ward asks: "What is Reality? Pluralist and singularist alike answer:

It is experience. But the difference between them is that the pluralist is content to stop at the totality of finite experiences, whereas the singularist or the theist maintains that beyond the universe of the many there is a single transcendent experient, who perfectly comprehends the whole." The Pluralist does not believe in a single transcendent experient, but in many finite experients. "The pluralistic whole is a whole of experiences, a whole of lives but not a living whole, a whole of beings but without a complete and perfect being." (*Realm of Ends*, pp 228-229). To Ward God is not the all-comprehending reality or the Absolute, but a part of the Absolute. "A theism that is reached through pluralism," says Ward, "can never end in an Absolute in which God and the World alike are absorbed and lost; the only Absolute then that we can admit is the Absolute which God and the World constitute. God and the World constitute the Absolute." (*Realm of Ends*, pp. 241-242). Ward admits the reality of the world. "If the reality of the world be admitted, then this reality stands over against the reality of God. God indeed has not been limited from without but he has limited himself. We do not say

that God comes into being with the world but only that as the ground of the world he limits himself." (*Realm of Ends*, p. 244). "How God creates the world and thereby limits himself we can never understand." (*Ibid*, p. 245). We have seen that Ward draws a distinction between the Absolute and God. God and the world together constitute the Absolute. God, in being limited by the world, is limited by himself. But he is also limited by free finite spirits. Ward says, "The Absolute must be in every respect all-inclusive, but God, if his creatures are free, is so far not all-inclusive. The Creator together with his creatures may be called the Absolute." (*Ibid*, p. 313). "From the standpoint of the many, we have no ground for assuming a Creator who does everything but only a Creator whose creatures create in turn. The real world must be the joint result of God and Man." (*Ibid*, pp. 352-353). "Starting from the Many as real we can never reach an Absolute into which they are absorbed and vanish. As related to them God must be determined and limited by them; he cannot be as if they were not. If then he is not to be merely one of them, not merely *primus inter pares*, this limitation must be an internal limitation; God we must say, is their Creator; and in creating them he has determined himself." (*Ibid*, p. 437). "Though God created us he created us free and to be co-workers with himself." (*Ibid* p. 439). Thus God, the world and the finite spirits together constitute the Absolute of Ward who thus advocates the doctrine of a finite God.

Thus Intuitionists, Pragmatists and Personal Idealists all give us a plurality of finite spirits under the guidance

of a finite and limited God. But all these doctrines are fast going out of fashion. Realism has come to the fore. Intuitionism takes us too high to the dreamland of fancy. Pragmatism is the philosophy of men in the street and as such is too low for educated men. Idealism, personal or absolute, is a veritable bugbear to many in the present day. 'Down with all idealism:—that is the war-cry to-day. So, over the graves of all these systems the Realist is building his edifice. There are three schools of Realism in the present day, one led by Bertrand Russell, Alexander, and Moore in England, another led by Perry and Marvin in America, and the other led by Drake and Pratt in America.

Here I shall deal with the views of Alexander and Russell with regard to God. Alexander traces the whole reality to the matrix of Space-Time. "Abandoning the attempt to define God directly, we may ask ourselves whether there is place in the world for the quality of deity." Alexander answers that in the evolution of the world out of Space-Time higher and higher qualities are gradually emerging. "There is a *nisus* in Space-Time which as it has borne its creatures forward through matter and life to mind, will bear them forward to some higher level of existence. Deity is the next higher empirical quality to mind, which the universe is engaged in bringing to birth." (*Space, Time and Deity*, pp. 346-347). Thus God is not the director of the evolution of the world but a product of its evolution. "As actual," says Alexander "God does not possess the quality of deity but is the universe as tending to that quality. Only in this sense of straining towards deity can there be

an infinite actual God. . . There is no actual infinite being with the quality of deity ; but there is an actual infinite, the whole universe, with a nisus to deity ; and this is the God of the religious consciousness, though that consciousness habitually forecasts the divinity of its object as actually realised in an individual form." (*Ibid*, pp. 361-362). Thus, according to Alexander, God is not, *but is to be*. He asks : " Does infinite deity exist ? " He roundly answers : " The world in its infinity tends towards infinite deity, or is pregnant with it, but infinite deity does not exist. Deity is the ideal of God in embryo. (*Ibid*, p. 365). " Deity is some quality not realised but in process of realisation, is future and not present." (*Ibid*, p. 379).

But if Alexander consoles us with the promise of a future God—a God in embryo, Russel rudely shatters all our dream of God. His scheme of reality has no room for God or immortality. He has no sympathy for Pragmatist's advice to act as if there were a God, and as if we were immortal. He has no sympathy for pragmatism or the philosophy of " as ifs." Would you act as if you were a multi-millionaire or the monarch of the whole world to avoid discontentment? The universe is rotten to the core. There is no place of God in it. Theology is a fraud and religion a mockery. We must totally disbelieve in God. We must not live in fool's paradise. We must not believe that good will triumph over evil. We must not anxiously await a brighter and happier existence after death. Death is the end of all : and we must submit to it in calm resignation. Morality is a myth ; religion is a delusion. This is indeed realism with a venge-

ance ! It breathes the spirit of the grim materialism of the present day.

Amidst all these rebellious tendencies the voice of Idealism has not altogether been hushed. Man cannot live without Idealism. So Idealism is raising a faint voice here and there. But it is not the same old intellectual Absolutism of Hegel. It is anti-intellectualistic. One of these idealistic tendencies is found in Germany, the cradle of Western Idealism. It is called the Philosophy of Values. It enquires into the validity of the ultimate values of life, viz., the true, the good, and the beautiful. Are they relative or absolute ? Do they exist in themselves unrelated to any finite mind ? Or do they depend on the individual tastes and subjective feelings ? The empiricist and the pragmatist reduce the true to the useful, the good to the expedient, and the beautiful to the pleasant. They deny their absolute existence and their universal and necessary character. But the philosophy of values recognises them as absolute forms existing independently of finite minds ; they are universally valid ; they are universal and necessary presuppositions of our intellectual, moral, and aesthetic judgments. They are ontological verities or absolute realities. They are not subjective but objective ; they are not relative but absolute ; they are not individual but over-individual or universal. Rickert holds that these absolute values or universal norms are transcendent *oughts* which are real in themselves. All *Being* (Mussen) is the realisation of *ought* (Sollen). So *ought* is prior to *is*. According to Rickert, the absolute norms or values of life, viz., Truth, Good, and Beauty exist in themselves in a transcendent void

craving for realisation through individual minds. These *oughts* do not exist in God ; they are not realised in God. Munsterberg also recognises the reality of these eternal values, pure norms, or absolute *oughts* ; but he does not recognise their existence divorced from, and unsupported by, any form of consciousness. Munsterberg differs from Rickert in so far as he holds that these absolute norms or values, though independent of finite egos, are not external to the Super-Ego or ultra-personal will. Munsterberg posits a Super-Ego or over-individual will to support and give meaning to the eternal values of life. But the Super-Ego of Munsterberg is not a conscious spirit or God ; but it is unconscious and unintelligent will which is eternal action, incessant effort of self-preservation and self-expansion. Josiah Royce of America puts the philosophy of values on a solid speculative basis by grafting it on Hegelian Idealism. He brings down the eternal values of life, truth, good, and beauty from the transcendent sphere to the ideal order immanent in Absolute consciousness. They find their eternal satisfaction not in the impersonal will or Super-Ego of Munsterberg but in the Divine Will of Royce. God is the eternally true, the eternally good, and the eternally beautiful.

Besides the philosophy of values in Germany, Eucken offers us another type of new Idealism. It may be called universal spiritualism or spiritualistic activism. According to Eucken, our life is action and not mere thought or intelligence. Intellect cannot give us a complete view of life ; it breaks up the one continuous life into discontinuous elements and interprets it in terms of mechanical

concepts. But life is not a logical system ; it is always changing and growing ; it overflows the categories of logic ; it can be known only by action or spiritual activity. Truth cannot be known by intellect or thought ; nor can it be known by intuition, emotion, or aesthetic sense ; it can be known only by deep spiritual action. Naturalism reduces life to a mechanical process. Intellectualism reduces life to thought. Eucken rejects both. He regards life as essentially action. Philosophy, according to him, is no mere reflection upon life ; it is rather a vital function of our spiritual activity. It is that form of spiritual activity which brings to coherent expression the intuitions of our experience. Eucken subordinates theory to action. He calls upon us to act to know the truth and meaning of life. But what are we to realise in life or action ? We must realise our spiritual life. We must rise above Nature and enter into the life of Spirit. We must cease to be the children of Nature. We must have a spiritual rebirth. But what does Eucken exactly mean by the spiritual life ? He does not define or explain it. He leaves everything vague and indefinite about it. He only tells us that it is an inward, self-sufficing, independent life. The spiritual life is necessarily the universal, the divine, the free and creative life. So, we should give up our false self-satisfaction and capture the cosmic spiritual life in which human life is rooted. The duty of man is not only to realise his spiritual nature but also to subordinate all things to the higher life of spirit. Eucken substitutes spiritual activism to mystic quietism and emphasises the practical work of building the

spiritual kingdom. Eucken's philosophy is beautifully vague from the beginning to the end. He does not say definitely what spiritual life is. He says mysticism is the highest religion; and it is living the life of God. But what is his conception of God? Sometimes he identifies God with the self-sufficing, eternal, cosmic energy; and sometimes he makes God a growing, changing, dynamic force. Eucken is not definite on the nature of God and his relation to man. He feels that we cannot prove the existence of a personal God. The nature of the Divine can only be felt by the divine in us.

Eucken is more a prophet than a philosopher. He gives us the message of universal spiritual life in this materialistic age. He asks us to create a Heaven on earth by our persistent spiritual activities. He inspires us with his religious enthusiasm and lifts us to a larger and higher plane of existence. But he does not give us a systematic philosophy. As a preacher he is a herald of the New Age of spiritual enlightenment; but as a philosopher he is a complete failure.

But Eucken is not the only prominent idealist of the present day. Croce and Gentile of Italy give us another type of Neo-Idealism. It is a revival of Hegelian Idealism stripped of all intellectual elements. Hegel's completed reality or eternally fulfilled Absolute has been attacked under the name of "block universe" by William James and the pragmatists, by Bergson and the intuitionists, by the realists, and finally by the neo-idealists. Croce and Gentile are at one with Hegel in holding that the only thing that exists in the universe is mind, and History is the History

of mind. If the reality is a static Absolute, eternally fulfilled, it cannot advance in time; it cannot progress if the structure of thought is already complete, the activity of thinking, which implies change and development, cannot be the essence of reality. If we are to admit the Hegelian doctrine that Philosophy is History we must discard his static Absolute, eternally self-fulfilled and self-complete, and concentrate on the multiplicity and immediacy of experience. This is done by Croce and Gentile. For them, mind,—active, self-creative and self-creating mind, is the only reality in the universe, and besides mind there is nothing. There is not even an all-generative Absolute at the beginning or an all-merging Absolute in the end. The universe consists in the continual advance in time—in the continual unrolling of mental events. Thus reality is a perpetual becoming whose completion is self-contradictory. Reality is not a progress *ad infinitum*; it is a recurrence of cycles; its movement is cyclic; at every instant something is attained, yet nothing is ever completely attained; and this twofold characteristic is exhibited by reality throughout. The progress of reality is a perpetual solution of a problem and a perpetually renascent problem demanding a new solution. The gist of the Neo-Idealism of Croce and Gentile is this: The only reality is mind; mind is self-creative and self-creating; it is essentially active; it is ever progressive; there is nothing but this movement; there is no end to which it tends, and there is no source from which it springs. The spirit is an infinite possibility overflowing into infinite actuality. But

the neo-idealists cannot account for this perpetual movement of Spirit, which has neither a beginning nor an end. It is something like Bergson's *elan vital* spiritualised. Whence, Whither and Wherefore of the movement of the Spirit remain an enigma.*

This is the age of ceaseless action and not of quiet contemplation. So the philosophy of the present day represents activism as opposed to quietism. All the present philosophical tendencies are the philosophy of change, action, movement; they never enquire into the origin or the end of this movement. They represent the spirit of the restless man of to-day who is always moving and moving but never cares to know whence he is moving, whither he is moving, and why he is moving. He is lost in his movement; so the present day philosophy is lost in change, movement, activity. This is the age of

*Perry: *Present Philosophical Tendencies*.

Otta: *Idealistic Reaction against Science*.

Radhakrishnan: *Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*.

Joad: *Introduction to Modern Philosophy*.

poetic institutions and wild inspirations, and not of plodding and hesitating intellect. So the philosophy of the present day is a reaction against intellectualism. It is intuitionism, aestheticism, moralism, or spiritual activism. This is the age of democracy and individualism; so the philosophy of this age is democratic and individualistic. It gives us either a pluralistic theism or an atheistic pluralism of finite spirits. And lastly, this is pre-eminently the age of liberty and freedom. So the philosophy of this age is pre-eminently the philosophy of absolute freedom and unrestrained activity. In short, the philosophy of today is the philosophy of anarchy, disorder, confusion. The future philosophy of the world must try to restore the equilibrium of human life by harmonising the discordant and rebellious forces of our nature, and it must try to reconcile being with becoming, the eternal with the temporal, the individual with the universal, intellect with intuition, quietism with activism, moral sense with aesthetic vision and give us a more complete and harmonious view of life as a whole.

(Concluded.)

A HINDU SPEAKS TO CHRISTIANS

By Swami Prabhavananda

[Swami Prabhavananda is the founder and leader of the Vedanta Society, Hollywood, California. In the following article the Swami gives a very simple exposition of the theory of Revelation propounded by Sri Ramakrishna reconciling the claims of all religions to be true and divinely inspired. His words are addressed to all who are bigotted and narrow in their religious outlook. Perhaps Christians are specially mentioned only because they are the greatest sinners in this respect.]

WHAT is Religion? Philosophers and theologians define God and Religion in terms of human laws of relation and causation. A Hindu defines religion in terms of realisation, of experience. Religion is to *see* God, to *know* God. This seeing and knowing is neither the perception of the senses nor the knowledge of the intellect. Vision of the divine has to develop; one has to evolve into a God-man, a Christ-man, or a Buddha-man, to see God, to know God. In Sanskrit terminology this knowledge of God is described as *triputi-bheda*, a state wherein the three knots of knowledge,—the knower, the knowledge, and the object of knowledge are obliterated. There remains the unitary consciousness of "I am", or "God is".

When one knows God, can he define his experience? To define is to limit. Who can express the inexpressible "whom words cannot express, from whom the mind comes away baffled, unable to reach"? "Silence is His name."

A story is told of how a father sent his son to learn of God. The boy lived with a renowned teacher for many years. After finishing his course of study he came back. His father asked him what he had learnt. The boy gave a fine discourse on God, quoting verse after verse from the Scriptures. His father listened to him

with pleasure, but remarked, "My boy, go back to your teacher. You have not yet learned what is to be learned." The boy went back and studied for further years, and then returned again to his home. His father asked him the same question as before. This time the boy answered nothing, rapt in contemplation. Then his father exclaimed, "Why, my boy, your face shines like a knower of Brahman! You have known Him whose name is silence."

Vain therefore are all discussions and theories of religion and of God. A bee disturbs the quiet with its humming until it sits on the flower and begins to suck the nectar. But when tasting the nectar it is silent. In the same way, when a man actually tastes the bliss of God, he becomes silent. When the bee has its fill, being intoxicated, it may sing a sweet note. The God-intoxicated man, the Christ-man, after having realised the sea of bliss, sings the song celestial and speaks to us of the Kingdom of God. Yet could he ever express Infinity?

Moses and Christ, Krishna and Buddha, no doubt, saw God, became absorbed in him, nay, became one with Him. Yes, they are the children of Light, Light themselves, yet when they hold the Light before others in the realm of relativity, the darkness of that realm to which belong all

attempts at expression comprehends not the Light.

The truth of the matter is that God is indefinable, inexpressible. Sri Ramakrishna, the great modern saint of India, used to say, "Everything has been defiled, as it were, like the leavings of food, except the truth of God. The Vedas, the Bible, the Quoran, all have come out of the lips of man, have been uttered by human tongue. But the truth of God has never been given utterance by any man." God is realisable, but He is realised in a state of consciousness beyond all relativity, beyond all name and form; the Hindus call that state *Nirvikalpa samadhi*, the Buddhists call it *Nirvana*, and Christians, the Divine Communion.

Once a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna urged his master to describe the experience of *Samadhi*. Sri Ramakrishna made the attempt. But every time he tried to give utterance to the experience he became absorbed in the experience itself. He then gave up the attempt as impossible, remarking with a smile, "A doll made of salt goes to measure the depth of the ocean. But as soon as it enters the ocean it melts away. Who is there to describe the ocean?"

Be he a Moses or a Christ, a Krishna or a Buddha, none can exhaustively express the Infinite God; none can give full and complete information concerning the Kingdom of Heaven.

Attempts indeed have been made by each and all of the great teachers of humanity to show us the light, the truth, the way. But the fact is that when all is said each of them shows us only one ray of that great light, one aspect of the infinite truth, one

way among the innumerable ways that lead to Him.

A student of comparative religions is often lost in the intricate maze of opinions about God and religion that are held by the different prophets. If he be prejudiced, and lean towards one opinion to the exclusion of all others, he misses the truth. God may be compared to the chameleon of varying hues. One seeing it at one time, thinks it red; another seeing it at another time, thinks it blue; another seeing it at still another time, thinks it yellow, and so forth. When these different people compare notes in regard to their experiences, they find themselves contradicting one another. Yet they each report the truth, and in reality their experiences are not contradictory. It is the same with these different great teachers. Each of them reports a different truth about God. All of them are right, and yet none exhausts the truth. And naturally in their attempts to express the Infinite God, they appear different and contradictory, for they can express only one of His aspects. The Vedas truly declare, "Truth is one; sages call it by various names." There is a common Hindu saying: "He is no saint who differs not."

One day the God-intoxicated Sri Ramakrishna was heard talking to the Mother of the universe in the temple thus: "Mother, everyone says 'My watch keeps correct time'; the Christians, the Hindus, the Mahomedans, all say 'My religion is the true religion'. But Mother, nobody's watch is exact. Who can truly know Thee? But again if one seeks Thee with a yearning heart, one can reach Thee by Thy grace through any path, through any religion."

The followers of any one of the different religions make the greatest blunder when they claim their religion to be the only true religion. No religion, howsoever great, is perfect and true if it claims to reveal the all-perfect God. That is an impossible claim! The source of all revelation is God. No revelation can reveal perfectly the source. All the religions of the world spring from Him, and therefore no one of them can contain Him within its boundary. God is all-inclusive. All religions are contained in Him.

The religions of Aryan origin never make a claim that they alone are true or that they exhaust the truth. Buddha propounds his own doctrines and philosophy and then remarks that nobody should make the mistake of thinking that what he has taught exhausts the infinite truth. There are, he says, other truths, other doctrines, which are equally true. Sri Krishna, the greatest interpreter of the Vedic Religion, explicitly points out that the Vedas, the teachings of religion, are within *maya*, within relativity, and therefore do not reveal perfectly the absolute truth. "Be thou above *maya*", he says, "above relativity, and know the Absolute Self."

None of the existing religions of the world is perfect, and the solution of the religious problem is not in attempting the impossible task of founding a perfect religion. The religions of the world, though not perfect, are true, inasmuch as they reveal to us the way, the path, to the realisation of Absolute Truth. "As many religions, so many paths." The path leads to the goal, the path is not the goal. When the goal is reached, one is no longer a Hindu, or a Chris-

tian, or a Buddhist. Be born in a religion, but do not die in it.

A significant incident is related in one of the Scriptures of the Hindus. Suka, a spiritual aspirant, approached the royal sage Janaka to learn of God. Janaka said, "My boy, before I give you the knowledge of God you must give me my fee." "Revered sir, how is that?" said Suka "why do you want the fee to be offered beforehand?" Janaka replied, "When I give you the Light of knowledge, there will be no longer any teacher or disciple. You will realise the One Existence beyond all relativity."

The sum and substance of the whole truth of religion is to know God, to realise Him. It is not subscribing to one creed or to another; it is neither being a Christian, nor being a Hindu. Follow any path, any of the great religions in its pure form, and attain the one and the same goal. Christ, or Buddha, or Krishna, each shows us the way, the life, the light. Follow any that suits your needs, and it will lead you to the ocean of bliss, where are many Christs, Buddhas, and Krishnas. Arjuna worshipped Krishna as God. Krishna asked him to follow him. Krishna then brought him to where there was a tree, and pointing to it, said, "What do you see?" Arjuna replied, "I see a tree." "What else?" asked Krishna. Arjuna saw many Krishnas hanging like fruits on the branches of the tree. Krishna smiled and said, "That is the tree of God, the Absolute Existence."

Let us imagine for a moment that to-day on this earth have met together the great world teachers, Krishna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Christ, Mahomet, Ramakrishna. Won't they not be

happy together? Won't they not be embracing one another, finding themselves in the same kingdom of blissful existence?

Now let us consider the actual state of things among the professed followers of these great *avatars*. Place together a Rabbi, a Hindu priest, a Catholic priest, a Protestant minister. What would you find? Would you not find them, perhaps, tearing one another to pieces? Why should such things be? Because of ignorance and fanaticism. Fanaticism is a sort of disease in the brain,

of which many a preacher needs to be cured. Blind indeed are they who claim to have found the whole truth and denounce other truths.

If one is a spiritual aspirant, one should beware of fanaticism. There need be no quarrels or disputes regarding God and religion. All the creed we require can be summed up in the following simple words: *God is existence. The purpose of life is to attain Him. The way to attain Him is to yearn for Him. To yearn for Him is to pray earnestly: "Lord, reveal Thyself unto me."*

IS HINDU CULTURE OTHER-WORLDLY?

By Dr. V. Raghavan, M.A., Ph. D.

[Dr. Raghavan is a Sanskrit scholar of the Madras University. He was honoured this year by being invited to deliver the T. R. Venkatarama Sastri Endowment Lecture for 1936. In the following article, which constitutes the substance of this lecture, he disproves, by a general review of Sanskrit literature, the false theory that the Hindus knew nothing about the golden mean between the extremes of world-scorning asceticism on the one hand and voluptuous sensuality on the other.]

WHILE some laud India as the mystic East, the land of the seers, the cradle of religion and philosophy, there are others who say it differently,—that Indian thought was other-worldly, over-occupied with meditation, pessimistic, ascetic, inactive and barren of advancement in worldly branches of learning on which 'good life' on earth depends. The Hindu is said to be an other-worldly being and his philosophy is said to teach the very undesirable doctrine of the illusoriness of the world. It is believed by many a student of Hindu culture that to the Hindu life was unreal, the world was not, was an evil he must fly away from; that this doctrine and the theory of *karma* had made the Hindu a pessimist who had no joy in life, no intention to live a

'good life,' and enjoy the good things of this world; and that the Hindu was enchanted with the ideal of an ascetic, all-renouncing, empty life. Such a view of life, the critics say, is hardly conducive to the development of a healthy theism and a scheme of ethical conduct. As a matter of fact, Flint and MacNicol deny any genuine theism in Hindu Philosophy and numberless are the writers who deplore the fact that the Advaitic conception of the world is incompatible with any scheme of ethical conduct. This criticism has been dinned into our ears, and through auto-suggestion and inferiority-complex, we have begun to think ourselves to be a race incompetent for life in this world. Recently, clever and perverse Anglo-Indian journalists and writers

have advanced this over-philosophical temperament and indifference to this world as an argument against our claims to Self-government and freedom. Echoing, as it were, the opinion of such critics, an Indian writes in a recent number of the *Hindustan Review* states that Hindu Philosophy needs to be rewritten if India has to live a life of dignity among the nations of the world. It is supposed by missionary writers and political propagandists that it is only as a result of the discharge of the white man's burden through the two functionings of the ruler and the missionary that India today is becoming active and learning how to enjoy life.

As the basis of all these opinions is the insufficient understanding of Hindu history and literature. The real cause of the spread of this half-truth is to be found in the history of European study of Indian Literature, which was for a long time, and even now, is predominantly interesting itself only in the religious and philosophical books, the Vedas, the Upanishads and the books of Buddhism and Jainism, for purposes of Comparative Philology and Comparative Religion. To generalise from a part of a nation's literature is very bad. It is one thing to pay due tribute to the eminence of ancient Hindu achievement in Philosophy. But to call them other-worldly is to forget the richness of their intellectual activity in other aspects of culture. One should understand that the Sanskrit literature which time, neglect and the library-burners have spared to us today is but a part of what it was. And a proper study of all the available literature will amply show that there is a vast literature in Sanskrit

which is hardly philosophical or religious, which is secular in nature, which deals with wordly subjects that promote the happiness of men, and which testify to the high achievements the ancient Hindus made in secular and technical branches of learning. It is foolish to suppose that a big country with such a long history did nothing but meditate; that the Hindu nation has lived through its long history by not living life. Dr. Keith says that nothing can be farther from truth than to suppose that the Indian was a person given to reflection and religious practices only to the neglect of practical life, and that to form a right judgment of India, one must add to *Dharma*, the two other objects of life, *Artha* and *Kama*. It is said by everybody that India was proverbially wealthy; did not India then enjoy her wealth? India was rich in wares that had an international market in the old world. She was draining Roman cities of their wealth with her articles of luxury. The Indians were an active maritime and commercial people who had colonies overseas. Evidence of literature, native and foreign, philology, numismatics and sculpture bear this out. The *Artha Sastra* and *Kama Sastra* literature, the story books of the *Kathasaritsagara*, etc., the dramatic types of the *Prakarana* and the *Prahasana* and the *Bhana*, the *Kavyas*, the prose romances like the *Dasakumaracarita*—these depict a people who intensely enjoyed life. Every bit of science which Mediæval Europe got was from India, through Arabia. Mathematics, Astronomy, Medicine, both human and veterinary, grammar, poetics, minerals, gems, law, government, love, architecture, engineering, the useful arts

and crafts—these were some of the numerous secular branches of study in which ancient Hindus achieved distinction. India taught the world how to spend the leisure hours intelligently by inventing the chess and the fables. When writers supplement their study of *Brahmanavidya* with a study of *Kshatriyavidyas* and *Vaisyavidyas*, they will have a proper understanding of Hindu culture.

It was not that every class of Indian in old days educated himself for a spiritual life and religious career. There was the *Nagaraka*, city-bred gentleman, as also the city-bred lady, who had to be proficient in the sixty-four arts if he or she were to be respected as cultured. An examination of these sixty-four items would show clearly whether the Hindu was active or inactive, other-worldly or this-worldly, enjoying or abstaining, virile or imbecile. One of the arts is general proficiency and competence in worldly affairs. Typical *Nagarakas* and social heroes like *Mirladeva* were as much real as the *Rishi* and the metaphysician. The *Nagaraka* was not a melancholy or meditative Hindu; he did not fly away from life; he was not innocent of beauty; he enjoyed the fair of life and played his part in life's carnival.

The Hindu was not a life-scorner. To the Hindu idealist, life was an art to the beautiful realisation of which all arts and branches of learning contributed. Education was of the whole man. There should not be over-development of only one part of one's personality. *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha* were all harmonised in the noble Hindu life. Such life was no enemy to happiness. Kautilya emphatically says in his *Arthashastra* (I. 7.) that one ought

not to be without happiness.¹ In his famous description of Rama in the opening canto of the *Ayodhyakanda*, Valmiki says that Rama did enjoy but was not indolent.² Rama was very proficient in worldly affairs and knew the truth of *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kama*.³ The citizens of Ayodhya were righteous and pure in conduct, yet always joyous; they enjoyed and were not misers, yet they were not creatures of desire and avarice: They decked and were most comely, yet pure as saints in character.⁴

There was thus a harmonious life in which there was no excess on any side; a golden normality prevailed. It is an absurd criticism that a writer named Arthur Duncan makes in his *India in Crisis* that the climate of India is more suited to indulgence or contemplation than to stern discipline or action. Many writers consider the Hindu as capable only of the two extremes of hedonism and asceticism. H. D. Griswold says in his article on *Indian Pessimism* in the *Encyclopaedia of Ethics and Religion* that in India there is no healthy volition, volition which alone can lead to good life on earth, that there are in India only excesses of thinking and feeling, philosophy and indulgence, monasticism and hedonism. He illustrates his criticism with *Bhartrhari's Vairagya* and *Sringara Satakas*. But this poor writer forgets that the first the *Nitisataka* of *Bhartrhari* is on right and healthy

¹ न निस्सुखस्त्यात् ।

² सुखतन्त्रो न चालसः । II. 1. 27.

³ धर्मं कामार्थतत्त्वज्ञः । लौकिके समयाचारे कृतकल्पो विशारदः । II. 1. 22.

⁴ तस्मिन्पुरे हृष्टाः धर्मात्मानो बहुश्रुताः । कामी वा न कदर्यो वा ॥ महर्षेय इवामलाः नाकुण्डली नामकुटी नास्त्रवी नाल्पभोगवान् । etc.

volition. That the ideal of Hinduism is always the achievement of the normal and healthy mean, the purifying of the ore of life and accepting it as gold, was very well demonstrated by Prof. M. Hiriyanna of Mysore in his Presidential Address to the philosophical section of the recent oriental conference held at Mysore. The learned professor contrasted the Buddhistic ideal of 'runaway' and the Hindu ideal of 'live-it-well,' illustrating his point with the two poets Asvaghosha and Kalidasa and their respective poems, the Buddhacarita and the Kumarasambhava. In an address to the American Oriental Society, (1926, T. A. O. S. Vol. 46), Prof. W. E. Clark of the university of Chicago corrects some misconceptions about India and says that Hindu life struck a balance between the claims of *Kama*, *Artha* and *Moksha* and that India has been more successful than the West in striking the balance between *Pravritti* and *Nivritti*.

The life of renunciation and pure spiritual pursuit was for a few. The general rule was the normal life of a householder. There is hardly any Sanskrit authority which does not mention that the stage of the householder, the *Grihasthasrama*, is the best. The Mahabharata says that there is no epic to equal its own greatness even as there is nothing to equal the *Grihasthasrama*. Sriharsa says in his *Naishadhiya Charita* that like India among countries, *Garhas-thya* is best among *Ashramas*. In the same verse, Sriharsa makes *Damayanti* prefer this world to the other world which the gods offer her.⁵

⁵ वर्षेषु यद्भारतमर्थयुयाः स्तुवन्ति गर्हस्थ्य-
मिवाश्रमेषु।

All the *smritis* praise the *Grihasthasrama*. This body and this world have been considered as the primary means and place for one to work out one's *karma*. To live here, discharging one's duties righteously, in the reverent spirit of co-operating in God's work, offering Him each work as if it were the flower of one's worship,⁶ is the great *Karma Yoga* that the Gita teaches. The *Isavasyopanishad* says—'Continuing to do one should wish to live for a hundred years.'⁷ Krishna says in the *Bhagavata*: 'Remaining in this world, doing one's duty, sinless and pure, one attains pure knowledge and devotion to Me.'⁸ Again there is the following text which assures *Moksha* even for the householder who has *Tattvajnana* and other good qualities.⁹

The critics however confuse and wrongly attribute the monkishness of Jainism and Buddhism to Hinduism. Those who had purely spiritual yearning were given full scope in Hinduism to walk the path of *Sannyasa*. But the *Adhikarins* and candidates for it form but a small part of the vast populace. To forget this is to forget the large scope of Hinduism and its very genius.

The ordinary Hindu ideal was very normal. In fact, the Hindu idealist had the vision of a life of

तत्रास्मि पत्युर्वरिवस्ययाहं शर्मोभिकिमीरित-
धर्मलिप्सुः ॥

⁶ स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य ।

⁷ कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेत् शतं समाः ।

⁸ अस्मिन्लोके वर्तमानः स्वधर्मस्योऽनघः
शुचिः ।

ज्ञानं विशुद्धमाप्नोति मद्भक्तिं वा मद्विष्णुया

11x1 20. 11.

⁹ देवार्चनरतः तत्त्वज्ञाननिष्ठोऽतिथिप्रियः ।

श्रद्धां कृत्वा ददद्गुरुं गृहस्थोऽपि हि मुच्यते॥

beautiful and healthy normality. He sought for a certain '*Samatva*' or harmony in his personality and in its all round unfoldment. He strove for that ideal of moderation, *Yukta-haravihara Yuktachesta*'—of the Gita. Hardly can one be considered to have understood Hindu culture or literature if he mistakes the Hindu as a dull-pulsed, gustoless individual. There was no pessimism, no melancholy, clouding his face. The ideal god which his art-canon described is one always beaming with smile—*Mandasmitasmera*, *Prasannavardana*. When he prayed to that deity in his prayers, he asked for not only *Mukti* (liberation) but *Bhukti* (enjoyment) also. 'May we see a hundred autumns'¹⁰ and so on he prayed. "To obtain all, for the success of everything"¹¹—so ended every *karma*.

Further, the doctrine of *Karma* need not mean all that the missionary theoretically draws out of it. The illusory nature of the world belongs as a tenet to only one system of Hindu philosophy. There are other realistic, theistic and ethical schools of thought. The idea of the vanity of earthly glories and divine discontent are feelings not in any way peculiar to the Hindu idealist. Lastly, even the realisation of Brahman is to be enjoyed only in this world.¹² Philosophy is not a way of not living; it is a way of living.

To say that to the Hindu, enjoyment and life are not recent British imports or missionary administrations is not to say that the Hindus were a race of hedonists, materialists, Bohemians or Epicureans. As pointed

¹⁰ पश्येम शरदश्शतम् ।

¹¹ सर्वस्याप्त्यै सर्वस्य जित्यै ।

¹² अत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ।

out before, there was the idealism of the harmony of *Trivarga* or the harmonious blending of ethics, earning and enjoyment in one's life. Enjoyment and acquisition (*Kama* and *Artha*) were always regulated by *Dharma*, righteousness. Those who are motivated only by enjoyment and only by acquisition are both condemned. Rama tells Lakshmana: "He who is after material gain only is to be scorned: so also to be essentially pleasure-seeking is not praiseworthy."¹³

Both the *Arthacharya* and the *Kamacharya*, namely *Kautilya* and *Vatsyayana* respectively insist on *Artha* and *Kama* being enjoyed without the violation of *Dharma*. In the very opening, *Kautilya* insists on *sense-control* for the prince and forbids sexual lawlessness, cupidity and cruelty. Hinduism denies not the joys of life; it only wants to draw up a limit and a method for the enjoyment. Says poet Nilakantha Diksita in his *Santivilasa*: "Wife, sons, bed, food, ornaments and clothing, and other objects of human longing of a similar nature—who says 'nay' to these things; but there is only a condition laid down in enjoying these."¹⁴ And the Lord Himself blesses all desires that are consistent with *Dharma*.¹⁵

Neither for the individual nor for the State does Hinduism lay *Kama*

¹³ द्वेष्ट्यो भवत्यर्थपरो हि लोके कामात्मता
स्वत्वपि न प्रशस्ता ।

¹⁴ दाराः पुत्राः शयनमशनं भूषणाच्छादने वा
यच्छेदं पुमभिलषितं तेषु माशाब्दिकः कः।
किन्वेतेषां भवति नियमः सेवने कोऽपि
कोऽपि द्वेषस्तस्मिन्नापि भवति चेत्तत्र वक्ता
कृतान्तः ।

¹⁵ धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ।

or *Artha* as the main impulse. To encroach upon another's possessions is to violate *Dharma*.¹⁶ Personal or national imperialism is condemned. When Jabali tempts Rama with a forceful plea for *Artha*, out comes Rama, condemning that State and its king who have converted their *Dharma* into a crime, who in their reckless pursuit of more and more have become low, wicked and sinful. Such kingship and rule, Rama says, he will cast away.¹⁷

Of that great normal life in which *Trivarga* found a harmonious expression, in which there was *Pravrtti* (action) in *Nivrtti* (renunciation) and *Nivrtti* in *Pravrtti*, in which the man lived and enjoyed but did not transgress the bounds of *Dharma*,

what greater ideal for us can there be than the Avatar who incarnated to show how noble man could live? For such a life, one should be an 'adept' a *Kusala* in *Karma*, a *Vichak-sana*, one knowing and decisive of what to do and what not to do and capable of distinguishing *Dharma* from *Dharmabhasa* (semblance of *Dharma*) and *Karma* from *Karmabhasa* (semblance of *Karma*). This ideal was embodied in Rama. He acted decisively at all critical situations, being superior in his wisdom over Jabalis and Vasisthas. Rama says of himself to Jabali: content in my pleasures, I am conducting my life's course without deceit, with faith in the eternal values of Truth and Right and with thorough discrimination of what is fit to be done and what is unfit.¹⁸

¹⁶ मा गृधः कस्यस्वित् धनम् ।

¹⁷ चालि धर्ममहं त्यक्त्ये ह्यधर्मं धर्मसंहितम् ।
क्षुद्रैर्दृशसैः पापैश्च सेवितं पापकर्मभिः ॥

¹⁸ सन्तुष्टपञ्चवर्गोऽहं लोकयात्रां प्रवर्तये ।
अकुह श्रद्धानश्च कार्याकार्यविचक्षणः ॥

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE INFINITE

By Sister Devamata

[Sister Devamata is of American nationality. She is one of the ardent supporters of the Vedanta Movement in America and has devoted her life to it. She has also written several books dealing with the theory and practice of religion. In the present article she gives a brief exposition of the discipline one must undergo in order to expand from individual to infinite consciousness.]

THE Egyptian pyramids have taught us that the most enduring structure is one broad at the base, narrowing toward the sky. In such manner should man construct his life,—at the foundation line, wide enough to include all humanity; at the apex, God alone.

No man can afford to live wholly to himself. If he close his door on mankind, he will find that he has shut himself out and stands a beggar at his own threshold. We exile our-

selves, when we withdraw from the human family and lead our life as isolated units. We are like soldiers marching alone, without the dignity and protection of an army.

The more extended the unity among men, the stronger is the social body. Forming alliance with a limited group only,—with country or community, does not suffice. It deprives us of a vaster background and the benefits of a wider association. Substituting one group for the whole, or breaking

the whole into groups, is the cause of the clashes and conflicts which rend the world. Out of it grows the illusive belief that between group and group there exist contending interests and rival advantages. The effort of one group to expand at the expense of another creates also a forced distribution of resources and disturbs the balance of the universe.

Through uncounted ages Nature has been striving to lift men from the animal to the human plane. Shall we betray her effort and continue to prey one upon the other? The human plane calls for cohesiveness, the desire to share and to include. When we manifest less generous tendencies, we are reverting to our brute instincts. Evolution works on the whole, not on selected parts; and as the strength of a bridge must be measured by the weakest girder, not by the strongest, so must the progress of the human race be counted not by the vanguard, but by those who lag. We move forward as a vast unit and cannot neglect or harm the least creature in that unit without retarding our own progress and the progress of all mankind. If we advance or profit at the cost of a fellow-being, we share in the injury we inflict. "Everything a man doth, be it good or evil, he doeth it to himself," we read in an early Italian record.

How may we gain this sense of universal kinship? We cannot hope to contact all the peoples of the earth or acquaint ourselves concerning them. Confucius may say, "The men of the four seas are our brothers," or St. Paul that we are all children of one God, but how are we to apprehend and feel it? By expanding our consciousness. We must move gradually up the scale of think-

ing and feeling,—from self-consciousness to group-consciousness, from group-consciousness to universal consciousness, and from an all-inclusive consciousness of the universe to a consciousness of the Infinite or God. Thus we reach the apex of the pyramid.

It is not a new course that we follow. Nature marked it out for man at the outset of his evolution. She has led him from individual to family, from family to tribe, from tribe to nation, from nation to internationalism, and to-day she is calling to him to break down the last barrier and pass on to an all-encompassing world-vision.

Consciousness has no limit of distance or area. It can circle the earth as swiftly and easily as it can travel to a neighbour's door. It becomes therefore a great uniting power. When an act of heroism or an exalted achievement is flashed from hemisphere to hemisphere there is something in every man's heart and mind which responds. A sense of kinship is awakened and mankind is more united because of that act or achievement. All expressions of moral and spiritual valor foster world-consciousness and bind men together. Every noble life, every generous impulse, every selfless sacrifice, contributes to it. We do not need to touch the hand or hear the voice of a fellow-being to be related to him. When we envelope him with our thought, we contact him. This holds equally for the group and for all humanity.

As we pass from plane to plane of consciousness, we must leave no gaps, no empty spaces. Each plane must form a solid foundation for the plane that follows. Each must be thoroughly tested by living. "No virtue

is to be trusted until it has been put into practice," the mystic, John Tauler, declares. We cannot grasp the import or fulfill the obligations of the group without first doing our part in the family. We cannot take our place worthily in the family, if our individual life is not nobly lived. We must grow strong in the lesser relation before we can prove adequate in the larger. It is not possible to answer the higher call, if we refuse to hear the one now sounding in our ears.

Our whole nature must be alive and active in this passage from the individual to the Infinite. Every moral and spiritual trait, every faculty, every finer impulse, will be needed. There are, however, certain qualities on which special accent must be laid. The first of these is sincerity. If we are not genuine, if our aspiration is mere theory, our effort will lack the driving-power necessary to carry forward and we shall remain static. Our thought will not broaden, rather will it shrink and shrivel. We must set out on our course with confidence, resolution and earnest conviction, if we would reach our goal.

Patience and endurance are also essential elements in our effort. The way is long and often rough and steep. Nature makes the struggle proportionate to the end to be attain-

ed, that we may develop the strength required for the larger vision. We cannot approach God wearily or in doubt and complaining. We cannot stand before Him, timid and questioning. We must come to Him with a valorous heart, a confident mind, a submissive will and an undaunted spirit.

Above all we must be self-forgetting. To think of our self or to assert our self is to narrow the area of our consciousness and cut ourself off from the whole. We cannot rest our thought on this finite self and move toward the Infinite. It is not possible to contract and to expand at the same time. Expansion implies merging the lesser in the greater.

So long as man is imprisoned in the little self, he cannot realize lasting happiness. There is an inherent tendency in his nature to break down all barriers, to go beyond all horizon-lines. Gratifying his ambitions and desires, his vanity and greed, will not satisfy him. He will continue to reach out for a larger attainment. He will still covet the unknown. His unrest will not cease until his individual consciousness has found its completion in infinite consciousness. Then his door will be open to the universe, no living being will be a stranger to him, and God will be his companion.

WORDS OF CHINESE WISDOM

By Sri Sivasuta

[Several thoughts given below are sparkling gems of wisdom, and provide excellent themes for meditation.]

THESE maxims of China are compiled from Tao-Teh-King, the famous work of Laotze. Laotze is the founder of Taoism, an ancient faith of pre-Buddhistic origin, and Tao-Teh-King is the Veda of this Chinese religion. This sacred book is said to embody the spiritual experiences of the Chinese race and has been commented upon by as many as sixty-one writers of the country. Its popularity and profundity are evidenced by the large number of commentaries extant on it. Perhaps no scripture that exists can boast of such a speciality. A glance into the following ideas of Laotze would show that they are now as fresh and impressive as when they were uttered more than twenty-five centuries ago. It is a striking testimony that they were born of highest spiritual realisations. These golden sayings of this Chinese philosopher contain nuggets of truths having universal appeal and application.

It is only those who are selfless that esteem life at its right value.

A diversity of light tends to blind the eyes. A diversity of sounds tends to deafen the ears. A diversity of flavours tends to dull the taste. A diversity of actions tends to excite the desires. A diversity of guests tends to corrupt the intentions. That is why the self-controlled man closes the doors of the senses and dwells in the Inner Life.

Prevent evil before it appears : secure order before disorder ensues.

But men, too anxious for results, fail on the eve of success. Regard the end as you regard the beginning, and you will not fail in your undertakings.

There is no greater sin than uncurbed desire. There is no greater evil than discontent. There is no greater fault than greed of gain. But the plenitude of contentment is the fulfilment of every desire.

Without leaving his threshold a man may know the universe. Without looking through his window a man may see the heart of Heaven.

He who raises himself on tip-toe cannot stand firm. He who straightens his legs cannot walk. He who asserts himself does not convince. He who boasts of himself has no merit. He who glorifies himself does not impress. These things are to Truth what refuse and remnants of food are to the body.

Man becomes old through excessive striving. That is why the sage avoids the extremes of excessive personal effort. Since he does not strive, no one in the world can strive against him.

To know that we are ignorant is a high achievement. To regard ignorance as knowledge is a defect. To feel the pain of this defect is the beginning of its removal.

To teach without words ; to benefit without action ;—how few in the world attain to this ?

To walk in goodness leaves no disfiguring tracks. To speak in goodness

leaves no cause for dissension. To plan in goodness needs no calculation. To guard the door of goodness needs no locks and bars, yet none can open it. To bind in goodness needs no cords, yet none can pull it asunder.

By ceasing to strive, we overcome strife ; by ceasing to possess and crave for love, we gain love ; by ceasing our endeavours to become learned and wise, we find Truth ; by ceasing attachments to the outer beauty we gain the vision of the Inner Beauty.

The wise men of old were cautious, as if fording a stream in the winter. They were reluctant, as if fearing to give offence. They were deferential as if dealing with strangers. They were self-effacing like snow beneath the sun. They were unpretentious like unpolished wood. They were lowly like the expansive valley.

He who knows others is discerning, but he who knows himself is enlightened. One who conquers others has strength but one who conquers oneself is prepotent. One who has wealth is wealthy but one who has contentment is really rich.

Heaviness is the foundation of lightness. Stillness is mastery over motion. Therefore the wise man in his daily intercourse departs not from inner gravity and repose. By lack of seriousness men lose heart.

He who possesses Truth in its fullness is like a little child. Poisonous insects will not sting him ; wild beasts will not chase him ; birds of prey will not strike him. Though his bones are soft and his muscles weak, yet his grasp is firm and sure.

Supreme Truth is very straight, but how much do men love the by-paths.

By blending heart and mind in united singleness of purpose it is possible to reach the Indivisible.

Esteem your highest attainment as incomplete, its utility will remain unimpaired. Esteem your greatest fullness as emptiness, it will never be depleted. Know your highest wisdom as foolishness.

As movement overcomes cold, as stillness overcomes heat, so he who has purity and serenity becomes a model in the world.

Hold fast to the Great Truth and all men will come to you of themselves. They will come and receive no hurt, finding rest and peace in the great calm.

To quicken, but not to own ; to actuate, but not to act ; to raise but not to rule is the way of Truth.

The wise man does not lay up treasures ; his riches are within. The more he spends his resources for others, the more he increases his own store.

What is he who takes hold of the inner life and knows the secret of its hidden springs ? No power can strike the inner life ; no power can hold it ; no power can penetrate it.

To know contentment is to fear no shame. To know how to be still is to avoid destruction.

Courage carried to one extreme is the boldness that leads to death. Courage carried to the other extreme preserves life by self-restraint.

Good words through Truth are fraught with potency. Noble deeds through Truth are wrought with never-failing efficiency.

He who neglects the inner Light is lost in body's darkness. He who follows the Light of Heaven ever reflects its radiance.

Moderate thy speech and thus attain spontaneity. A gust of wind does not outlast the morning ; a squaller of rain does not outlast the day.

It is better to withhold than to fill to overflowing : it is better to refrain than to push to the extreme. Continual excess wears away the keenest instrument.

He who fills the void, knows the nature of Eternity. The highest man never magnifies himself.

He who knows the Truth, tells It not : he who tells it knows It not.

He alone who is free from earthly passions can perceive the mystery of the Unmanifested One.

The nameless simplicity brings absence of desire ; absence of desire

brings stillness ; thus would the world become perfect from within itself.

The self-controlled man dwells in the balance which is beyond the action of the contraries ; he teaches without words ; he inspires to action, but appears not to act ; he produces but does not possess ; he brings his work to perfection but does not claim reward.

The root of dignity is in humility : the foundation of the exalted is in loneliness.

Thirty spokes unite in the hub of a wheel ; but the usefulness of the wheel depends on the empty inner centre. Moulded clay is fashioned into a vessel, but the usefulness of the vessel depends on the empty inner centre.

SWETASWATARA UPANISHAD

By Swami Thyagisananda

युजे वां ब्रह्म पूर्व्ये नमोभिविश्लोक एतु पश्येव सुरैः ।

शृण्वन्तु विश्वे अमृतस्य पुत्रा आ ये दिव्यानि धामानि तस्युः ॥

सुरैः = of the wise पश्यि = according to the way एव = only वां = you two नमोभिः = by meditation पूर्व्ये = the ancient ब्रह्म = Brahma युजे = merge विश्लोकः = the glorious one एतु = may manifest विश्वे = all अमृतस्य = of immortality पुत्राः = sons शृण्वन्तु = may hearken ये = who दिव्यानि = celestial धामानि = regions आतस्युः = occupy.

Following only in the footsteps of the wise,¹ merge² you both³ in the Ancient⁴ Brahman by continued meditation. May the Glorious One manifest itself ! May the sons of Immortal Bliss⁵ hearken⁶ to me—even they⁷ who occupy celestial regions (5)

Note.—This verse treats of Samadhi and realisation by complete union and absorption in Brahman through meditation.

1. *The wise*—The men of realisation who initiates us in the methods of Sadhana. The Sruti seems to hint that only they are wise who have become one with the ultimate principle of the universe, and only such should be accepted as guides or gurus and not such as have stopped on the way. Otherwise it will be the same as the blind following the lead of the blind.

2. *Merge*—The reference here is to the Nirvikalpa or Asamprajnata or Nirbija Samadhi which is the culmination of spiritual practice or yoga, where all the modifications of the mind cease completely ; all thought vanishes, and the individual becomes one with the universal.

3. *Both*—The mind and the intellect which were hitherto serving as a screen, hiding the vision of the ultimate truth.

4. *Ancient*—Because Brahman existed before creation, i.e., before everything else came into existence.

5. *Sons of Immortal Bliss*—This shows that we are all entitled to immortal bliss as our birthright. It gives the lie direct to the view that we are all born sinners.

6. *Hearken*—Refers to the happy state of the mind of the realised man who is eager to share his bliss with others less fortunate.

7. *Even they, etc.*—Even those who have mounted the topmost rungs of the ladder of worldly prosperity and foolishly pride themselves as having achieved their life's goal are reminded that there is still something higher—their birthright of Immortal Bliss.

अमिर्यत्नाभिर्मध्यने वायुर्यत्नाधिहृत्यते ।

सोमो यत्रातिरिच्यते तत्र सजायते मनः ॥

अग्निः=fire यत्र=where अभिमध्यते=is churned out वायुः=air यत्र=where अधिहृत्यते=is controlled सोमः=soma juice यत्र=where अतिरिच्यते=overflows तत्र=there मनः=the mind सजायते=attains perfection.

Where fire¹ is churned out, where air² is controlled, where soma juice³ overflows, there the mind attains perfection. (6)

Note.—This verse aims at a synthesis of the Jnana Yoga, Raja Yoga, and Karma Yoga, and presses them all into service for the realisation of the Ultimate Truth.

1. *Fire*—In Vedic symbology fire stands for intellectual knowledge in the form of ideas couched in language. This knowledge is churned out as a result of study and reflection and philosophical enquiry under the guidance of a competent teacher. Of the two pieces of wood used for producing fire in sacrifices, the upper one stands for the teacher (Guru) and the lower one for the disciple (Shisya), and the process of study is spoken of as 'churning out.' The whole line refers to Jnana Yoga in general. Cf. Bhagvata XI, V, 12. Cf. also Taittiriya Up. T. 2 & 3.

2. *Air*—This represents Pranayama or the control of the vital functions, which is a practice peculiar to Raja Yoga as expounded by Patanjali. Hence this line refers to the practice of that Yoga.

3. *Soma*—The Soma juice used in Vedic sacrifice symbolises the exhilaration arising out of the pursuits of worldly enjoyments giving rise to a forgetfulness of one's higher nature and birth right of eternal bliss. Soma is said to overflow when the symbolic character of the Vedic sacrifice is transcended and ritual gives place to self-sacrifice, when work becomes unattached and is elevated to the rank of worship and service of God in man. This line therefore stands for Karma Yoga or the Yoga of active self-sacrifice.

सवित्रा प्रसवेन जुषेत ब्रह्म पूर्वम् ।

यत्र योनिं कृण्वसे न हि ते पूर्वमक्षिपत् ॥

यत्र=where योनि=the source कृण्वसे=you destroy ते=your पूर्व=the results of past actions न=do not अक्षिपत्=cause trouble (च=and) (तत्—that) पूर्व्ये=the ancient ब्रह्म=the Brahman प्रसवेन=through the Creator or First Cause सवित्रा=through the Immanent Soul जुषेत=should be devoted to.

Attaining whom, you destroy the source,¹ and are no more troubled by the results of past actions²—to that Ancient Brahman be thou devoted, through³ the Prime Cause, the Immanent Soul. (7)

Note.—This verse refers to Bhakti Yoga for completing the picture of synthesis of Yogas referred to in the previous verse.

1. *Source*—Here refers to the mind which gives rise to the phenomenal world. This is finally destroyed only when the Absolute Brahman is realised and the Sadhaka becomes one with It.

2. *The results of past actions*—The word Poortha means charitable acts such as the construction of wells, tanks, gardens, rest-houses, etc., for public benefit. It is generally used in conjunction with the word Ishta which denotes acts of sacrifice. These stand for all meritorious actions leading to heaven. Here it refers to the accumulated results of all past actions in general. The virtuous actions are specially referred to for showing that even they lead to re-birth, and should be transcended before the final release from Samsara, by becoming one with the Absolute.

3. *Through, etc.*—The Absolute is beyond thought and speech and cannot be the object of devotion. Devotion moreover requires the duality of Bhakta and Bhagavan. We have therefore to approach the unity of the Absolute through some perfect form conceived by the intellect. The best possible form of devotion is that of the Immanent Soul conceived as the First Cause—whose presence is felt by all devotees in their hearts.

The next few verses refer to some of the details of Yoga practice.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

(1) *The Message of Our Master.* (2) *Spiritual Talks : Both by the first disciples of Sri Ramakrishna.* Price Rs. 1-4 & 1-12 and pp. 230 & 390 respectively. Pocket size. Advaita Ashrama, 4, Willington Lane, Calcutta. Can be had also at the Vedanta Kesari Office, Mylapore, Madras.

The first book contains a collection of 22 short essays by some of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna—Swamis Vivekananda, Brahmananda, Premananda, Trigunatita, Turiyananda, Saradananda, Ramakrishnananda and Sivananda, falling

under five topical headings, viz., *What is Religion? What is Spiritual Practice? Preparation for Higher Life, The Need of a Guru and The four Great Paths.* The authors of these writings were all dazzling examples of intense spiritual living. Most of them did not at all care to leave any document of their spiritual strivings or counsels. Of this collection, a few very solitary and rare productions such as *Brahmacharya* by Swami Trigunatita *Truthfulness* by Swami Premananda, *Guru* by Swami Brahmananda and *Pranayama* by

Swami Shivananda are too precious to have been left to remain in the limbo of a monthly. Although the contributors are various, the book as a whole has a distinct unity and coherence, because the underlying theme is the same. Self-surrender as well as self-knowledge, the goal of life as well as the path to it, the way of worship as well as the nature of the worshipped are all explained here clearly and concisely with a winning freshness and vigour.

The second volume records the conversations of the Holy Mother and Swamis Brahmananda, Premananda, Turiyananda, Saradananda and Sivananda, noted down by some of their close associates and attendants. About three quarters of the bulk of this volume is taken up by Swami Turiyananda's conversations which are unrivalled for their pithiness, spiritual acumen, sound practicality and thorough understanding of the needs of the spiritual aspirant. The occasion for these talks being mostly the doubts and difficulties of the persons who have taken to spiritual life, they are of great assistance to all that seek help in their spiritual striving. The hardships and failings of a life of inner discipline are past the imagination of all that shirk an attempt for its mastery. Hints thrown out by texts and scriptures are often bald and lacking in definiteness and warmth. But words of advice garnered in the pages of such books, coming as they do from persons who have traversed the arduous path of the spirit, would surely settle many a doubt in the mind of the disciple and infuse enthusiasm and new hope. A telling directness, a profound simplicity, a ring of actuality, a warmth and glow of life and an admirable freedom from second-hand crudition make these two compilations attractively useful. The charming get-up with the coloured ribbon as page-mark and the general typographical excellence and beautiful illustrations bear eloquent testimony to the taste and discretion of the publishers.

The Holy Quran : By Maulana Muhammad Ali, M.A., LL.B. Published by Dar-ul-Kutub-Islamia, Ahmadiyya Buildings, Lahore. Crown 8 vo. Pages CXVI & 631. Price, paper bound, Rs. 2-8.

The book under review is a new edition of Mr. Muhammad Ali's larger work

with Arabic text, translation and elaborate notes in English. The general reader will welcome the new edition with the original size considerably reduced by the omission of the Arabic text and the abridgement of the notes. The translator has also added a new introduction wherein he gives a valuable exposition of the essentials of Islam and useful guidance for the study of the holy book.

Among the great scriptures of the world the Quran has the uniqueness of being not only a book of spiritual guidance and inspiration but the source of law and the code of daily conduct for its millions of followers. In these days of rapid social and political changes, its importance in the latter respect may dwindle both due to march of ideas and novelty of situations, but one may confidently assert that as long as man feels the call of the Beyond that is within, he will turn to it for the enrichment of his faith and a guaranty of his intuitions. For, its note of trust and faith in a Supreme Intelligence and Will is uniform and unwavering; its vision of a law of righteousness governing the destinies of individuals and nations never makes compromise with parochial considerations; and its scheme of spiritual discipline, consisting in resignation to the Divine Will and universal charity to all beings, has a simplicity and naturalness, a universality and non-dogmatic turn which no spiritual aspirant can fail to notice. The misconceptions about the Quran among non-Muslims are innumerable. These have their origin mainly in the unedifying conduct of ignorant and fanatical Muslims, in the misrepresentations of interested critics, and in the incapacity of both Muslims and non-Muslims to disentangle the essential teachings of the scripture from what is purely local and transient. But to one who can rise above these limitations, the Quran can transmit an enlightened faith in the One God of the Universe who combines in himself power with beneficence, mercy with justice and knowledge with action, and convey a sense of creatureliness and utter dependence on the mighty yet beneficent Power for whom the unnumbered world systems are only like tiny particles of sand. It can give him valuable guidance in both spiritual and civic life and teach him how to live with heart to God

and hands to work. The non-Muslim world will be grateful to Mr. Muhammad Ali for giving them access to this valuable

scripture by this cheap edition of his translation, noted alike for its accuracy and lucidity.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary in London

The chief meeting in connection with the Ramakrishna Centenary Celebrations in England was held on Friday the 27th of March at the Hall of the Theosophical Society in Gloucester Place, under the chairmanship of Sir Francis Younghusband.

At the outset, messages of sympathy which had been received from the President of the Ramakrishna Mission in India, Marquess of Zetland and Mr. C. F. Andrews were read out by Mr. Kanti Ghosh, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Centenary Committee. "I am interested," observes Lord Zetland in his message, "...in what you tell me of the arrangements which you have made for the celebration of the centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna in this country. I carry with me very pleasant recollections of my visit to ... Belur Math... and I shall be glad if you will convey to the meeting... my good wishes. I trust that the philanthropic work of the Mission in India continues to make progress." Rev. C. F. Andrews regretting his inability to be present in the meeting makes the following statement in the course of his letter: "My admiration for the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Mission is very deep indeed, and I have often worked with its members in relief work during times of flood or cholera or scarcity bordering on famine. They have always rendered devoted and loving service to the poor. I have also visited the Ramakrishna Mission in America, where it has carried a spiritual message into the heart of an overburdened world and 'civilisation, where untoward things have grown too strong for the silent working of God's spirit in man. Their members have shown an unselfishness and love for humanity which has won my heart."

The Chairman in his opening remarks recalled how when he was a young man in India, Sri Ramakrishna was living near Calcutta, but that he had never had the

good fortune of ever meeting him face to face. But he knew one person at least who had seen the Master, and that was the late Maharani of Cooch Behar. The Maharani had told the speaker that she was present at the first meeting of Sri Ramakrishna with her father, the great reformer Keshub Chunder Sen, and though she was too young at that time to react to the spiritual force of the Master, she remembered how her father, ever since that first meeting, held Ramakrishna in great reverence, and what a close bond of mutual love existed between those two great souls. Sir Francis went on to observe that the Master's message "as many faiths, so many paths" is the greatest of all messages that they had received from the East during the last century. Sir Francis laid emphasis on the peculiar character of the message in that it did not advocate mere tolerance, but that it insisted on acceptance of the tenets of other faiths in their entirety, and Sri Ramakrishna, through his spiritual practices, had proved that all religious paths, if sincerely followed, led, in their ultimate consummation, to the same realisation. It was a message which was destined to do a great deal of good to the modern world. Mrs. Edith Hunter, of the Friends of India Society, in a very interesting speech dwelt on the realisation of Sri Ramakrishna and his message to the world. She observed that the problems of the modern world would be automatically solved if they would only follow the teachings of the great Master. It was not for the first time that messages of peace had come from the East, but that Ramakrishna's message interpreted by his great disciple Vivekananda had this peculiarity that it offered a solution on the spiritual plane by advocating the worship of divinity in man. That, in the speaker's opinion, was the only remedy for the fever-stricken world at the present moment. Dr. Har Dayal, who followed next, traced the trend of modern European civilization from the days of the

Renaissance and the Reformation which had culminated in Individualism in its most pernicious form, the result of which could be seen in the unstable condition of Europe today with its hedonism, with its greed and its love of money and power. Sri Ramakrishna stood out against all these. He insisted on doing away with *ahankar*, "I-ness," before one could hope to attain the ultimate bliss. His teachings were never more needed than in the present day when the whole world seemed to be standing on the edge of a precipice as it were. In his life, Ramakrishna had proved how complete and blissful life could be if one were only free from *ahankar*.

Swami Avyaktananda, the last speaker, dwelt at length on the achievements of the Western civilization with its ideal of humanism. While paying tribute to the humanising force of that civilization, he said the path had led to a "cul-de-sac" and it was here that the light which Ramakrishna had lit would discover a new path which would lead the world to the state of blissfulness. He would not undervalue the greatness of the material civilization of the West, but he would insist that the time had come for its divinization by the acceptance of the spiritual ideals of the East. The blending of the two ideals would transform the world and he believed that it would be consummated in no distant future through the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna.

The Chairman in his concluding remarks said that he felt proud to have had an opportunity of paying his tribute to Sri Ramakrishna by associating himself wholeheartedly with his Centenary Celebration. The West was now prepared to receive spiritual messages from the East and especially from Sri Ramakrishna who was not only the greatest spiritual genius of India in the present age, but also one of the greatest men of all times. The Hall was packed full and the large gathering dispersed late at night after a vote of thanks to the Chair proposed by Mr. Henry Polak.

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary at Portland, Oregon

The Centenary Celebration of Sri Ramakrishna was opened on Saturday, March 28, at 8-30 p.m., with the presentation of a

playlet called "The Light from The Beyond," in the Commandery Room of the Masonic Temple, before an enthusiastic and respectable gathering of more than three hundred people. The play, in two Acts and three Tableaux of the goddess Saraswati, Mohammed and the Madonna, was adapted by Swami Devatmananda, from the Life and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. This sublime subject was presented in the picturesque and colorful setting of oriental costumes and religious chants.

On Sunday, March 29, at 11 o'clock in the morning, a devotional service was held, in the Chapel of the Vedic Temple, 1206 N.W. 25 Ave., when Swami Devatmananda addressed the full hall on "Sri Ramakrishna, the God-Man." It was preceded by a period of silent meditation and appropriate musical program.

At 6-30 p.m., a banquet was held in the Banquet Hall of the Masonic Temple, when Hindu dinner was served to more than one hundred people. The Memorial meeting was promptly started at 7-45 p.m., when more people began crowding in the hall. The Toast Master, Mr. Ralph Thom, of the Bank of California, called the meeting to order with a few appropriate words explaining the purpose of the gathering. He then introduced Dr. Norman F. Coleman, ex-President of the Reed College, who spoke eloquently on "Our Debt to India." Dr. G. B. Noble, of the same college, then spoke on "A Western View of Sri Ramakrishna." Swami Devatmananda was finally called upon to address the gathering. He spoke on "Sri Ramakrishna, and God-Intoxication." The talks were interspersed with musical numbers, vocal and instrumental, both presented by noted artists. Floral offerings, including one hundred red roses, added charm and grace to the place; and a large painting of Sri Ramakrishna prominently displayed was the centre of attraction.

On Thursday, April 2, a dinner reception was given to more than 30 members and friends of the Society, at 6 o'clock, in the hall of the Vedic Temple. The Swami prepared special Hindu dishes for the occasion. It was followed by music and other entertainments. On Sunday April 5, at 11 o'clock in the morning, the regular Ser-

vice was held in the Chapel of the Vedic Temple, when Swami Devatmananda spoke on "Sri Ramakrishna, His Spiritual Practices." A special feature of the musical program was a song composed for the occasion and dedicated to Sri Ramakrishna. In the evening, at 8 p.m., the Swami gave an illustrated talk, in the Corinthian Room of the Masonic Temple, on "The History of the Hindu Religion in Pictures" with the help of lantern slides. This graphic and thrilling presentation was immensely enjoyed by the whole audience that filled the hall.

As a permanent Memorial to Sri Ramakrishna, the newly-acquired Retreat named after him, will be dedicated, at a later date.

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary in Providence, U.S.A.

A Committee for the celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's Centenary in America had been formed during the winter. It comprised, besides the American Swamis, of such outstanding figures as Professor William E. Hocking of Harvard University, Rev. Ivan Lee Holt, President of the Federation of Churches of Christ, Rev. Frederick B. Fisher, President of the Council of Free Churches of America, Rev. Jabex Sunderland, Professor Franklin Edgerton, Head of the American Oriental Society, Professor Millar Burrows, President of the American School of Oriental Research, Rabbi Israel Lazaron and others.

The celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's birth-centenary was opened early on Friday, February 21st at 7-30 a.m., over the radio when Swami Akhilananda, speaking for the Ministers' Morning Devotions, gave a talk on the Spiritual Experiences of Sri Ramakrishna. That afternoon at 3 the Swami, speaking over a different radio station, read to the invisible public the message of Swami Vivekananda on Sri Ramakrishna, and spoke on Sri Ramakrishna and Future Civilization.

On Sunday, February 23rd a large gathering of about 300 came together at the Plantations Club, a big auditorium in the centre of Providence, to hear ministers of different religions speak on mysticism. An unusual spirit of harmony and good-will toward one another and toward Sri Ramakrishna could be noticed among the ministers. After music Swami Akhilananda

opened the meeting by reading to all the message of good cheer from Swami Akhandanandaji. A Catholic monk, Father Chandler, struck a high spiritual note by his beautiful exposition of the stages of divine love as portrayed in the life of St. Thomas Aquinas showing the attainment of God to be the highest human goal. This was followed by a very interesting account by Rabbi Braude of the charitable life of Rabbi Israel, the Master of Good-name. Rev. Ralph Harpole depicted practical mysticism in the Protestant Church from the life of Horace Bushnell. An entertaining note was then brought in by Rev. Frederick A. Wilmot's definition of mysticism, which he followed by a talk on Sri Ramakrishna bringing out with sympathetic understanding the idea of the harmony of religions. Swami Akhilananda then spoke on the mysticism of Sri Ramakrishna stressing the fact that man must realize God before he can become truly religious. The subject was drawn to a fitting close by Dr. Joachin Wach, of the Brown University, who wound up his speech with the brilliant remark that "mysticism denoted the harmony of man above his national and social barriers." On Monday four Swamis, Swami Akhilananda, Swami Vividishananda, Swami Gnaneswarananda and Swami Paramananda were able to be together for the Birthday. The worship and rituals performed in the impressive Indian manner created an atmosphere of calm and sanctity which was enjoyed by all.

The following day, the message of Swami Akhandanandaji was broadcasted by the Press on the radio over the whole of the United States. This day a dinner for 100 was cooked in the Hindu fashion and served by Swami Akhilananda with the help of a number of friends. The number of guests, ministers, Rabbis, professors and friends, taxed the capacity of the house for dining, and late applications had to be rejected. The Hindu curries, new to many, were greatly relished. Then followed music and brief addresses on various phases of the life of Sri Ramakrishna by the five Swamis present and a few prominent American friends consisting of well-known ministers and University professors. On Wednesday again there was broadcasting of Swami Akhandanandaji's message

and a talk over the radio on Sri Ramakrishna by Swami Akhilananda, music, informal discussions and partaking of refreshments. Harmony of Religions was the topic of Swami Akhilananda over the radio on Friday, February 28th. In the evening there was another large public meeting at the Plantations Club. This time, four Swamis delivered lectures on Sri Ramakrishna and His influence which did much to spread acquaintance among the public.

The week of celebration proper ended on Sunday, March 1st. At a meeting in the evening, after a little violin music by Professor Henri J. Faucher accompanied by Mme. Marie B. Faucher and vocal music by Miss Ruth Webber accompanied by Mrs. Curry, Swami Akhilananda gave a lecture on India and Her Master illustrated by slides. On Sunday Swami Akhilananda again lectured on Sri Ramakrishna and Modern Problems.

The Celebration was thereafter carried to Philadelphia and to St. Louis by Swami Akhilananda, where, in both places, he delivered a number of special lectures on Sri Ramakrishna which interested and drew many people. The immediately noticeable result of the celebration was a greater number of letters from unknown people to the Swami, and an increased demand for the Swami as a speaker to various religious societies and gatherings of various kinds of ministers, of Men's and Women's Church Clubs including a Jewish women's group, of Young People's Church Societies, of Y.M.C.A. Boys groups and of Religious Conferences.

Sri Ramakrishna Thondar Sangham,
Madras

A group of young men called together by the ideal of loving service has been able to meet at regular intervals and do some work of village uplift for the last four years with an increasing degree of success. The report for the year 1935 shows that an amount of Rs. 720-6-2 was collected through donations and subscriptions and spent in furtherance of the aims and purposes of the Association. The activities of the Association for the reported year consists of three night schools with 115 pupils mostly school-going, a miniature library for their use, supply of books and stationery for poor boys, conducting of bi-weekly Bhajanas, several festivals and Pujas, lantern lectures on moral and reli-

gious themes, a Co-operative Savings Bank, Panchayats, serving the in-patients of two hospitals with literature and gramophone songs, and the organising of a volunteer corps to prevent danger to crowds of women and children participating in the festivals at Kapalisvarar Temple. The Sangham, it is evident, deserves greater encouragement and co-operation to launch on larger schemes of uplift work among the poor and illiterate of the city.

FLOOD & FAMINE RELIEF WORK

Khulna & Bankura : Swami Madhavananda, the Acting Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission, issues the following report and appeal :—The Mission started Famine Relief Work in Khulna District in 14 villages with a distribution of 28 mds. 33 srs. of rice among 508 recipients and in the last weekly distribution the figures have gone up to 31 villages, 1,643 recipients and 83 mds. 26 srs. of rice. The area will be further extended which will raise the total amount of rice distribution to 100 mds. In the Bankura District, where the work has recently been undertaken the third weekly distribution of 6 mds. 5 srs. was made from Jayrambati amongst 188 recipients belonging to 7 villages. Here also the work will have to be extended.

To continue the work already undertaken, the Mission will require at least Rs. 500 weekly. Our funds at present are insufficient and the continuation of the work depends entirely on the generous public. We therefore appeal again for liberal contributions, so that thousands may be saved from starvation and death. We cannot overestimate the seriousness of the situation, and we believe our appeal will reach every philanthropic heart in the country and find a ready response for this great cause.

Arakan Flood Relief : Our Flood Relief Work in South Arakan is also going on smoothly. Here also the work has been extended. Besides distribution of 940 mds. of rice among 13,207 recipients for the week ending 4th July, from four centres, the Mission workers have also been giving temporary medical relief and distributing building materials and clothing among the most deserving cases.

Contributions for this fund may kindly be sent to the address of The President, the Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, P. O. Howrah.

To be shortly out

THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDIA

SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY MEMORIAL VOLUME
IN TWO PARTS.

Will contain about 2,000 pages, D. Crown Octavo.

Profusely illustrated with more than 100 plates.

About ninety eminent scholars of India representing fifteen Indian Universities have contributed.

Part I.—THE FUNDAMENTAL UNITY (Introduction)

The main sections which again contain several chapters in each are :—(1) The Vedas and the Upanishads, (2) The Epics, (3) The Smritis and the Puranas, (4) Buddhism and Jainism, (5) Systems of Hindu Philosophy, (6) Systems of Hindu Philosophy (Vedanta Schools), (7) Other Schools of Thought, (8) The Saints of India.

Part II.—The SPIRIT of INDIAN CULTURE (Introduction)

Sections : (1) Landmarks in Indian Culture, (2) Institutions, (3) The Pursuit of Science, (4) Arts, (5) Literature, (6) Faiths other than Indigenous, (7) Hinduism, (8) Sri Ramakrishna Movement.

PRICE :

Inland (India, Burma and Ceylon) : Rs. 16	Foreign : \$ 10 or 40sh.
For Members of the Centenary Committee	Inland : Rs. 14 „ \$ 9 or 36sh.

N.B.—Mofussil subscribers are advised to send the postage, Inland Rs. 3-8, Foreign \$ 2-50 or 10 sh. along with the price while ordering.

For hand delivery at our office Rs. 1-8 will be charged as Railway freight from Calcutta to Madras.

Apply to :

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MYLAPORE,
MADRAS.

No presents !**No coupons !!**

For quality, taste and
lasting sweet flavour

use our famous
L G Brand
ASAFOETIDA

Look for this mark on the packet.

Price Rs. 1-14-0 per lb.

Head Office:

Yadgadi, Bombay.

Laljee Godhoo & Co.

Branch Office:

Kumbakonam.

SOWCARPET, MADRAS.

FREEDOM AND CULTURE

BY SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SPALDING PROFESSOR OF EASTERN RELIGIONS AND ETHICS
(OXFORD).

The contents are mainly from Sir S. Radhakrishnan's Convocation addresses to the Andhra, Mysore, Punjab, Lucknow, Nagpur and Allahabad Universities. Indeed, the addresses cover a wide field dealing with problems of individual and collective life such as Universities and National Life, Training for Leadership, The Spirit of Youth, Education and the New Democracy, Democracy and Dictatorship, A New Social Order and The Responsibility of the Intellectuals. In these addresses, Sir S. Radhakrishnan stresses the need for real Freedom and true Culture. In the words of Prof. Joad, he exhorts his countrymen "to shake off the oppressive traditions of the past and equip themselves to face the future, a future in which they will be called upon to play their part as leaders, statesmen, and administrators in the national life of a Self-governing India." But Sir S. Radhakrishnan does not content himself with an exhortation to his countrymen only. He warns the rulers that the basis of present association, the assumed racial superiority of one people over another, must go. Sir S. Radhakrishnan's vigorous handling of the many problems of the day can hardly fail to interest readers in India and abroad.

Price Re. One. To Subscribers of the "Indian Review." As. 12.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE HEART OF HINDUSTHAN

A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES. "An admirable survey and interpretation of Eastern thought."

CONTENTS: The Heart of Hindulism, The Hindu Idea of God, The Hindu Dharma, Islam and Indian Thought, Hindu Thought and Christian Doctrine, Buddhism, and Indian Philosophy.

Price Re. One. To Subscribers of the Indian Review, As. 12.
Foreign 1sh. 6d. Postage 6d. each.

All Foreign orders must be accompanied with remittance in advance.

G. A. NATESAN & Co., PUBLISHERS & BOOKSELLERS,
GEORGE TOWN, MADRAS.

Swami Vivekananda's Works

Complete Works in Seven Volumes.

Each—Board, Rs. 3.

Cloth, Rs. 3-8.

Index to Complete Works 0-10-0

	Rs. As.		Rs. As.
Hinduism	0 10	Epistles,	
Raja Yoga	... 1 4	I, II, III & IV series,	
Jnana Yoga	... 1 12	each	... 0 10
Bhakti Yoga	... 0 12	Do. V & VI each	
Karma Yoga	... 0 12	crown size	... 0 8
The Science and Philo-		Do. III & IV	
sophy of Religion	0 12	Pocket Edn. each	0 6
A Study of Religion	0 12	The Vedanta Philoso-	
Realisation and its		phy	... 0 6
Methods	... 0 10	My Master	... 0 8
The East and the		Chicago Address	... 0 4
West	... 0 12	Modern India	... 0 6
Religion of Love	... 0 12	Christ the Messen-	
Indian Lectures		ger	... 0 3
(Colombo to Almora)	2 8	Pavhari Baba	... 0 3
Inspired Talks	... 1 4	Reply to Madras	
Do. Cloth	... 1 12	Address	... 0 4
Women of India	... 0 3	India and her Problem	0 10
Thoughts on		Religion and Philoso-	
Vedanta	... 0 10	phy, Part I	... 0 12

JUST OUT!

JUST OUT!!

SPIRITUAL TALKS

By the first disciples of Sri Ramakrishna

(THE HOLY MOTHER AND SWAMIS BRAHMANANDA, PREMANANDA,
TURIYANANDA, SHIVANANDA AND SARADANANDA).

Contains rare spiritual counsels given by these great Souls to the spiritual aspirants and as such invaluable for all those who sincerely search after God.

Cloth-bound. Excellent get-up. Price : Re. 1-12

MESSAGE OF OUR MASTER

By the first disciples of Sri Ramakrishna

(SWAMIS VIVEKANANDA, BRAHMANANDA, PREMANANDA, TURIYANANDA
RAMAKRISHNANANDA, TRIGUNATITA, SHIVANANDA AND SARADANANDA).

Gives in a comprehensive way the spiritual message of the Master.

Cloth-bound. Excellent get-up. Price : Re. 1-4

Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, MADRAS.

WORKS BY SISTER DEVAMATA

Days in an Indian Monastery—Indian life has been described and interpreted in a very charming way by the writer who lived for some time in an Indian monastery.

Excellent get-up. With 10 Illustrations. Price Rs. 4-8-0.

Sri Ramakrishna and His Disciples—Will be read like a story book. Fluent style and nice get-up. Price Rs. 4.

The Open Portal—A large number of soul-stirring poems. Excellent get-up. Price Rs. 2-8-0.

The Habit of Happiness—Deals with the Technique of Meditation. Price Re. 1-8-0

Building Character—In this age of construction the many build houses, the few build character. Price Re. 1-8-0.

HEALTH AND HEALING & THE PRACTICE OF DEVOTION Price 7 As. each

(1) Sleep and Samadhi; (2) What is Maya; (3) Robert Browning & Vedanta; (4) Development of the Will; (5) The Indian Mind and the Indian Culture; (6) Eastern and Western Religious Ideals.

At Four Annas each

Sri Ramakrishna and St. Francis of Assisi Price Re. 1-8-0

Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna

(Third Edition)

This is the most exhaustive and comprehensive collection of the Master's sayings and parables. 1003 in number. Contains a valuable glossary. They are most Universal and Catholic in spirit and will suit all people irrespective of their creed or religion.

The sayings elucidate in a simple and forceful manner the fundamental truths of religion. —The Hindu.

Crown 8 vo. pp. 340

Price Cloth Rs. 2.

Concession Price Re. 1.

The Vedanta Philosophy (Brahma Sutras)

By Sridhar Majumdar, M. A.

With original Sutras, their word for word meaning, explanatory quotations, and an unbiased and thoughtful exposition in most clear and lucid English, highly spoken of by the Press, 'The Vedanta Kesari' 'The Prabuddha Bharata' 'The Modern Review' 'The Statesman' 'The Amrita Bazar Patrika' 'The Indian Daily Mail' 'Peace' as well as by the eminent scholars of the world, Drs. Barnett, Keith, Jacobi, Jolly, Rapson, Hopkins, Winternitz, Thomas, Jackson, S. N. Das Gupta, Rabindranath Tagore, P. Narasimhaiah, Moreno, Lord Ronaldshay, Mahamahopadhyayas, Pramatha Nath Tarka Bhushan and Durga Charan Sankhya Vedanta Tirtha, Pandits Kokileswar Sastri, S. Radhakrishnan and Gopi Nath Kaviraj, Brajavidehi Mohant Maharaj Santa Das Babaji, etc. Most attractive and useful to beginners, over 800 pages in all, cloth bound with title inscribed in gilt letters. Price Rs. 5 only, postage extra.

To be had of The Author, Hastisunda Barisal, Bengal, India.

SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS

OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

It is a book of rare spiritual counsels, giving practical instruction about meditation, worship, continence, good company, mind control, ecstasy, Yogic practice, search for God, God vision, Tapas and the like. An invaluable handbook for all spiritual aspirants.

"Helps one to pass from Darkness to Light."—The Hindu.

"The seeker after truth, according to every faith and church, will find in the book light, hope, encouragement and inspiration."—Bombay Chronicle.

"The entire book is most practical and invaluable to seekers of truth of every phase and character."—Liberty.

"The book will be useful even to the more gross among laymen."—Swarajya.

Neatly printed in large types on good paper and attractively got-up.

With one portrait of the Swami, pp. Do. 234. Price Rs. 2

TELUGU PUBLICATIONS

Life of Sri Ramakrishna
(In Telugu)

A comprehensive chronological account of the wonderful Life of the Saint of Dakshineswar. Very beautiful language. Excellent get-up. Demy 878 Pages, with many pictures. Price Cloth Rs. 5.

Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna
(In Telugu)

It is a series of conversations in which the highest spiritual truths were expounded by the Master in simple language with homely illustrations.

Price Re. 1-8-0.

Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna—The most exhaustive and comprehensive collection of sayings and parables. Price Board Re. 1-8.

The Life and Teachings of Swami

Vivekananda	...	...	...	0 8 0
Chicago Address of Swami Vivekananda	...	...	...	0 6 0
Words of the Master by Swami Brahma-	...	...	...	0 6 0
nanda	...	...	...	0 6 0
Karma Yoga	...	...	...	0 12 0
Bhakti Yoga	...	...	...	0 8 0
Narada Bhakti Sutras	...	...	...	0 4 0
Path to Perfection	...	...	...	0 2 0
My Plan of Campaign	...	...	...	0 3 0

"The Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore Madras.

"The Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore, Madras.

TAMIL PUBLICATIONS**Life of Sri Ramakrishna**
(in Tamil)

A comprehensive account of the wonderful Life of the Saint of Dakshineswar.

Beautiful language—Excellent get-up—Demy 970 Pages with many pictures.

Price : Cloth Rs. 5.

(To Subscribers of "Ramakrishna Vijayam" Rs. 4-8-0)

Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda

(Vivekananda Jnana Deepam)

(in Tamil)

Contains Chicago lectures, Karma yogam & Raja yogam.

Excellent get-up

VOL. I Price Rs. 2.

	To subscribers of R.K. Vijayam	
	Ordinary	Rs. A. P.
Sri Ramakrishna Vaohanamritam Part I ...	1 8 0	1 6 0
Karma Yoga by Swami Vivekananda ...	0 12 0	0 10 0
The Universe and Man (By Swami Ramakrishnananda. ...	0 12 0	0 10 0
Bhakti Yogam ...	0 10 0	0 8 0
Life Sketch of Sri Ramakrishna by Swami Chidbhavananda ...	0 8 0	0 7 0
Life Sketch of Swami Vivekananda ...	0 8 0	...
Epistles of Swami Vivekananda Part I ...	0 8 0	0 6 0
India and Her Problem ...	0 8 0	0 7 0
Words of the Master by Swami Brahmananda Cloth ...	0 8 0	0 7 0
Do. Paper ...	0 5 0	0 4 0
Path of Devotion by Swami Paramananda ...	0 5 0	0 4 0
Chicago Address by Swami Vivekananda ...	0 5 0	0 4 0
Pavhari Baba ...	0 3 0	...
My Plan of Campaign by Swami Vivekananda. ...	0 3 0	...
God in Everything ...	0 2 0	...
Path to Perfection by Swami Ramakrishnananda ...	0 2 0	...
Nataraja Vadivam and Thillai Thirunadanam by Swami Vipulananda ...	0 2 0	0 1 6
Vidhivasam ...	0 0 6	...
Raja Yogam by Swami Vivekananda ...	1 4 0	1 2 0
Balabodha Vivekananda by Swami Kedareshwarananda ...	0 7 0	...
Sarada Devi Charitam ...	0 6 0	...

The "Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore, Madras.

Editors : Swami Amriteswarananda and Swami Tapanananda.
Publisher : Swami Hrishikeshananda.
Printed by : Mr. V. Sundaram Iyer at the Kesari Printing Works, Madras.

THE VEDANTA KESARI

September-1936

SCRIPTURAL LEAVEN OR LIVING WILL?

THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD

SAINT RAIDASA

THE HISTORICITY OF PROPHETS

Notes :: Reviews :: News

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH
MYLAPORE, MADRAS

Indian: Annually Rs. 3
Single Copy As. 6

Foreign: Annually Rs. 6
(\$ 2 or 8 Sh.)

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

(By 'M', a direct disciple of the Master)

IN TWO VOLUMES

It is in the form of conversations and reads like a novel. It presents Sri Ramakrishna's teachings in a dramatic setting, giving a vivid pen-picture of the occasions when they were delivered and the persons who listened to them. There is no problem of Spiritual Life that does not find solution therein.

"Socratic dialogues are Plato all over—You (author) are entirely hidden. Moreover, the dramatic part is infinitely beautiful. Everybody likes it—here or in the West."—*Swami Vivekananda*.

Price Each Volume, Cloth Rs. 2-8, Gilt Rs. 3.

UNIVERSAL PRAYERS

Selected and translated from
Sanskrit Religious Literature

By SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

Contents:—Introduction, viewing Prayer from different aspects Peace chant; Hymns and Stotras from the Vedas, the various Purana and the various Acharyas. Sanskrit on the left page and the English translation on the right page.

Most useful for daily devotion
Flexible Binding Excellent get-up

Foolscap 8 vo. over Pages 250. Price: Rs. 1-4-0.
To Subscribers of the Vedanta Kesari, Rs. 1-2-0.

WOMEN OF INDIA

By SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(A Lecture hitherto unpublished in India)

Here the Swami shows how the Indian ideal of Womanhood has perfected motherhood to its zenith in contradistinction to that of the West which has developed wifehood. But the ideal woman in the modern age must combine both of them.

Price As. 3.

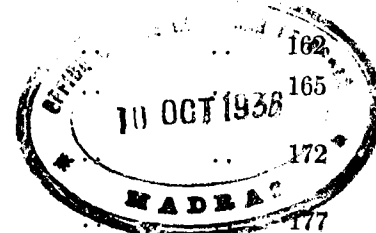
"The Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore, Madras.

THE VEDANTA KESARI

Vol. XXIII. SEPTEMBER, 1936.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Hindu Ethics	161
Sri Ramakrishna the Great Master By Swami Saradananda	162
The Doctrine of Transmigration—A Restatement Scriptural Leaven or Living Will? By Mrs. Rhys Davids, D. Litt., M.A.	165
Biogenesis versus Transmigration By Bhagavati Das	172
The Truth About God By P. V. S. Narayana, M.A., B.L.	181
Saint Raidasa By Ramchandra Tandan, M.A., LL.B.	183
The Historicity of Prophets By R. Ramakrishnan, M.A.	188
Reviews and Notices	194
News and Reports	197



Life of Sri Ramakrishna

(In English)

A detailed chronological account of the Master's wonderful life, based on the most authentic sources, with a foreword by Mahatma Gandhi.

With one tri-coloured and several half-tone portraits.
Price: Third Edition, BOARD Rs. 5. CLOTH Rs. 6-8.

Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna

(Third Edition)

This is the most exhaustive and comprehensive collection of the Master's sayings and parables. 1003 in number. Contains a valuable glossary. They are most Universal and Catholic in spirit and will suit all people irrespective of their creed or religion.

The sayings elucidate in a simple and forceful manner the fundamental truths of religion.

Crown 8 vo. pp. 340

Price Cloth Rs. 2.

Concession Price Re. 1.

Works By Swami Ramakrishnananda

Complete Works, Vol. I. Contains The Universe and Man, The Soul of Man, Path to Perfection, and Necessity of Religion.

A few remaining copies of the Old Edition.

Original Price Re. 1-8. **Reduced Price As. 8 only.**

Sri Krishna, the Pastoral and the King-maker.

(FOURTH EDITION)

This book gives a clear idea of the full and varied life of the Incarnation, Lord Sri Krishna. It reproduces faithfully and accurately the glowing narratives of Srimad Bhagavatam with all its wealth of descriptive detail. Price **As. 12.**

To Subscribers of V. K. As. 10.

Path to Perfection (3rd edition)	...	...	As. 4
(To Subscribers of V. K.)	...	...	3
True Self of Man	...	...	4
Wisdom and Devotion	...	...	4
Search after Happiness	...	...	12

"The Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore, Madras.

An Entirely New Publication.

BHEDABHEDA

OR

THE PHILOSOPHY BETWEEN SANKARA AND RAMANUJA

By P. N. SRINIVASACHARI, M.A.,

Professor of Philosophy, Pachaiyappa's College, Madras.

The author is a well-known writer on Indian Philosophy and his book, *Ramanuja's Idea of the Finite Self*, is recognised as a masterly introduction in English to the Philosophy of Ramanuja. In this book he has covered a new ground altogether and has given an exposition of the *Bhedabheda* Philosophy, a work which has not been attempted so far by anybody. The book is divided into two parts—(1) The Philosophy of Bhaskara; (2) Other schools of *Bhedabheda* Philosophy represented by Yadava, Nimbarka and Bhartriprapancha, and a comparison of *Bhedabheda* with similar Western systems. Prof. M. Hiriyanna of Mysore contributes an appreciative Foreword.

Printed on Superior Antique Paper. Cr. 8vo. about 400 pages **Rs. 5.**

SRINIVASA VARADACHARI & Co.,
PUBLISHERS, 190, MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS.

10 OCT 1938

CHYABANAPRASH)
RS 3 PER SEER

ADHYAKSHA MATHUR BABU

MAKARADHWAJA
RS. 4 PER TOLA

SAKTI OUSHADHALAYA-DACCA

Estd. 1901. Has brought about a new era in the Ayurvedic world
The premier, the cheapest and the most reliable Ayurvedic Medicinal concern in India.

Factory & Head Office—Dacca, Calcutta Head Office—52/1, Beadon Street, Calcutta Branches—Bowbazar, Shambazar, Barabazar, Chowrangi, Bhawanipur, Khidirpur. OTHER BRANCHES—Patuatuli, (Dacca) Netrokona, Mymensing, Sirajganj, Madaripur, Muttra, Sylhet, Berhampur, Chittagong, Kustia, Jalpaiguri, Rangpur, Midnapur, Khulna, Rajshahi, Bogra, Gauhati, Allahabad, Delhi, Gorakhpur, Gaya, Patna, Cawnpur, Bhagalpur, Cuttak, Lucknow, Benares, Kashi Chawk, Madras, Rangoon, Dacca Chawk, Narainganj, Jamshedpur, Chaumuhani (Noakhali), Tinsukia (Debrugarh), Bessein, Mandalay (Burma), Bombay Branch—411, Kalbadevi Road &c.

AMRITARISHTA--

Killer of Malaria
and all kinds of
fever. Rs. 3 per seer.

Shiddha Makara- dhwaja

Cures all kinds of
diseases such as Im-
potency, Typhoid
and Typhus fevers
&c., &c. Rs. 20 per tola.

Saragunabali jarita

Makaradhwaja
Rs. 8 per tola.

Mahabhringaraj

Taila
The best Ayur-
vedic hair oil.
Rs. 6 per seer.

H. E. Lord Lytton, Ex- Governor, Bengal, wrote:—

I was very interested to see
this remarkable factory
which owes its success to
the energy and enthusiasm
of its proprietor Babu
Mathura Mohan Chakra-
varty. The preparation of
indigenous drugs on so
large a scale is A VERY
GREAT ACHIEVEMENT.
The factory appeared to me
to be exceedingly well ma-
naged and well equipped,
and I hope that it may con-
tinue to prosper." 11-8-22.

**H. E. Sir Henry Wheeler,
Ex-Governor of Behar and
Orissa, wrote:—**".....I
had no idea that the manu-
facture of indigenous drugs
was carried on upon so large
a scale. The whole thing
bears marks of enterprise
and success." 29-7-20.

Saribadyarishta

(Saribadi Sarsa)
The best blood
purifier and Tonic.

Rs. 3 per seer.

Asoka Ghrita—

Cures Leucorrhoea,
Dysmenorrhoea,
Dysmanorrhagia,
Amenorrhoea, Me-
norrhagia, &c.

Rs. 6 per seer.

**Basanta Kusu-
makar Rash—**The
best remedy for
diabetes of all kinds.

Rs. 3 per week.

MRITASANJIBANI SURA (duly licensed by the Government) available in all our
Tele. 'SAKTI' Dacca.] Branches. [P. B. No. 6, Dacca.

Branches—All over India & Burma.

Proprietors—Mathura Mohan, Lal Mohan & Phanindra Mohan
Mukhopadhyaya, Chakravarty.

Managing Proprietor : Mathuramohan Mukhopadhyaya,
Chakravarty, B.A.

All letters, Money Orders, etc., should be sent in the name of the
Managing Proprietor.

Treatise on Ayurvedic Treatment & Catalogue sent free on application.

Srimad Bhagavat-Gita

with Sanskrit Text—word for word rendering—English
Translation—Notes: By Swami Swarupananda.

Excellent Get-up
Price Rs. 2-8.

THE UPANISHAD SERIES

By Swami Sharvananda

		Rs. A. P.
1. Isha Upanishad	(Second Edition)	0 6 0
2. Kena Upanishad	(Second Edition)	0 6 0
3. Katha Upanishad	(Second Edition)	0 12 0
4. Prasna Upanishad	(Third Edition)	0 10 0
5. Mundaka and Mandukya	(Third Edition)	0 12 0
6. Taittiriya Upanishad	(Second Edition)	0 14 0
7. Aitareya Upanishad	(First Edition)	0 6 0

(For Subscribers to "Vedanta Kesari," Price each As. 2 less)

Each of the above contains Introduction, Sanskrit Text, Paraphrase with word for word literal translation in English, Running translation and Comments.

Saint Durgacharan Nag

(The Life of an Ideal Householder)

The wonderful life of a householder disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, popularly known as Nag Mahashaya—about whom Swami Vivekananda said, "I have travelled far in different parts of the globe, but nowhere could I meet a great soul like Nag Mahashaya."

Price Re. 1.

To Subscribers of "Vedanta Kesari" As. 2 less.

INSPIRED TALKS

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(THIRD EDITION)

The book contains a series of inspiring conversations on various religious and philosophical topics during the Swami's seven weeks' stay at Thousand Island Park, America—recorded by a distinguished American lady disciple who had the rare privilege of sitting long at his feet. A few valuable notes also have been added where the Swami's utterances might appear to be abrupt and unconnected. The present volume is the first to give us the words spoken by him, so long hidden in the intimacy of an inner circle.

With portraits of the Swami and the house at Thousand Island Park

Price Paper Bound Re. 1-4; Cloth Bound Re. 1-12.

(To Subscribers of "The Vedanta Kesari", Each As. 2 less)



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

—Swami Vivekananda

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. XXIII]

SEPTEMBER 1936

[No. 5

HINDU ETHICS

सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं प्रियं वा यदि वा प्रियं
प्राप्तं प्राप्तमुपासीत हृदयेनापराजितः ।
शोकस्यानसहस्राणि भयस्यानशतानि च
दिवसे दिवसे मूढमाविशन्ति न पण्डितम् ।
बुद्धिमन्तं दृढज्ञं शुश्रूषुमहङ्कृतिम्
शान्ते जितेन्द्रियं चापि शोको न स्पृशते नरम् ।
यद्यत् त्यजति कामानां तत्सुखस्याभि पूर्यते
कामानुसारी पुरुषः कामाननु विनश्यति ।
यच्च कामसुखं लोको यच्च दिव्यं महत् सुखम्
तृष्णाक्षयसुखस्यैते नार्हतः षोडशीं कलाम् ।

Be it happy or miserable, pleasant or unpleasant, one ought to take up whatever that comes with a pushing, victorious mind. Innumerable grounds for grief and innumerable grounds for fear occur to an ignorant fool, but not to a wise man. Grief does not touch a man who is intelligent, provident, anxious to learn, free from egoism, calm, and controlled in senses. The more a man sheds his longings for enjoyments the more is he filled with pure joy. The person that pursues objects of lust dies a death at every endeavour. The joy that is derived in this world by fulfilling a sensuous desire and the great joy that is associated with the heavenly regions do not balance with even a sixteenth of the true happiness consequent upon the diminution of Thrishna or worldly hankering.

Mahabharatha, Santi Parva Ch. 173, Verses: 41, 42, 43, 46 & 47.

austerity you have only acquired this power? With half an anna I can easily do what your power has helped you to accomplish. How can I evaluate this power higher than the pittance spent by me.' This remark of the younger brother brought the elder one to his senses, and thenceforward he began to bestow his thoughts on God-realisation."

Supernatural powers increase egoism—the story of the death and revival of an elephant

In the course of his conversations the Master would try to teach us in various ways that these supernatural powers are quite worthless in the spiritual path and that they should be avoided by all means. We cannot refrain from recounting here another story told by the Master to bring out a similar moral: There was a Yogi who attained the power of infallibility through ascetic practices. As soon as he expressed his wish it would come to pass. By a mere command he could both kill and revive any one. One day the Yogi happened to meet on his way a pious monk who was found to be repeating the Lord's name and meditating upon Him always. The Yogi came to know also that the monk was living at a particular place for many years, uninterruptedly engaged in his devotional practices. The proud Yogi went to the lonely anchorite and said, "Well, you are praying to the Lord for such a long time; would you tell me what you have got thereby?" "What is there to be got, Sir?" replied the other. "I have no desire to get anything save God Himself; and that is not possible except through His grace. Hence I am going on calling upon Him so that some day or other

He may be pleased to have mercy on His humble servant." The puffed up Yogi remarked, "If you have got nothing at all, what is the good of this fruitless labour? Exert in a way that will bring you actual profit." At this the devotee kept quiet for a while and then said, "Well, sir, may I know what you have gained through your practices?" "What is the use of only just hearing about what I have achieved? Have an ocular proof of it," ejaculated the conceited Yogi, and turning at an elephant that was tied to a neighbouring tree he wished its immediate death. The elephant fell dead at once. Filled with pride the Yogi again ordered the dead elephant to come to life; and it stood up once more as before, moving its body. "Have you seen my power now?" the Yogi asked the pious anchorite standing by. Thereupon the devotee breaking his silence said, "What, after all, was there to be seen except that the elephant died and again came to life? But would you tell me how the death and the revival of the elephant concern you at all? Have you been saved from the cycle of repeated births and deaths by the attainment of this power? Have decay and disease left you? Or, have you realised the true nature of the indivisible Absolute that is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss?" These words dumbfounded the Yogi and brought him back to his senses.

Although Chandra* and Girija were far advanced along the path to God-realisation, yet they could not

*In June, 1899, Swami Vivekananda sailed for England and America for the second time. A little after that a gentleman suddenly came to Belur Math one day and made himself known as 'Chandra.' He stayed there for about a month and was

attain to complete perfection because of their supernatural powers and the egotism resulting from them. Contact with the Master made them conscious

found to be often engaged in private conversations with Swami Brahmananda (the then President of the Order) who used to live mostly at Belur Math in those days. We have heard him enquire of the Swami repeatedly whether he felt anything there, i.e., whether he perceived the living presence of the Master in the monastery, and so on.

The gentleman would say that all the prophecies of the Master about him had come true. Only one thing yet remained to be verified, viz., the Master's promise to appear before him at his last moment. He was wont to spend long hours in the shrine room in prayer and meditation with great devotion. His eyes would shed tears of love at such times. He took much delight in recounting his reminiscences of the Master, whenever requested to do so. He was very quiet by temperament. Finding him always seated quietly at one place and occasionally with closed eyes, one of the monks happened to ask him tauntingly whether he was in the habit of taking opium, whereupon he replied with great

of their defects, and as a result they proceeded again along the path of God with redoubled energy.

humility, "Pray, what offence have I done you to make you talk like that?"

While showing his respects on entering into the shrine for the first time, he addressed the Master's picture installed there, as 'Brother', and shed copious tears with an exuberance of devotional feelings. In appearance he was quite an ordinary man, having no demonstration of the ochre robes or any sectarian mark on the forehead. He had simply a piece of cloth on the loins, and another piece to cover the upper part of the body, an umbrella in the hand and a canvas hand-bag containing another piece of loin-cloth, a towel, and a tumbler for drinking water. As he told us, he would travel with this equipment from one place of pilgrimage to another. Swami Brahmananda showed him much respect and requested him to live permanently at the Belur Math itself. He too agreed to it and said he would return after making the necessary arrangements with regard to his landed properties and stay at the Math. But since then he has not turned up as yet. The above mentioned Chandra is probably identical with this gentleman.

THE DOCTRINE OF TRANSMIGRATION— A RESTATEMENT

[In the following article an attempt is made to restate the doctrine of the transmigration of souls in order to bring it in line with certain facts of science that seem to contradict the theory in some of its details as ordinarily understood. These scientific facts are treated in detail in another article entitled "Biogenesis versus Transmigration," published elsewhere in this issue, and the following paragraphs are by way of reflections on the points raised in that article. The lines of thought suggested here do not presume to be based on scriptures. They are entirely speculative, and are to be taken only as the writer's personal views on a doctrine which seems to require a restatement in view of some important findings of modern science.]

The Biological Point of View

WE draw the attention of our readers to the criticism of the doctrine of transmigration of souls from the point of view of the law of biogenesis, published elsewhere in this

issue. The criticism would appear relevant and forceful to any one who attaches some importance to the findings of science. We shall therefore consider in the following paragraphs whether it is possible to hold to the doctrine of transmigration without

doing violence to one of the fundamental laws of biology.

We shall begin by stating, for the benefit of our readers, the essential scientific facts which our contributor calls our attention to, and which have necessitated the present consideration of the doctrine of reincarnation. Leaving aside the question of the ultimate origin of life, it is an axiom of biology that no life comes out of previously non-living matter. The unit of live matter is the microscopic entity called the cell. The lowest forms of organism consist of a single cell, while the higher forms are made of large numbers of them according to their size and organisation. The birth of new living organisms from those already living take place in two ways. In the case of single-celled organisms, which form the lowest rung of the ladder of life, the cell, at a certain stage of development, breaks into two, and these in turn become two organisms capable of producing more of their type by the same process of splitting. In the case of organisms of higher development consisting of large numbers, sometimes of millions, of cells, the reproductive function is confined to certain specialised cells. While the rest of the cells are capable only of producing their kind and not a new organism as a whole, these specialised cells called the reproductive cells, when united with a similar cell coming from the opposite sex, are capable of producing a new organism. Two reproductive cells, when fertilised, as this process of their union is called, merge into each other so as to form a single cell, and then begin to split into new cells, as in the case of single-celled organisms; but in place of developing on independent lines as

in the latter case, they develop as a colony of closely organised cells, eventually giving rise to an organism of the same type as those from which the original cells came.

Now the question arises: if these are the facts of science, is there any reason for supposing that the new life thus produced is the result of a psychic being, a discarnate spirit, whose physical body has previously fallen off, getting into the reproductive cells that form the source of the new body? According to the hypothesis of reincarnation, as believed and explained commonly, it is something like that. But the obvious difficulty is that *even before the particular pair of reproductive cells started on their career of development as a new organism subsequent to the process of fertilisation, they were living entities*. Why should then life be connected with the entry of a discarnate spirit into them?

In the case of single-celled organisms the difficulty takes another shape. On the hypothesis that it is the presence of a psychic entity that originates life in every form of living matter, we have to suppose either that the original psyche or Jiva has split itself into two, when the cell splits, or that new ones have entered into the two divisions of the cell. The first hypothesis is by its very nature unacceptable, while the second one, in spite of its bewildering nature, would have been acceptable, had it not been for certain facts we observe even without any scientific apparatus. For example, an earth-worm may be cut into small pieces, but all the pieces will survive the cutting operation and develop into new earth-worms. The process of cutting in no way affects the property of life in the

cells of the earth-worm; they were living before, and continue to do so afterwards. The intervention of a discarnate spirit seems to be quite unnecessary here for the origination and maintenance of life. The case of single-celled organisms does not seem to differ from this. In fact these organisms at the lower stages of evolution seem to differ from those at higher stages in that the central organisation of life in them seems to be very loose, and that there is in them practically no power-house holding within itself the dynamo of life, by severance from which all the cells constituting the organism may be deprived of their property of living.

This seems to us to be the sum and substance of the objection raised by our contributor to the theory of reincarnation. The objection is quite valid and requires the careful consideration from all who hold the doctrine of transmigration in esteem. It is therefore worthwhile for us to bestow some thought on the question and ascertain whether the doctrine of reincarnation and of the embodiment of discarnate spirits in new bodies can be reconciled with these findings of biology. Obviously we have to give up the idea that wherever life is present, a psyche, an ego, a soul or whatever else we may call it, must also be present. And in fact according to some modern scholars, such a pan-psychic conception is not envisaged by the older Hindu scriptures. They opine that it is a later development resulting largely from the rise of animal stories, of the penal code of the Smṛiti literature, of the Buddhist Jātakas and of the eschatological wild-growths of imaginative Purāṇas. In consistency with the spiritual view of the universe, one may

fall back on the doctrine of Christian theology that the soul is a special endowment of man, that it is created with the origin of the body, and that it survives the body but is never re-born—thus wiping away the doctrine of reincarnation from the list of one's theological beliefs. But then all the moral and philosophical difficulties associated with the Christian belief will arise, and drive us back to the theory of reincarnation. Moreover, the Hindus maintain that the memory of several links in one's past births can be revived by men of great spiritual powers, and as such the theory of reincarnation is said to stand on an experiential basis apart from its purely speculative value. Hence the doctrine cannot be given up so lightly but has to be restated and reconciled with facts of science.

The Cell and the Ego

We shall attempt this reconciliation by first of all defining from our point of view, a cell and an ego—the two factors concerned in this discussion. A cell is a piece of living matter having a purely physical history traceable to the original protoplasm from which life must be supposed to have developed. An ego, on the other hand, is a non-dimensional psychic entity with a purely mental history. It used to be the contention of the old school of materialists that the ego is purely a product of the physical activities of the living cells, and being thus dependent on them, would cease to exist with the cessation of the physical and chemical processes that constitute the life of the cells. Our contributor's point of view too will tend towards this conclusion, when all its implications are fully developed. But it must be remember-

ed that the survival of the ego is a subject which pure physical science can never take cognisance of; for a disembodied ego is a mental entity which no physical apparatus can contact with in the absence of a material embodiment. Besides this, according to some eminent biologists like Hans Driesch, the theory of psycho-physical parallelism and the dependence of mind on matter have no substantial basis. Together with this fact has to be taken into account the findings of modern psychical research which, through the efforts of many eminent scientists, has been raised from a fad and a fake to a position deserving the respectable name of a science. The conclusion hitherto arrived at by this line of research also is that the ego or mind has a separate existence from its physical accompaniment and that it survives the body in which it was previously embodied. To those who are interested in this line of study the writings of Hans Driesch, the eminent biologist and philosopher, will give the scientific facts and arguments connected with it. Our purpose in drawing attention to this question is only to show that the line of distinction we have drawn between a cell and an ego is not without scientific foundation, and that when the ego is described as something having a mental history, the history referred to is not exhausted by that of any single material embodiment.

From the Unconscious to the Self-Conscious

The line of distinction we have drawn between the ego and the cell is tentative, and its full implication cannot be developed until we have considered the relation between living and non-living matter. It is general-

ly presumed that living matter which forms the bodies of creatures is entirely discontinuous with non-living or brute matter that forms the world we see around us. Although science has not yet been able to give convincing proof against this belief, enough has been done to give substantial ground for holding that living matter is after all only the same brute matter in a higher state of organisation, and that structurally there is very great resemblance between them. For example at least four of the fundamental characteristics of living matter are shared by the supposedly inanimate atoms also. Each atom has a definite structure and unity of behaviour, all the parts within it acting not as a kind of loose aggregate but as subject to the configuration of the whole. One order of atoms is distinct from another and each maintains its distinction. Thus self-maintenance and structural organisation, the first law of life, is present in them. In the next place the atom is not passive, but like life is a centre of seething, palpitating energies and activities. The difference is only in the character of activities. And lastly certain atoms have been seen to change their order by internal transformations, as when helium changes into radium and lead. The origin of atomic species may become an interesting branch of study in the future. General Smuts in his book on Holism suggests and elaborately argues that colloid matter, which forms so important a subject of study in modern science, may in all probability be the missing link between the living and the non-living. These facts show that the distinction between brute matter and living matter is not one over which a bridge cannot be thrown. Science is on the

way of showing that brute matter is not as dead as it is supposed to be and that living matter is nothing other than the same brute matter at a higher state of evolution and a more complex state of organisation.

It must not be supposed that we are hereby reducing life into inorganic matter in the approved fashion of the mechanistic view of Reality. On the other hand our attempt is to show that life is the *first manifestation of the spiritual potentialities of matter*. According to no less an authority than Eddington, the advances made in the study of physics in modern times tend to show that the stuff of Reality is more akin to consciousness than to our popular conceptions of matter, and that the latter can at best be conceived only as the crust of Reality. This is in agreement with the Indian idea that matter is nothing but a degradation or gross manifestation of Spirit, and that it is a state in which the Spirit remains veiled or hidden. Evolution in that case is the gradual manifestation of the Spirit that is involved in gross matter, and its culmination must be supposed to be reached when Spirit recognises itself as such. In the scale of evolution gross matter occupies the lowest place, but a higher stage is reached when the living protoplasm makes its appearance. The evolution of living matter from inorganic matter need not be taken as spontaneous generation, in the first place because the contrast between the living and the non-living is not as absolute as is commonly supposed, and in the next place because evolution conveys the idea of a gradual development according to some law unlike spontaneous generation which signifies a break of continuity. The former is the

sudden outburst into the manifested condition, of an *involved purpose* that has long been in the process of incubation.

Now life in its early stages need not be conceived as endowed with a mind or ego,—a psychical history, if we may use our descriptive phrase, just as matter in its primeval condition need not be thought of as possessing life, although from the spiritual point of view the possibility or potentiality of such development must be conceded in both the cases. The living cell in the early stages of development has only a physical history like that of the atom, its only difference from the latter being in some of its workings. It is however in the process of developing the ego as the atom is in the process of evolving life. At what stage of the development of life the ego first makes its appearance is a question that cannot be settled. It can be said that self-consciousness is the sign of the birth of the ego; but it is difficult to determine at what point of evolution this faculty comes into existence. To credit rudimentary forms of life like a reproductive cell or a single celled organism with self-consciousness is to draw too freely on the bank of guess-work. At least we have absolutely no evidence in support of such a conclusion. In fact it is only in the case of man that we can say with certainty that there is self-consciousness and that an ego is consequently present. The progress of the study of animal psychology may perhaps show in future that even many of the higher varieties of sub-human species are endowed with this faculty.

The three points which we wish to emphasise as the result of this discussion are (1) that a living cell or

organism at a low state of development need not be credited with an ego, (2) that the ego comes into being only in the higher stages of life's evolution and (3) that hence we need not always associate life with the presence of an ego. If we are prepared to grant this, we can get over the incompatibility that our contributor points out between the theory of the transmigration of the ego and the law of biogenesis. For the chief difficulty here is that *we know a reproductive cell to be endowed with life even before it starts on its career as a new organism*, or in other words life is not a property that it comes to possess by virtue of a transmigrating ego gaining entrance into it but a faculty which it had at its very inception as a new cell by virtue of its unbroken continuity from the original protoplasm. If we grant that there is no invariable relation between life and ego, that the ego is only a later manifestation in the evolution of life, the difficulty pointed out above is automatically overcome. But then we have to give up one of our pet notions that *wherever there is life there is an ego, a jiva*. With that we shall also have to abandon our habit of thought attributing a soul, a transmigrating psyche, to a vast body of living organisms, on the ground that there is in them no evidence of self-consciousness that warrants a background of psychical history.

Having arrived at some definite idea regarding the relation between life and ego, we may now consider further as to what is meant by the transmigration of the ego. We said before that in matter the spirit is latent but unconscious; in life, at least in its higher stages, it gradually comes to consciousness; in the ego,

however, it becomes self-conscious. Self-consciousness may be described as the capacity to introspect and feel the distinctness of selfhood and its continuity. It is accompanied by consciousness of free will, and is the basis of rationality and moral experience. We can infer the presence of self-consciousness only in those forms of life where there is an indication of some of the above mentioned features, in however imperfect a form they might be. In man it is distinctively present, but whether any of the sub-human species possess it or not, we cannot say with certainty owing to our lack of insight into animal psychology.

The birth of the ego, as that of life and consciousness in the earlier stages of evolution, must be regarded as a sudden leap, an emergence which suddenly brings into light a new phase of the evolutionary purpose. It is an efflorescence of the Spirit and marks a distinct stage in its progress towards self-revelation. The ego makes its appearance only when the biological organism has become perfectly developed so as to be a suitable instrument for its manifestation and workings, even as the protoplasm of life emerges only after the material environment in the earth becomes adapted for its origin and growth. The function of organisms below the stage of self-consciousness is just to lead to that state in which the ego first emerges. Once the ego comes into being, it does not perish with the decay of the biological organism but migrates from body to body gathering experience and facilitating more and more the self-revelation of the Spirit. In this process the ego, no doubt, changes, but change does not mean death or destruction; even as in the

case of changes in the living body. The thread of continuity is kept on, each stage impressing itself upon, and gliding into, the succeeding stage. Hence in spite of the change, one may speak of the same ego as involved in the process.

Or if this evolutionary view of the ego is not acceptable, one may shelve aside the difficulty by taking shelter in the Hindu theory of eternity of creation and cyclic process of cosmic manifestation and withdrawal. Creation being eternal, one need not enquire how the egos come to be, but rest satisfied that at all stages of world's history there are egos ready for embodiment. When in the course of evolution the physical and biological conditions become suited for their embodiment, the egos take birth in bodies which the evolutionary purpose has for long been preparing and perfecting for their advent. Except that it avoids speculation on the origin and growth of the ego, this view does not in any way alter the general position stated by us.

Identification versus Entry

In our conception of the transmigrating process also, we shall have to abandon our crudely materialistic symbols of thought. As we have seen before, the mere phenomenon of life need not in any way be associated with the presence of an ego or Jiva, and accordingly even in those species of beings endowed with self-consciousness, the cells that go to originate a new organism are living entities even prior to their association with an ego. In other words the ego or Jiva is not to be conceived as a hard substance which penetrates into some non-living stuff and brings it into life. It is on the other hand an organisation of

mind with a definite psychic history; and it is more appropriate to speak of the ego as identifying itself with, than entering into, an already living and developing organism of the suitable type, at some stage of its growth which we cannot definitely ascertain. For, the conception of 'identification' is peculiarly mental unlike that of 'entering' which is essentially a material symbol. Identification conveys the sense of unity of experience without any implication of mergence of entity or of a merely mechanical type of connection. In the higher organisms, in man for example, the vital or merely biological phenomena do not originate from the ego, although it may control them. But all the higher powers of man, self-consciousness, personality, free will, rationality, moral experience and aesthetic appreciation, are directly connected with the presence of the ego; for the ego is the medium for the manifestation of these higher 'glories' of the Spirit which underlies all existence. As long as the biological properties of a body remain intact and suited to the habitation and development of the ego, the ego continues to identify itself with that body. But with the death of the body, it is forced to abandon its connection with it and identify itself with a fresh body. And so it goes on from body to body, gathering more and more of experience, and manifesting more and more of the Spirit's glory, until by perfect purification and spiritual enlightenment it develops from self-consciousness to super-consciousness—the state in which the Spirit attains the fullest self-revelation. Here the ego comes to the fulfilment of its purpose, and in the shock of final super-conscious illumination, it may be

described as dying in the Spirit by recognising its essence to be the Spirit itself. Or if the figure is changed and the final illumination is interpreted as Jiva recognising the identity of its nature with the Spirit and not as the merging of its entity, then the ego must be described as realising itself to be a manifestation of the Spirit, solely dependent on it and surviving as a conscious instrument of it. Whatever metaphors we might employ and in whatever philosophical concepts we might clothe the idea, the Spirit involved in nature gains the fullest self-revelation when the ego attains the super-conscious state.

Nature, the Sweet Nurse

Thus the path of evolution is from unconsciousness to life, from life to consciousness, from consciousness to self-consciousness, and from self-

consciousness to super-consciousness. And when super-consciousness is reached, there is no more transmigration; for "Nature's task is done, this unselfish task which our sweet nurse, Nature, had imposed upon herself. She gently took the self-forgetting soul by the hand, as it were, and showed it all the experiences of the universe, all manifestations, bringing it higher and higher through various bodies, till its lost glory came back, and it remembered its own nature. Then the kind mother went back the same way she came, for others who also have lost their way in the trackless desert of life. And thus is she working, without beginning and without end. And thus through pleasure and pain, through good and evil, the infinite river of souls is flowing into the ocean of perfection of self-realisation."

SCRIPTURAL LEAVEN OR LIVING WILL?

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

[The article of Prof. Ghosh, on which Mrs. Rhys Davids comments in the following paragraphs, appeared in the April issue of the Vedanta Kesari. At the end of the article is printed what Prof. Ghosh has to say on the comments. We wish to say here a word on a new point raised by Mrs. Rhys Davids, namely, the growing influence of the philosophy of Immanence on Western theology. Cannot India claim some credit for this new movement? Are we to suppose that all the vast body of Indian religious and philosophical literature translated into European languages by Western scholars, and the work and writings of great Indian prophets and thinkers like Swami Vivekananda, Tagore, Gandhi, Radhakrishnan, etc., have had no influence on Christian thinkers of the West? It is true that in Neo-Platonism and in early Christian thought influenced by it the doctrine of Immanence is to be found. This literature was however, in existence for so many centuries, but why is it Christian thinkers of the West did not turn to it for inspiration till recent times? We feel that the influx of Vedantic thought into the West in various ways during the past one or two centuries together with the new situation created by the growth of science must have been mainly responsible for at least drawing the attention of Christian thinkers to their old heritage of Neo-Platonism. Leavening, especially in the realm of higher thought, is done more in these subtle and indirect ways than through directly traceable measures or violent methods of propaganda. We are prepared to admit that similar influence has been exercised by Christian teaching on Indian religious thought

too, especially in focussing the attention of modern Hindus on those aspects of their scriptures that teach true service to be the best form of spiritual discipline.]

IN introducing an article by Professor Ghosh to readers of the *Vedanta Kesari*, the editor has suggested, that he will welcome discussion of its 'line of study.' Writer and readers may well welcome the invitation, whether ensuing discussion be wise and pertinent, or the reverse. The article will take on prolonged vitality, and the writer will be enabled to see where he has made due impression, or where by some defect, either his own, or that of commenting writers, he has failed to carry them with him. In the comment I here submit, I make a criticism and a suggestion.

In the first place I submit, that the author has failed to make subject-matter fit title. He contends that 'a leavening' by Vedantic thought may be found in much contemporary thought of Western literature, notably in that of philosophy. Ancient European thought is intentionally put on one side. But a vast field remains, and brevity was imperative, limiting him to the citation of but a few instances. These few instances are, I venture to submit, not cases where a historical leaven has been at work, with the exception of Schopenhauer and Deussen. They are only quasi-*parallels* between Vedantic and European thought. He suggests, nay, he affirms, that in the Gifford Lectures, the late J. S. Haldane, and, in an unnamed book, Bishop D'Arcy each betrays what amounts to a 'confirmation' of two Vedantic standpoints. Of the former case he gives no proof, nor for the latter does he make out that there is more than a remarkable parallel. In the 'emphasis,' laid by

the Italian Gentile and the late Vivekananda, 'on action,' he finds a 'a ripple' as if of a felt vibration. But he admits that this is actually only a parallel. He refers to Fichte, Kant and Hegel, but gives no evidence that any one of these moved Schopenhauer or Deussen in the direction of Vedantic thought. And of the remarkable use made by Hegel of the concept of *Werden* (*bhava*), reminding us of the way in which early Vedanta was, as it were, seeking to rationalize its doctrine of Immanence, he makes no mention. Not that even here was there more than a notable parallel. Leavening goes behind the 'parallel' and shows us some energizing influence exercised by an earlier scripture. I am not saying that proof of such influence might not be shown; I only say it has not been shown so as to justify the title.

Of the two cases where a leavening is more plausibly to be assumed, and of these taking only Schopenhauer, it is not made clear how far anything making for lasting influence in his writings was due to the fact that he had read and enthused about a bad translation of the Upanishads. We know him in the West mainly for (a) his rationalized pessimism, (b) his awakening of Europe to the importance of the will. The former tendency (a) he may have derived from India, but it will have been from a degenerate Vedantism, not from the high message of religious hope and strength in the early Upanishads. And the latter (b) he can scarcely have derived from these. Whereas in *kama*, and in *kratu* also, they had a fine term for will,—*manas* too was as volitional as it was intellectual;

(*samkalpa* was an inadequate emergence)—the Upanishads never developed Yajnavalkya's great utterance of man's nature as of *kama*, *kratu*, *karma*. They left it sterile, and suffered the word *kama* to degenerate, swamped in upgrowing monasticism, *kratu* to die out, and *karma*, from being *matter* for adjudication, to become a dummy adjudicator at the post-mortem tribunal. Schopenhauer made 'will' usurp the position of man the 'willer,' but in shooting over the mark, he roused the philosophic conscience of the West. Yet we hear nothing of actual leavening by Indian thought; nor, for that matter, when Gentile is adduced, do we get behind 'action' to will.

I believe that the religion and philosophy of Immanence, which is put forward as a new message of tremendous vibrant significance in early Vedanta, has yet a great part to play in Western thought, but this article does not show any present tendency towards Immanence as the *result* of any knowledge of Vedanta. If here and there I now seem to see it faintly showing in, say, Western theology, this is due more to the Johannine valedictory utterances of Jesus and to Neo-Platonism, than to any Vedantic leaven.

And yet—and here I come to my 'suggestion'—it is at times hard to believe that *nothing* has ever supervened in mediæval Christian writings to inspire the writer. It is a subject I have neither space nor competence to go into, but to take one case only:—when we see St. Catherine of Genoa, in the 15th century, writing thus: (I quote from memory)—“My God is Me, not by simple participation but by a process of gradual

transformation,” we are amazed.* Not merely at the virtual restatement of the Upanisadic formula of Immanence, but at the way in which she improves on and rationalizes it. Yet her biographer Von Hugel makes no comment about 'leaven,' and for the saint access to Indian literature will have been out of the question. Are we then to call such utterances just parallels, wherein Eastern sayer and Western writer have, through causes somehow similar, been driven to express themselves in similar terms?

Now here I go further than Indian writers of to-day in general and the present writer in particular appear to have gone. I do believe that 'leavening' of one age by another, of one culture by another, is possible and is true. And it is not in this case the result of scripture exercised directly or indirectly. It is a leavening of a man by a man. And what I testify is the result of some years of personal experience. Hereby I have come to hold certain things as verities, if only subjectively valid. Namely, I believe in an indefinitely great power of will as a possible development even in this much handicapped earth-body. Telepathy, or, better, televolution, known and taught by a saintly Brahman of forgotten name when the Buddhist movement began, and annexed his teaching, is now coming to be recognised scientifically.

Next, I believe in the indefinitely greater power of will wielded by man in the next world, and next world to that (*svarga* and *Brahmaloka*). Next, I believe in the emergence, as man in these becomes

*It was Mr. Edmond Holmes who told me of her.

a More in his long wayfaring, of the long memory of his former lives, it may be a gradual, a partial emergence. Lastly, I believe in the power and the will of the worthy in those two worlds to visit us of earth who may be trying to live our best and help others, and, in visiting, even where unseen and unheard, *to will us* with the knowledge they now have as stored in that longer memory. In the light of these four 'verities' it is possible to understand how a St. Catherine, in fifteenth century Genoa, could receive and express a teaching from an unseen willer, himself or herself mindful of what, in a former life, he or she had been taught some thousand years earlier in India.

My sceptical Hindu brethren may say I labour under a form of *maya*, or indeed of *moha*. My sceptical Christian brethren may say no less. Yet why should we accept, with at least respect, the testimony of the Sakyamuni and his men, of the boy Samuel and the judge Eli, of Jesus, of Peter, Paul, Mohammed and many

more, and scout such experience as impossible for ourselves?

Or am I doing Professor Ghosh wrong in classing him with the usual sceptic, when it may be, he means by 'leaven' precisely this psychic inspiration of modern men in the West by men in the unseen, modern no less, yet who may have so *grown* as to remember the wisdom they once knew on earth? Does he shrink, in a world, where narrow knowledge still provokes the sneer, from telling us more clearly what he means by 'leaven'?

Be that as it may, I have here outlined what it has largely come to mean for me. And I would beg readers to consider it sanely and soberly, in that it opens up the possibility of a great More in life, not only in the life of a few elect men, but as within the scope and power of any earnest man and woman, ay, and any modern child Samuel—"Speak! Lord, for thy servant heareth!"—who single-mindedly desire to learn the true under the warding will of the Highest.

A NOTE ON THE ABOVE

Mrs. Rhys Davids has done me the honour of a critical review of my paper on the Vedantic Leaven published in the last April Number of the *Vedanta Kesari*. I welcome her conclusions, a note of disagreement notwithstanding. My paper was not primarily a piece of historical research, it was a theological confession of faith. I accept the suggestion that what appears to be merely historical parallels in case of the authorities cited by me may, ought one knows, be due to the working of the Vedantic Leaven. The theory that the leavening has been

brought about by occult causes or post-mortem psychical influences cannot be rationally refuted. But so much indigestible material has got mixed up in esoteric psychology that I do not feel competent to offer any opinion on the matter. The conclusion that one culture or faith is permeated by another has come to me in a deductive way. The spiritual values, or for the matter of that, the truths of the historic faiths of the world stand to one another, to borrow an expression of Whitehead's, in a relation of pre-hension. They are all subject to

the law of active participation in virtue of which each is immanent in all, all in each. This is the metaphysical background that leads me to claim for the Vedantic Leaven no more than Clement of Alexandria in the second century and Count Tolstoy in the nineteenth century claimed for the Christ-spirit. It is a commonplace of scriptural interpretation that the truth of divine message transcends its historic embodiments. As such the Vedantic Ideal is eternal as much as the Christ-spirit. These ideals are creative and interpenetrative. That the apparently divergent ideals of the historical religions go to the making of the common spiritual atmosphere of the race is with me an article of faith. They are elemental in a deeper and profounder sense than physical ingredients. So their inter-leavening is not a hypothesis, nor an induction culled in the region of an occult science but an indisputable fact of spiritual experience. I crave to be judged in the light of this experience.

In other words, the religious consciousness of man is in an intimate sense *en-rapport* with the ultimate nature of things. The law of Epigenesis or Creative Synthesis runs

through them all. This brings about the reconciliation and inter-leavening of values at successive stages of human achievement till we come to the Vedantic synthesis in one race and Christian synthesis in another. It is the working of the same law that has brought these two master-ideas into contact at many points of modern life and thought. Hence I have fully claimed that wherever there is the recognition of the identity of the Divine and human soul, the acceptance of the method of self-realisation through self-transcendence, the Vedantic Leaven is at work. Similarly I readily concede to a thinker like Tolstoy who claims that Christian Leaven is functioning wherever God is recognised as distinctly the other, where self-abnegating love is at work, where the law is fulfilled through bearing of one another's burden. Not simply Vedanta and the Christ-spirit but all faiths are in all men. As in biology so in religious experience, the ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny. Historic confirmation of this may be long in coming, but something in me whispers that these are the rudiments of a theology of to-morrow.

Prof. K. S. Ghosh.

BIOGENESIS VERSUS TRANSMIGRATION

By Bhagavati Das

[The following article draws the reader's attention to certain scientific facts that raise some difficulties in the way of accepting the doctrine of transmigration of souls, at least in the form it is usually presented. We must state here that the writer himself is a pious Hindu, and he has written this article and we publish it in the spirit of disinterested quest after truth, so characteristic of Hinduism. Science and religion do not really contradict each other. When a contradiction really appears, it does not prove the defeat of either but only points to the need of a higher synthesis. Our object therefore is only to draw the attention of Hindu thinkers to this need, and not to refute the doctrine of transmigration of souls. As suggested by the writer towards the close of this article, we shall be glad to publish brief and well-written writings, discussing the points raised herein. We have given one possible way of solving the difficulty in the article entitled "Doctrine of Transmigration—a Restatement," appearing elsewhere in this issue.]

THE doctrines of *Karma* and transmigration have been accepted from immemorial times by all schools of philosophies and theologies in India—Vedic, Puranic, Tantric, Sankhya, Vaisesika, Nyaya, Yoga, Jaina and Buddhist, the Charvakas or the materialists being the only exception. It is one of the fundamental beliefs of all these schools of thought that the soul must undergo numerous births, gathering experience in different grades of existence beginning with lowliest vegetable life. It has got to pass through the stages of germs, insects and animals, and come finally to be embodied as human being; or it may even receive the etherial bodies of Devas, Gandharvas, and other unearthly beings, and thus complete its evolution, finally attaining to liberation, called variously as *Moksha*, *Nirvana* or *Kaivalya*. While there are differences of belief among different sects as regards the sojourn of the soul in the interval between a death and a birth on this earth, the number and kinds of bodies and the worlds into which it migrates and the mechanisms of transmigration, the essential ideas common to

all are the continued identity of the soul through all these migrations, its repeated severance from the physical body at death and its repeated re-entrance into other bodies at birth. Admittedly there is a persistent continuity of the subtle body (*Sukshma Sarira*) composed of *Manas*, *Prana* or vital energies, *Jnanendriyas* or five senses of perception, *Karmendriyas* or five seats of activities of different organs and the *Dhi* or intellect. Throughout the course of its migrations, there is, however, repeated discontinuity of the physical body or *Sthulasarira* by severance from the subtle body in death. The theory cannot dispense with the idea of the continued individuality of the soul which remains intact and unbroken, and of its existence as an individual separate from every other, throughout the course of its migrations. A *Jiva* is a distinct individual separate from every other even for Adwaitins in the *Vyavaharika* or relative planes, though they deny any kind of duality in the Atman from the standpoint of *Paramartha* or Absolute Truth. Further the *Jiva* or the living being in a particular body

is a single indivisible entity which is to be distinguished from every other Jiva by the individuality of the body which it inhabits. These are essential ideas for the doctrine of transmigration.

Now, I wish to place before the readers certain scientific facts which seem to go against the hypothesis of transmigration. The evidential value of these facts would not have been much, if they had only not lent any support to the doctrine. Their significance for us lies in that they supply positive evidence which goes against that theory.

These data which present such a formidable front to the theory of transmigration are chiefly those discovered with regard to the process of reproduction by which new living beings take birth in this world. While it must be admitted that the whole mystery behind the birth of a new organism has not been unravelled by science, still there is a body of facts connected with it, well-attested by all eminent biologists and the knowledge of which has passed into the common possession of all students of biology and which leaves no room for doubt as to the nature of the process itself.

What, then, are these facts? It is now well established by biology that all organisms are either single corpuscles of living matter or are built up of a large number of such corpuscles, known as cells. Every organism, reproduced in the ordinary way, begins its life as a single cell. The simplest organisms rarely get beyond this stage; almost all of them remain strictly unicellular. But in all other cases the original single cell in which the individual life begins, the fertilised ovum, divides itself into two, each of these again into two and

so on. Thus through the process of division they multiply into a coherent mass of cells, and gradually give rise to a more or less complex body, a multicellular organism. The cells represent elementary organisms that are not composed of lower units capable of life. Among the vital phenomena which cells are seen to exhibit before microscopic examination none is so strikingly distinctive of living matter as is this process of cell division. By the continued division of an original germ-cell or egg-cell all the tissue cells of a multicellular animal arise and the germ-cell or egg-cell itself arises in the parent body from other cells by cell division. The rapid advance of biological research is continually adding weight to the conclusion reached years ago that every cell originates by division of some pre-existing cell (*omnis cellula e cellulae*). This is now regarded as one of the fundamental laws of biology; and obviously it is a corollary of the biogenetic law which states that *all living matter, known to exist only in cells, originates from pre-existing living matter*. No spontaneous generation of cells occur either in plants or in animals. The many millions of cells of which, for instance, the body of a vertebrate animal is composed, have been produced by repeated division of one cell, the fertilised ovum, in which the life of every animal commences.

All forms of reproduction fall under one or other of two heads; (a) Agamogenesis or asexual reproduction in which the detached portion (which may be either a single cell or a group of cells) has the power to develop into a new individual without the influence of other living matter—as in protista and the earth-worm; (b)

Gamogenesis or sexual reproduction in which the detached portion, in this case always a single cell (ovum), is acted upon by a second portion of living matter (the sperm), likewise a single cell, which, in most cases, has been detached from the body of another individual, the male. In sexual reproduction the two fuse together (this process is called fertilisation) to form a single new cell (the zygote) endowed with the power of developing into a new individual by fission (mitosis). In multicellular species certain cells are exclusively retained as germ-cells distinct from other cells of the body. While the latter cells may reproduce only tissue cells, the germ-cells can reproduce cells which develop into a complete organism of the species, comprising many kinds of tissues and the protoplasm of future germ-cells. These cells contain a share of the protoplasm from which the parent came. Thus there is a continuity of protoplasm, and any living being of to-day has within it protoplasm derived from its earliest ancestor.

What do these facts signify? Here is an amoeba, the simplest known living creature. Let us look at it through the microscope; we find it dividing itself into two individuals, each of these again dividing itself into two new individuals giving rise to four germs, these again into eight and so on, until a host of them are reproduced in a few minutes under our eyes. Let us cut a star-fish into two halves. Each half, we notice, sprouts new arms and becomes a whole star-fish. What meaning has this for us. Are we to infer that a Jiva or *linga-sarira* enters into the parent amoeba cell before every moment of fission and tears away a part of it for its habita-

tion? Even if all cases of natural reproduction by cell division are supposed to be due to the entry of a disembodied agent into the physical frame, are we to infer the same process occurring every time we arbitrarily cut an earth-worm into small sections each of which we could notice developing into a complete individual of the same species in due time? Granting for the sake of argument that a *linga-sarira* can exist without a physical frame and that it can enter a physical body from outside, still we are precluded from making the foregoing inference in recognition of the fact *that life already existed in the two dividing parts before the division started*. Further we must add that we cannot think of a living physical body, however low in evolution, without a soul or Jiva which is responsible for the life activities of the physical body. If it were not so, there would have been room for inferring the entry of a fresh soul. Well, then, we have to say that these individuals did not exist as separate entities in the parent bodies, and that their separate individualities started with the separate individualities of the bodies. A moment before one body and one Jiva, and the next moment two or more bodies and as many Jivas!

Such a conclusion seems to be rather fantastic, if not absurd.

Equally wonderful to contemplate is the mystery that attends the phenomenon of two germs coming together and fusing into a single cell, which can be seen under a microscope. And this exactly is the process by which all the higher orders of living creatures have started life. Two living germ-cells, having entirely different individualities, unite together

to form a single tiny cell which grows in course of time into a fully developed organism. We find here that inspite of the difference in their individualities before their union they develop into a single individual after that. Our ideas of individuality or personality or Jivahood has certainly to be revised in the light of these facts.

What is the bearing of these facts on the doctrine of transmigration? First of all there is no persistence of the same individual after a cell division or cell fusion. The greater is this mutation in the case of the higher species where both these processes are required for the birth of an individual. The three ideas *viz.*, the indivisible unity, persisting identity, and separate existence at all times of every Jiva from all other Jivas, so essential for the doctrine of transmigration, are directly contradicted by the facts of biogenesis.

Secondly biogenesis shows that leaving off one body by complete severance from it is unnecessary for the Jiva's birth in another. On the other hand, it shows conclusively, to quote Caroline E. Stackpole, "an unbroken material (protoplasmic) continuity from one generation to another that forms the physical basis of inheritance and upon which the integrity of the species depends. As far as known, living things never arise save through this process. In other words every mass of existing protoplasm is the last link in an *unbroken chain* that extends backward in the past to the first origin of life." Thus there was no time when any of the present Jivas living in a material body existed apart from a physical basis. The idea of its repeated severance from the body, an idea so essential for the doctrine of transmi-

gration, is also thus precluded. Those who wish to maintain that the individual repeatedly dies at every occurrence of division may use the word 'death', seeing that the parent cell does not continue any more *as such*, but then it will be a case of quibbling and we are not concerned with verbal controversies. The word 'dead' applied in this context cannot have more than a figurative meaning, for the so-called 'dead' individual continues to live in the two individuals into which it has divided itself and there has been no *corpse*. The conclusion is inevitable that no Jiva existing in a present body has ever died before, it has never been without its physical abode, it never *left one* to seek another. Nor is it possible to claim the privilege of transmigration for human beings alone exempting them from the application of biogenetic objections to the doctrine on the ground of their being better organised and evolved individualities, and contending that the objections are valid only in regard to the lower creatures; for we have seen that the process of reproduction, *viz.*, cell division and cell fusion, is essentially the same for all organisms *not excluding* man. Therefore the implications of the foregoing biogenetic law must apply as much to the human species as to the sub-human species.

Biogenesis thus excludes the need as well as the possibility of a disembodied spirit entering into living or non-living matter for rebirth. And without this the theory of transmigration loses all significance. The doctrine therefore has either to be abandoned or modified in such a way as to leave room for the fact of biogenesis and its immediate implications. Is it possible to formulate

such a theory of rebirth which will not contradict biological facts? Or is it possible to give to those facts other interpretations than those given in this article? The writer would like very much to be enlightened by those who have thought well on this subject.

THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD

By P. V. S. Narayana, M.A., B.L.,

[Mr. Narayana was lately Fellow of the Andhra University in the Department of Philosophy. To give a clear statement of one's conception of God is very difficult. With his knowledge of comparative religion and philosophy, Mr. Narayana throws many suggestive hints on this difficult subject, and spiritual aspirants will find in them much light and help.]

THEISM and ethical scepticism are the formants of the age. The modern mind is signalling the stigmata of a fateful declivity. We are in the cruel clutches of a shallow, sensual and spiritually impoverished epoch. We have created our own dead-locks, our own inhumanities out of our own conceits. We have, in ruthless hurry, chosen the wrong set of values for gratification. It is time to take stock of our ideologies and make a drastic spring-clearance of all rubbish. It is time to know the simple truth about God, the commonplace of all religions and philosophies. We have only to resurrect the familiar and the obvious, to know them and to be free.

That God is the Supreme Being is the note of all religions. He is both Immanent and Transcendent, the ground and goal of all existence and values. The early Greek thinkers, the sophists and even the primitive races were not new to this truth. We meet with the same postulate in the language of contemporary philosophy, in Alexander's Space, Time, and Deity and in Croce's idealism. With scientific claim the truth is pressed upon us in Smut's Holism. With more emphasis and less exactness, it is seen

through the veils of J. S. Huxley's religion without revelation and Nicolai Hartmann's theory of values. To Middleton Murray, God forms the subject of the science of metabiology. In imaginative literature it has found its ample iconography in Shaw's Back to Mathesullah. The Shaw of 1933 spoke to the Black Girl with her knob-kerry: "God is at your elbow, and He has been there all the time." This is one of the greatest truths ever uttered with consummate levity. This, in fact, is the direct challenge to the Deistic conception of God. In India, for example, the Yoga, a fundamentally non-theistic system like the Snakhya, inserted the conception of a transcendent God only to satisfy the religious promptings of the soul. A God who sits in unbroken silence upon His lonesome throne, is, at least, so far as man is concerned, an ontological zero. "Am I a God at hand, said the Lord, and not a God far off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill Heaven and Earth? saith the Lord?" (Jer. xxiii, 25.). The New Testament improves still further upon this language expressing the living presence of God in the Universe.

"Know ye not that ye are a temple of God and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you." (1 Cor., iii, 16.)

In the Upanishads God is spoken of as being in all things and in all places. The Mundaka regards the wind as His breath and the universe as His heart. He is, in fact, the inmost self in all things. This does not mean that He is a synonym for Nature. Divine transcendence is as much a part of divine nature as divine immanence. The Katha brings home to us the central truth about God in simple poetry:

"The light as one penetrates into space

And yet adapts itself to every form,

So the inmost self of all beings dwells

Enwrapped in every form and yet remains outside.

The air as one penetrates into space

And yet adapts itself to every form,

So the inmost self of all beings dwells

Enwrapped in every form and yet remains outside.

The sun, the eye of the whole universe,

Remains pure from the defects of eyes external to it,

So the inmost self of all beings remains

Pure from the sufferings of the external world."

(Katha. V, 9-11)

As the one eternal supreme spirit, God is above and beyond all the multiple phases of His conditioned being. After declaring that He is the source and dissolution of the whole universe, the Lord of the Gita speaks: "Since

I am beyond the perishable, and higher also than the imperishable, therefore am I celebrated in the world and in the Veda as the best of beings."

(XV. 18.) The conception of an eternal spirit of which the world of space-time is only a fragmentary expression, is a belief passionately held in Platonism. Like the Upanishadic sages, Plato powerfully advocated the view that knowledge and happiness depend on finding a firm anchorage for thought and conduct, beyond time and change. In Hindu theology, God is looked upon as creating the various forms of life as citadels and then entering into them as citizen. There is no puff of existence so trivial for His habitation; He is everywhere as the story of Prahlada indicates. No idea, so far as this country is concerned, has so thoroughly gone into the heart of the millions as the idea of Divine Immanence. The Hindu is convinced more of this truth than even the actuality of his own existence. Whatever its defects, it makes the burden of the flesh less ignoble.

Higher reasoning, rooted in spiritual consciousness, will bear witness to the axiom that in all outpourings of the spirit, the reality of the spirit is manifest. In the religious consciousness of the highest order, God is the immaterial spirit exempt from the limitations of space and time and the values that are integral to that order of being. The two great words of Indian philosophy, Atman and Brahman, bring out the whole kernel of truth regarding the essential nature of the Deity. This sterling nomenclature constitutes, to me, the gist of Indian philosophy. By these two words, the Hindu thinkers could take in one hold, the metaphysical identity

of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul. The Atman or the spiritual principle manifested in man, is no other than Brahman, the cosmic principle pervading the whole universe. The universe, the sum of all objects of thought, has the same live principle or Atman pervading it as is found in man. The same Atman is thus the animating principle of both the individual soul and the objective world of appearances, if you do not misuse this word. The Brahman without, that is, the power or spirit that operates in the universe is one and the same as the Atman within man's innermost self. In this sense,

subject and object are one; I and my foe are one; I and my father are one. The 'thou' within you is the same as the 'that' you foolishly imagine to be outside and different. This ringing voice of an ancient nation that could not be blown out by bullets, is embalmed in the final saying of those radiant sages of the Upanishads—TATTVAMASI—Thou art That. The open sesame of any form of sentient destiny, here or elsewhere, now or ever, lies in the recapture of this secret for the service of life itself, within the forms of perishing civilizations which have their own seasons of rise and fall.

SAINT RAIDASA

By Ram Chandra Tandan, M.A., LL.B.

[Mr. R. C. Tandan is a Hindi scholar, and the translator of Mira Bai's songs. In this article he gives a sketch of the life and teachings of a well-known saint of North India.]

AT a time when a powerful and earnest movement for obtaining justice towards Harijans or the so called "untouchables" is going on in this country, it will doubtless be of interest to recall the name of one, who himself a Harijan, had preached four centuries back in no uncertain words, the equality of men before God. This was Saint Raidasa. Namadeva, Sadana, Sena, Kabir, Raidasa, Kamal, Dadu, Nabhadasa, Krishnadasa—there is a long list of saints, who, having sprung from the lower grades of society, rose to occupy a spiritual eminence therein, and whose poems, such as have been preserved and handed down to us, contribute to the undying glory of the Hindi language and the Hindu religion. Next perhaps to Kabir,

Raidasa is the most venerated among these saints.

Unfortunately for us, we have the scantiest scientific data, wherewith to construct the lives of most of these religious leaders of our Mediaeval society. The dates of birth and death of Raidasa are matters of surmise. Tradition has it that he lived up to a very ripe old age, and that he was a disciple of the famous saint and reformer Ramananda and a colleague and contemporary of Kabir. We find in various songs of Mirabai, Raidasa being mentioned as her teacher. Between Ramananda, Kabir, and Mirabai the dates of Raidasa's period of life must lie. But even the dates of these celebrities are not free from considerable doubt. That Ramananda himself lived to a

very old age is a fact which finds mention in the *Bhaktamala* of Nabhadasa. The date of birth of Ramananda has been variously mentioned by scholars—the surmises ranging from 1299 to 1400 A. D. In a recently discovered work entitled the *Prasanga Parijata*, said to have been completed about 1460 but whose authenticity is itself not beyond doubt, the date of Ramananda's death is mentioned as Samvat 1505, equivalent to A. D. 1448. In view of the long life admittedly enjoyed by Ramananda, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that he lived through the latter half of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth century. Tradition is strong on the point of Kabir and Raidasa having been the disciples of Ramananda. The fact also finds mention in the *Prasanga Parijata* above referred to. Kabir and Raidasa both belonged to Benares where Ramananda had made his seat. That Kabir was much senior to Raidasa is a fact which can be gleaned from the references to Kabir found in Raidasa's works. So far, I have not been able to discover a direct reference to Ramananda in the works of Raidasa. It would seem that though Kabir and Raidasa both came under the influence of Ramananda, Raidasa was but a junior contemporary of Kabir, and a mere boy while admitted into the circle of the veteran saint Ramananda. Raidasa had, from his childhood, a religious bent of mind, and gave himself in service to Sadhus and saints of his time, and Ramananda, whose sympathies for the down-trodden castes was too well known at the time, recognised Raidasa as a promising initiate in his circle. Keay mentions in his book *Kabir and his Followers* the foundation in 1543

of a sect of Sadhus in the district of Mirzapur. The founder was one Vira Bhan, a disciple of Udaidasa, himself a disciple of Raidasa. Now, if 1543 may be taken to be roughly the date of the death of Udaidasa, the demise of Raidasa would be dated somewhat earlier. Raidasa having lived to a very old age (said to be 120 years, by some accounts), his disciple Udaidasa would probably not have long outlived him. It would be reasonable to fix the dates of Raidasa between 1430 at one and 1530 at the other end. These dates would account for Raidasa's discipleship under Ramananda, his being a junior contemporary of Kabir, and also his acceptance of Mirabai as a disciple of his own. Mirabai's widowhood occurred, according to Pandit Gaurishanker Hiracland Ojha sometime between 1518 and 1523. She probably met Raidasa in the course of her pilgrimage and at a time when the latter had already become very old. Raidasa thus flourished during the last three quarters of the fifteenth and the first quarter of the sixteenth century. For want of more definite data, this is all that can be said at present.

Some people have tried to establish that Raidasa lived in Maharashtra or Rajputana. The variety of language and diction met with in the works of Raidasa would lend some colour to such a supposition, but we have definite statements in some of his songs preserved in the *Adi Grantha* of the Sikhs, compiled about the end of the sixteenth century, that the ancestors of Raidasa lived and plied their low trade in and round about Benares. There is no doubt that Raidasa belonged to Benares. He seems to have travelled much, and to have visited

not only Maharashtra and Rajputana but also Gujerat, where he created for himself a very large following. Even to this day the sect of Ravidasis to which he gave his name, persists in Gujerat.

There is little doubt that Raidasa was a *chamar* or tanner by caste. The fact of his humble origin has been frequently and almost painfully reiterated in his songs. His ancestors, as we find mentioned in one of his songs, were engaged in the skinning and curing of the skins of dead cattle. His father Ragghu, it would seem, had risen to comparative affluence, and disliked his son attending more to the Sadhus than to his father's trade. The name of Raidasa's mother is said to have been Ghurbiniya. Ragghu in his anger is said to have driven out his son from his house, and Raidasa built for himself and his wife a small thatched cottage behind his parental home, and the young couple lived there unconcerned by the wrath of Raidasa's parents. Raidasa made his living by making shoes and as a cobbler, and appears to have given both honest and efficient service to his customers. A considerable portion of his earnings was yet offered to Sadhus and holy men, and he seems to have slowly risen in the estimation of his fellow citizens.

Numerous anecdotes and miracles are related about Raidasa which would cause a considerable strain on our credulity. One of these is that a Sadhu once appeared to him and presented him with a piece of *paras* stone, the very touch of which is said to transmute iron into gold. The Sadhu even demonstrated such a transformation. Raidasa would not at first accept this gift, and later asked the Sadhu to slip the stone in the thatch

of his cottage. When thirteen months later the Sadhu came to see Raidasa again, he enquired as to what use the latter had made of the stone. Raidasa told the Sadhu that he would find the stone where he had left it in the thatch. Raidasa certainly lived a contented life, and depended upon his own labours for his livelihood. Later on as his fame for devotion went round and he gave more and more of his time to spiritual discourses, he seems to have been induced to accept the offerings of his disciples for the satisfaction of his bare needs, and as he further advanced in age, to have entirely given up his profession. Out of the money entrusted to him by his disciples, Raidasa is said to have built a *dharamshala* or home for pilgrims, and also a temple, where in later life he was induced by his followers to move himself. It would not be surprising that his followers wanted to take Raidasa out of his mean surroundings. For though Raidasa appears to have gained the increasing veneration of his fellow citizens, a prejudice against his low origin seems to have persisted in the minds of men throughout. Benares has always been a citadel of Hindu orthodoxy, and the persistence of prejudice against low caste should cause us no surprise. Raidasa himself stoutly refused to accept that his low caste mattered in the eye of God, and he continued to mention the names of earlier saints whose sainthood had been acknowledged in spite of their low origin. But Raidasa's almost too frequent mention in his song of his humble caste leaves one to doubt, if in his dealings with men, especially caste Hindus, he had succeeded in shaking off his obvious complexes. Some of the anecdotes concerning

Raidasa mention how some of the caste Hindus had come to grief because of their want of faith in Raidasa or because of having insulted him for his low origin. One thing would appear to be clear that though Raidasa gained in reputation because of his saintly life and character, prejudices against his caste never entirely died out in his life-time, and that his followers themselves were drawn for the most part from among men of humbler origin.

It is not known whether Raidasa himself transcribed his songs or made any collection of them. The probability is that the task was left to be performed by his disciples, that is, by those among them who were literate. It is, however, certain that various private collections were made and the text must have greatly suffered in the process. The Nagari Pracharini Sabha, reporting on the search for manuscripts, notices three different collections in the first volume of its Report. These are 'Raidasa ki Bani', 'Raidasa ke Pada', and 'Raidasa ki Sakhi tatha Pada.' I understand that the Sabha has since, brought to light a fuller collection of Raidasa's works. Mr. Kshitimohan Sen of Shantiniketan, whose knowledge of the literature concerning our saints is vast, has recently brought out an edition of Dadu's poems. He mentions two voluminous collections of poems of Hindi saints, one in the possession of Shri Chandrika Prasad Tripathi of Ajmer, and the other in that of Shri Shankar Das of Jaipur, both containing poems of Raidasa. Rai Bahadur Pandit Tara Datt Gairola of Garhwal mentioned to me several years back, of a similar collection which was in his possession. I am sure if some competent Hindi scholar

undertook the collection and proper editing of the available poems of Raidasa, a valuable edition of his works would be forthcoming. As it is, reliance has to be placed on the only printed work available, viz., 'Raidasajiki Bani' published by the Belvedere Press of Allahabad. In addition to half a dozen *sakhis* and eighty-seven *padas* brought together in this volume we find forty *padas* collected in the *Adi Granth* of the Sikhs. Twenty-three *padas* are common to both, though the readings found in the two collections vastly differ.

Raidasa was a pilgrim of the *Bhakti-marga* or the path of devotion. To him this world is full of sorrow and suffering. The very thought of having been born causes him pain. He believes in the cycle of births and rebirths, and craves for release from it. Such an end can only be achieved through the mercy of God, and such mercy is attainable only through prayer and devotion to the Supreme Being. Almost the same ideas occur in his songs again and again. He says :

This sea of Existence is an endless torture, O Govinda ! One can see no end therein.

Far, far is my home, and difficult to reach: speaking wilt Thou not give me assurance ?

Devotion to Thee is a ladder for the saints : wilt Thou not help me to climb ?

It is a boat of iron, laden with stones; and I am without good deeds or emotions.

The desires are like waves, and in-fatuation Death : yet my mind is after the fish.

O Lord of the humble, listen to my prayer. Why dost Thou delay ?

Raidasa is a slave at the feet of the saints. Give me protection now.

Time and again is Raidasa moved by the falsehood and the transience of life as it appears to thoughtless people. "Why sleepeth?" he cries out passionately, "wake thou, o mad man. This false life thou knoweth as true."

*High palaces, halls and kitchens—
and then not one hour to live !
This body is like a matted shutter
made of grass : when the grass
has been burnt up, to dust it
comes.*

Brother, kindered, family, and companions—all say, "Take him out quickly!"

The women of the house, who embraced thee in life, run away crying, "Ghost !"

Says Raidasa : Everyone is plundered in this world. I have escaped saying only the Name of Rama.

Raidasa's faith in the power of prayer is infinite. It is by various names that he invokes his Lord. Rama, Govinda, Hari, Murari, Mukunda—whatever name he invokes, it is always the *Nirguna* or the Attributeless Lord that is meant. He calls upon all and sundry to join with him in repeating the Name of the Lord.

*Repeat, ye people, the Name of Mukunda, of Mukunda. Without Mukunda the body wear-
ieth.*

Mukunda is the Giver of Redemption.

Mukunda is our Father and Mother,

Living repeat the Name of Mukunda, dying repeat the Name of Mukunda.

His servant is ever in bliss.

But the devotion which Raidasa calls upon people to offer to the Lord is not of the ceremonial kind. Of its futility he seems to be too well aware. The devotion which he asks the people to offer must result in the effacement of the self.

Such is Devotion, listen, O brother. When Devotion is attained, pride departs.

What avails the dancing and the singing? What avails the performance of the penances?

*What avails the washing of the feet—
if the Essence is not recognised?*

What avails the shaving of the head, what the performance of pilgrimage and fasting?

Master and slave, devotee and servant—these relationships avail not, if the Great Essence is not recognised.

Says Raidasa : Devotion to Thee is a distant object—he who finds it is greatly fortunate.

Abandon the pride, and efface the self, for thou art like an ant, and eateth the pickings.

The formal offerings to the Deity are of little worth, unless the mind be bent in devotion. How beautifully does Raidasa express himself on this point!

What shall I offer Thee for worship, O Rama? Fruits and flowers rare, I find not.

The milk in the cow's udder is defiled by the calf tasting it.

The 'bhramara' hath contaminated the flower, and the fish the water,

The serpent entwines the sandal-tree : poison and nectar are to be found side by side.

In the mind is the worship : in the mind, the incense : in the mind I attend on Thy natural Form.

I know not Thy worship or oblation. Says Raidasa : What shall be my fate ?

Songs of great beauty and devotion could easily be multiplied. One more, however, should suffice.

How can I forsake now the utterance of Thy Name ?

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

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

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

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

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

We mix together as gold mixes with borax.

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

Such is the devotion which Raidasa offers Thee.

And such was Raidasa, who spent his life in earnest devotion to his Lord, and may be said to have died in the faith embodied in the well-known lines :

Who cares, what one's caste or calling may be ?

He who prays unto Hari, is by Hari claimed as His own.

THE HISTORICITY OF PROPHETS

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

[People whose religious faith centres round prophets and incarnations of old are very often distressed to find the verdict of historical criticism going against their cherished convictions. The suggestions offered by Mr. Ramakrishnan in this article will go a great way in solving the difficulty of persons confronted with such perplexing situation.]

EVERY society can boast of heroes in all departments of its activity; but the great men that really attain immortality are surely the prophets. This is not in the least surprising when we realise that the line of work in which the prophets engage themselves relates to the eternal verities of human existence, while the labours of the politicians and the statesmen, of business magnates and financiers are confined to the changing aspects of earthly life. The prophets direct their energies to the solution of problems such as the

existence and nature of God, the destiny of the human soul, etc. Hence there is in their researches an element of the immortal and the unchanging.

Prophets of course are few in number, and the greatest ones of the world can be counted on one's fingers. The universe is governed by an intelligent Law and this Law creates prophets only when there is a real and felt need for them. When we think of the world's greatest prophets, the names of Buddha, Jesus Christ and Muhammad strike us immediately. Each of

these prophets is associated with a major religion (major from the point of view of the number of votaries). There are other minor religions and each of them has its prophet too. There has ever been a profusion of prophets in our own land, India. We revere a host of them. Krishna, the preacher of the Gita, Sankara, the rejuvenator of Hinduism, Ramanuja, Madhwa, Mahavira, the founders of Jainism, Nanak—these are a few of the great names. Zoroaster, Confucious and Lao-tse are a few other famous names honoured in different lands. But in thinking of the world's mighty prophets, we must always remember one great truth, viz., that history has recorded the lives of only a very few of the prophets, that a great majority of them lived unknown to mankind, though their work was as potent as that of the prophets known to us. This is in a way deplorable, but so far as the seers of ancient India are concerned the position is understandable. We of the present day give too much prominence to *who* says a thing rather than to *what* is said. We care more for the composer than for the sweetness of a song. With the Indians of old, the message mattered more than the man. The meaning of an utterance mattered more than the time of its utterance. Hence we know practically little about the authors and codifiers, the composers and commentators of the brilliant philosophical treatises which are our proud heritage. But yet no one can deny that these men and women, who have left us the results of their researches and enquiries, without allowing the image of their personalities to pass on to us, who, like master-musicians hidden in a tower and unseen by the populace, send out into

the world enchanting melodies, must really have been great prophets, perhaps greater than those whose names we revere in history. Such supreme self-effacement as we see in the lives of these ancient seers and such utter disregard for personal reputation as they are the examples of, are a great lesson to us at this time of the day when the tiniest waiting-shed on the road does not fail to bear an inscription immortalizing the name and the munificence of the donor.

It must however be admitted that the absence of intimate details connected with the personal life of a prophet results in certain difficulties to the votaries of the prophet. Man's mind always searches for concrete things, it finds it hard to hold on to abstract things for long. A bird en-caged for long and accustomed to the perch in the cage fears, when released, to fly into the vastness of space lest it should be lost; so too does the mind, fed on thoughts of the little concrete things in life, refuse to conceive abstractions; at any rate there is grim resistance first, though at last the mind may gain the capacity for holding on to abstract conceptions. That is why wise men say that in the evolution of the soul image-worship is a necessary and a very helpful phase. What applies to the worship of God applies with equal force to the adoration of prophets. The prophets themselves never seek personal honours; they do not expect applause; on the other hand, history shows us that in many cases prophets were persecuted rather than honoured; and in one case at least contemporary humanity was mad enough to crucify a mighty seer for the crime of promising to mankind entry into the Kingdom of God. But posterity cannot

help honouring in a thousand little dear ways the memory of the prophets. The teachings of the prophets are inspiring, no doubt, but their lives are fascinating too. And to the disciple, every word of the great master's teachings is pregnant with uplifting sense; so too is every little detail connected with the master's earthly life saturated with spiritual significance. And as he treasures every utterance of the master, so too does he feel ennobled in reviewing the incidents in the master's life. The personality is as redemptive as the principle embodied in that personality. We often hear a cry that we must care more for the principle than for the personality. There does not appear to be any great danger in showing reverence to both. For the personality is merely the embodiment, the expression, the concrete aspect, of the principle.

An illustration will make this point clear. Let us take the example of Sri Ramakrishna, the prophet of the new age. Sri Ramakrishna never sought for personal glory; his chief disciple, Swami Vivekananda, never preached that the Paramahansa must be regarded as the prophet; in fact for quite a long time after the commencement of his lecturing work in America, he only preached the essentials of Vedanta, without even referring to the Paramahansa, though Sri Ramakrishna was the very personification of Vedanta; and his lecture *My Master* was delivered later in response to insistent demands. Neither Ramakrishna's nor Vivekananda's aim was to found a cult. We find in Vivekananda's writings numerous instructions to his co-workers and disciples always to stress the principle rather than the person of Sri

Ramakrishna. But yet while humanity to-day drinks deep of the fountain of Ramakrishna's wise sayings and draws inspiration from his sublime teachings, it also takes perennial interest in the life of the great saint. This is because every action in the life of Ramakrishna illustrated some grand principle taught by him. For instance, the simple fact of the young Ramakrishna taking his first alms after his *Upanayanam* ceremony at the hands of a lady who did not belong to his own caste illustrates the truth that while scriptural injunctions and hoary conventions are certainly intended to serve as guides to the evolving soul, at times they have to give way to the demands of the sincere heart. It will not be denied that the masses can more easily grasp the significance of this great truth by being told this incident in the Paramahansa's life than by an abstract exposition of the truth. Sri Ramakrishna's admonition to a disciple (who allowed himself to be cheated to a little extent by a petty shopkeeper) that a devotee must not be a fool, his retort to another disciple (who came leaving something behind and argued that he was too much lost in contemplation to remember it) that he himself never failed to remember things in spite of almost unbroken meditation on the Supreme, his reply to his brother about the futility of bread-winning education, his throwing back a quantity of opium into the owner's room because he took it from the servant and not the owner, his passion for visits to the pious men, his peculiar relations with his teachers and his wife, his all-consuming love for his disciples, his determination not to continue his pilgrimage unless

the hungry people in a place were fed by Mathuranath, his cleansing the abode of a low-caste man by way of discipline to achieve true humanity, his practice of Islam and Christianity—these are a few of the thousand details of his life which are full of meaning and spiritual significance. The secret of the great popularity of M.'s Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna lies in the fact that besides reproducing for us the immortal utterances of the Master, it makes Ramakrishna live before us. All those that are drawn to the universal teachings of Sri Ramakrishna are irresistibly drawn to his life too, because his life is the best and the most authoritative commentary on his teachings. It is in the nature of things therefore that those whom the Master's teachings inspire are naturally eager to know his life too, nay, even to visit the places sanctified by his stay on earth. Those who are familiar with the short but intensive life of Swami Vivekananda will easily recall similar instances in his life which are in themselves great teachings. The same is the case with all prophets.

A word of caution is necessary here. The misfortune with mankind is that as days pass the letter is held to be more important than the spirit, the chaff is adored while the grain is left by. Very often people continue to pay homage to a great prophet without in the least acting up to his principles. There is nothing intrinsically harmful in the adoration we pay to the personality, but deterioration sets in when we stop there, and fail to see the real purpose behind the personality. It is like resorting for a bath to a river bed, long after the drying up of the river. That the Buddha came to be adored as a Saviour was

quite consistent with human nature, but it is real blasphemy to sing praises to the Saviour when we break his commandments every hour of the day. So long therefore as adoration does not descend into blind worship, so long as the prophet's message and mission are not lost sight of, there is no danger in our being delighted with the personality as much as with the principle.

Different devotees have varying temperaments, and there are many who choose a prophet as their Ideal; their way of salvation lies through intense devotion to and constant meditation on the great master whom they have elected as their guide. To such men there often arises an almost insurmountable difficulty. The prophet who is their all in all, whose tiniest deed has ever-expanding meaning for them is often pronounced to be a myth by eminent thinkers whose conclusions cannot easily be brushed away as figments of the imagination. Among the great prophets the Buddha and Muhammad are quite historical personages. But the great preacher of the Gita, Krishna, is said to be unhistorical. Rama and Sita who are the very backbone of Hindu tradition and culture are also said to be so. Christ also shares the same fate at the hand of many critical historians. Everyone knows how Rama, Sita and Krishna have entered into Hindu life. But is it sanity to be adoring personages that never lived except in the fancies of poets? With us Hindus at least, the problem is not very acute; for after all, allegiance to Krishna or Rama is no necessary element of the faith we profess. One may reject Rama and yet be a very honest Hindu. But what is the case with Jesus? Christianity is founded on

Jesus, on his personality. And where is Christianity to go, if the very foundation is knocked off? The unhistoricity of Jesus is therefore bound to be a very troublesome thorn on the side of the Christian believer and devotee. Is he then to give up Jesus? Is it easy to give up the holy bondages of a life-time? How heart-rending must it be to tear oneself away from the Chosen Ideal? To acquire faith is hard enough, and if it is to be disturbed by an attack on its very basis all cheer goes away from life. The light that sustained the mind is extinguished, and the soul withers.

The problem of the historicity of prophets needs then to be enquired into.

We must first remember that history as is known to us does not cover the whole of human existence. Man is a very old inhabitant of the earth, and if there are pre-historic periods in the story of his stay on earth, certainly those periods were not periods of no activity. Only, our knowledge of them is limited. Moreover, as new fields are taken up for research, we are often compelled to revise our pet conclusions and change our present estimate of men and things. We must therefore always be open to fresh convictions. What we assert to-day may not be the final word on problems.

And then, man is by nature so very self-contained that he has a tendency to disbelieve what he does not know or cannot comprehend. To him the proof of reality is his own understanding or conviction. And so, fed by reason as he is, he is unable to believe that the miracles attributed to the prophets, and the extraordinary incidents recorded in their lives could at

all have happened. But it has to be remembered that the field of the prophets' activities is one in which inspiration, intuition, etc., play a prominent part. That field is not super-natural in the sense of being unnatural; it is super-natural, because it is beyond the nature that we comprehend, with our limited vision. The critic must therefore hesitate to pass judgment on a matter whose laws are unknown to him. When worldly-minded men say that the prophets could never have lived such brilliant lives as they are credited with, we must not be upset, for they speak without authority.

There is a vein of scepticism in man. There is a tendency in him to doubt the veracity of any reported extraordinary happening. So when he hears that Jesus performed a deed which he can never dream of doing, he merely laughs at the idea. He gives a bad name to what he is unwilling to concede. But many such sceptics have been redeemed by a study of the life of Sri Ramakrishna. The great merit of the example of the Paramahansa is its recency. Men who have seen him still live amidst us. He has been tested 'as coins are tested by money-changers', by persons like Vivekananda who could not be hypnotised or fooled by pretensions. The Paramahansa has not now become a fabled personage described in dim books of doubtful authenticity. And in his life we see again and again experiences which seem too very astounding for ready belief. But yet we know they were real. It is quite possible that a few centuries later men may disbelieve in some of these real experiences of the great prophet of Dakshineswar. When they read for example, that

this God-man was completely immersed in divine consciousness throughout life, that he practised all the difficult *Sadhana*s (spiritual exercises) of the several systems and reached the goal in an incredibly short time, that he combined in himself perfectly the ideal of the *sannyasin* and the householder, that extraordinary visions were common occurrences to him,—they may smile and say, "This man must undoubtedly have been great, but surely his disciples and biographers need not have claimed for him so much as is recorded here."

It must not however be thought that what is advocated here is an utter surrender of one's reasoning powers. No sane man ever pleads for unquestioning blind acceptance.

What attitude should a devotee adopt when he is told convincingly that the prophet who is his ideal is historically a myth? It melts one's heart to think of withdrawing the allegiance paid reverentially to a loved sage, but reason rebels against continuing the allegiance in the face of the historical proof about the mythical nature of the sage. Let us take the examples of Krishna and Christ. No one can historically prove that Krishna ever lived, but yet Krishna is more real to the Hindu mind than many a historical personage whose doings are recorded in books and stones. So too do many souls in the West seek and derive unceasing solace from the Son of Man and feel themselves blessed by the love they bear to Jesus. It is cruel, to say the least, to tell these people that their devotion is founded on a falsehood. Life to many will to-day have no meaning without Christ, while Krishna can never be banished from

the Hindu home. So too are Rama and Sita not fabled personages, but real living guides to millions of Hindus.

Prophets have a two-fold reality—a historical reality and a spiritual reality. Historically Jesus may never have lived, but this fact does not in the least detract from his spiritual reality. For Jesus and Krishna are spiritual ideals. They represent an idea, the idea of perfected beings. That idea is eternally true, unchangingly real. A person known as Jesus the earth may never have borne on its bosom, but the men who conceived the idea of a Jesus were as great as the conceived Jesus. Krishna may be a pure myth, but the thinkers who pictured a Krishna must surely have been gifted with all the greatness we credit Krishna with. Just as a poem is only an expression of the soul of a poet, just as a painter transforms his genius to the picture he paints, so too is the conceiver of a grand ideal, himself the ideal personified. What we are not we can never create. Of course as intelligent students of history we must decide the question in a sane manner, but as spiritual aspirants, even an unhistorical Jesus may conveniently be our ideal. The sublime teachings of Jesus could not have been uttered by common men without spiritual vision. The grand conception of Krishna, the ideal *Karma-Yogi*, the philosopher who could preach religion on the field of battle and remain calm amidst stormy activities, could not have been the work of a petty mind. Jesus might never have lived, but if he was merely a creation of the Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, these saints were themselves Jesus. If Krishna was only the creation of Vyasa, then Vyasa had all the greatness Krishna

is credited with. If Valmiki created a Rama, Valmiki himself must have been an ideal man? What does it matter whether the great man is called Valmiki or Rama? Names do not count in the spiritual field; the substance and not the name, is the thing that is important.

To the aspirant in the spiritual realm, therefore, the historicity of a prophet is at best a matter of academic interest. The question has no reference to the spiritual relation between him and the prophet. Historians may quarrel about the date of a prophet's advent, about the place of his birth, about his very existence, but their conclusions do not affect the spiritual reality of the prophet. It was because Jesus was to him real and living that St. Francis of Assisi got the stigmata. It was again because Rama and Hanuman were living personalities that Ramakrishna during the period of *Sadhana* in the mood of Hanuman had for a time his coccyx enlarged. Jesus and Rama

may or may not be real to the common people, but to St. Francis and Ramakrishna they were nothing but real. And what did the world's opinion matter to them so long as they got their redemption through Jesus and Rama? Spiritual life is intensely lonely and individualistic. Spiritual march can never be done in groups. In the words of a great thinker, God never addresses congregations but ever speaks in secret to the individual soul. The aspirant need not therefore time his march and decide his pace with reference to popular opinions and group convictions. He must determine what is good for him primarily with reference to his own tastes and needs. If an 'unhistorical' Jesus or a 'legendary' Krishna appeals to him, the proper course for him is to choose either as his guide. For spiritually, both are real, both are the perfect embodiment of a saving ideal, and both are bound to lead aspirants on to the cherished goal of life.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

The Basic Conception of Buddhism: By Vidhusekhar Bhattacharya. Published by the University of Calcutta, 1934.

The Adharchandra Mukerjee Lectures delivered in 1932 by Prof. Vidhusekhar Bhattacharya have been published under the above caption. The learned professor, who is considered to be an authority on Buddhist canonical works in their originals, has very ably presented the problem Buddha had before him and the solution he gave for the cessation of suffering "which follows the extinction of desire, as declared by the sages of the Upanishads."

In the first Lecture the author gives a bird's eye view of the religious and philosophical speculation in the country before Buddha came. The place of Buddha as

an original thinker was not new. "Quite independent of Vedic tradition new paths of solution attracted people. There were ascetics holding different religious views and practising severe forms of austerities or self-mortification." Buddha was an "out and out rationalist." The following direction of Buddha regarding the enquiry into Truth is worth reproduction: "As the wise take gold by cutting, burning and rubbing it (on a piece of loadstone), so, O Bhikkus, you are to accept my words, having examined them and not merely out of your regard for me." "A Bodhisatva rests on reason (Yuktisara) and not on a person (Pudgalasara), though things might be explained by an Elder (Sthavira) or an experienced man, or Tathagatha, or the Order (Sangha). Thus resting on

reason and not on a person, he does not move away from the Truth, nor does he follow the path of others."

Buddha was silent regarding the nature of the Ultimate Truth. On this point the Exalted One says, "I do not quarrel, O Bhikkus, with the people. But it is the people who quarrel with me. One, O Bhikkus, who speaks the truth, does not quarrel with any one." If in Buddha's life time there were differences of opinion, it is no wonder that subtle hair-splitting differences were enlarged into different metaphysical schools after Buddha's Parinirvana. Apart from these implications, the doctrine Buddha preached is an invitation for every one "to come and see for himself."

The teachings of Buddha were taken variously by various people according to their mental calibre. The two main schools were formed by Yogacaras or Vijanavadins and Madhyamikas or Sunyavadins. The Madhyamikas aver that the idealism of Vijanavadins is only a concession to middling intellects who are afraid of the doctrine of "voidness," "being not able to understand it thoroughly." Prof. Bhattacharya, in summarising the Madhyamika position, says, "The teaching of the Master that the world of our everyday experience exists is meant only for those foolish and childlike persons who are strongly attached to the existence of the world and are frightened even to hear of the profound and subtle truth. But those who have a better intellect, but are yet ill-witted, are taught that all this is only pure consciousness (Vijana), there being neither the perceiver nor the perceptible. And those whose minds are freed from all sorts of impurities by profound meditation for years are advised that all this is just like an imaginary town in the sky" (Gandharvanagara)."

In the second Lecture, the author very neatly explains where Upanishadic and Buddhist thoughts meet and diverge. The Prajnaparamita of Buddhism and the Jnana of Vedanta are identical in that they agree that wisdom dawns when desires are burnt up, when Ahamkara and Mamata go or, in Buddhist language, when the Skandhas are dissolved away. With regard to the content of their know-

ledge, both the schools are diametrically apart "in their conclusions." According to Vedanta, when Ajnana vanishes the Self alone exists. The Buddhist doctrine denies the Self as the final ground of experience. We wish Prof. Bhattacharya had been a bit more explicit in explaining the concept of the Vedantic Self. The Vedantic Self can never become an object of experience. Then it would become a Drsyavastu or Skandha-environed, and as such it is unreal. The significance of Buddha's silence about the ultimate reality is also the same. This conclusion becomes very much substantiated when an authority on the subject like Prof. Bhattacharya says, "It seems to me that it is the Upanishadic doctrine of Self that led him (Buddha) to arrive at such a decision (Anatman). Desires cause suffering and desires are hubbed in Self, which is illusory and on analysis evaporates into nothingness. But the Vedantic characterisation of the Ultimate as Satchidananda is only a hint at the unhintable by suggesting that the Ultimate is not Asat, Achit or Niranandam. The empirical self, caught up in Skandhas, is explained by Buddha as having a dependent origination (Pratityasamutpada) and the propelling force to give it movement is Trishna." All questions relating to individuality are solved by dependent origination and no room is left for intervention of Self." The final decision on this philosophical system we get in Visuddhimagga. "Only Sorrow is there, but not an afflicted man. There is action, but not agent. There is Nirvana, but not one who realises it. And there is a way, but not he who goes thereby."

Buddha heightened the individual status of man to find out his own ultimate destiny. In his parting advice to Ananda, the Exalted One consoling him said, "The Truths and the Rules of the Order which I have set forth and laid down for you all, let them, after I am gone, be the teacher of you". Prof. Bhattacharya compares this to the light supplied by Vedic Rishis and their saying that the sense of the hymns has to be constructed by the help of oral tradition as well as reasoning.

Psycho-Therapy (Its Doctrine and Practice): By Elizabeth Severn, PH. D., Published by Rider & Co., Paternoster House, London, E.C. Pages 211.

This book is written in an engaging and forcible style, and it carries conviction as the author has based her statements on her own experiences in dealing with patients. A long list of cures attempted or completed is given at the end as well as in the course of different chapters to illustrate particular points. She has clearly explained how colour and music have great therapeutic value; and one who has observed the arrangement of coloured silks, flowers and lights or chanting and music in temples or churches cannot help reading a curative value into them after reading this book and connecting them as the legitimate causes of the consolation, comfort and "freedom" many a devotee gets from these institutions. She has also stressed the fact that unless one dives deep into one's own soul and "touches" the Source of all life, the mere observance of the technique of cure will avail nothing. This is illustrated by the case of one healer herself who went to the author for treatment, being "broken down" as a result of having spent all her energy in curing other people and not having cared to "re-charge" herself by proper detachment and meditation.

Psycho-therapy is not simply a cure of small illnesses. From a wider standpoint, as the author shows, it can be called a "rational religion" calculated to "appeal to rational thinkers as well as to the more essentially spiritually-minded." Many religions, she says, have centered the mind around self-abnegation and denial, while others have preached activities and individualism to the point of excluding God from the universe. But in modern metaphysical thought, of which psycho-therapy is an applied branch, there is a certain procedure outlined for the individual, which makes a solution of the problem of evil possible for him. In this system, the self is made the "hypothetical centre of the universe, the microcosm of the macrocosm; and in this realisation of the Self, as opposed to a personalised but absent God, lies the secret of its power." "The ultimate origin of all sin and dis-

ease and suffering is felt to be in the human sense of separateness from that divine life called God. The individual in repeating 'I am,' as he is often taught to do, is but using a few way to realise what sometimes seems so hard to realise, the unity of all life."

This book thus gives a most dignified and comprehensive exposition of the art of "psycho-therapy," and we wish it a very wide circulation.

Mystical Psychology: By R. Dimsdale Stocker. Published by Messrs. N. Fowler & Co., London. Pages 112.

This is a small book dealing with mysticism under certain heads intended avowedly by the author to serve as an appeal on its behalf to the common sense reader. In the first chapter, 'Life's Solitudes and Silences,' the author seeks to make out on high authority that religion is what the individual experiences in his solitariness and proceeds ultimately from one source, the craving for union,—the manifestation of the will to completeness. In the second chapter, dealing with the psychological aspect of mysticism, stress is laid on the ultimate aim of life and the need of the doctrine of non-attachment in our psychological scheme. Poetry, according to the third chapter of this book, is not merely an outlet for otherwise unutilised tendencies; rather it is a mode of life,—the only mode in which these tendencies view objects wherein and whereby to discover the multitudinous possibilities of evolution. In the fourth chapter the fundamental difference between spiritualism and mysticism has been elucidated. The next two chapters are only elaborations of the ideas in the previous ones. To those familiar with Vedantic thought, the exposition in this book may appear elementary. But to the large numbers of those unfamiliar with Vedantic thought or mysticism as expounded by Western philosophers in the light of modern thought, this book ought to be of immense help as an easily understandable introduction to further study of an interesting and useful subject.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Sri Ramakrishna Centenary at Bombay

The Birth-Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna is being celebrated in different ways in various parts of India, but the celebration held by the Ramakrishna Mission, Bombay has an appropriateness of its own derived from the very successful sessions of the Parliament of Religions organised in connection with the occasion. That a function like this should attract unusually big audiences consisting of highly intellectual and influential sections of citizens indicates that even in a city like Bombay, where, for all outside appearances, modernism, industrialism and materialism are in full swing, there flows an undercurrent of religious piety which is characteristic of India's national life.

Not a little of the success and popularity of the Parliament was due to the fact that its sessions were presided over by the distinguished Indian scholar and philosopher, Sir S. Radhakrishnan. In fact during its three days sittings, commencing from the 5th of May, the most outstanding events were the opening and concluding addresses of Sir S. Radhakrishnan, giving a masterly survey of the spiritual problems of modern humanity with special reference to conditions obtaining in India. Beginning with a reference to the great influence of Sri Ramakrishna on modern thought, the learned Professor declared that the speciality of his message consisted in putting religious views to the test by the logic of life, and establishing the equality of all religions through example and precept. Proceeding with his survey of the wider world-problems he said that there was a conceit of ignorance and a conceit of knowledge. The happenings in the world—the victory achieved by the sword, and the great calamities that visited mankind—must make them think seriously whether beneath all this there was any fundamental spiritual assurance, whether there was anything real behind this apparently transient. In modern times there were conceited men of knowledge who claimed to provide solutions for all problems and claimed to dispel the great mystery of life. But if today people thought themselves more

enlightened, the barbarians too had their sense of enlightenment, but the latter had their sense of the mysterious too. Science put an end to this mystery and they became prosaic. Man in the East recognised this mystery and did not worry about its cause but carried on the quest to attain truth and enlightenment. But the westerner proceeded to explore all aspects of reality and if they did not find a satisfactory explanation, they were puzzled. In spite of all the sacrificial efforts of the westerner why was it that he was unable to translate aspirations into reality of universal decency, freedom, justice and equality? It was because he mistook religion as mere Panditya, as an intellectual dogma which remained untranslated into action, and not as an intuitive apprehension of Reality possible for all who made an effort in that direction. Therefore intellectual progress had not touched the fundamental weaknesses of mankind, and we have the strange experience of people caring scrupulously for the hygiene of their bodies but neglecting the hygiene of the soul. So long as these germs were there, wars were inevitable. It was the war in the soul of man, the split and dissention in the inner self, that left mankind nothing more than a horde of clever animals.

The remedy for this state of affairs consisted in Ramakrishna's conception of religion—namely, the practice of the presence of God. This mystical tradition recognised the scriptures, but their music could not be expressed in words. The silent worship when one was in communion with God was an experience which provided a negative explanation of the existence of the Supreme Power. Although man might attempt a logical embodiment of this supreme truth, it was, however, transcendental and refused to be defined by formulas and categories. But simply because one did not find a suitable empirical embodiment for the Fundamental Reality, it was improper to discard it as non-existent. Spiritual matters could be comprehended by spirituality, and man by virtue of the Divine Spark in him could apprehend the Supreme Truth, even if he

could not comprehend it. If man's highest category was Purusha (person), then the Supreme Reality could be described as Uttama Purusha which supplemented the characteristics of the human being. All religions took their stand on this supreme truth.

In the last address he delivered before the session of the Parliament, he traced the difference between India and the West to their attitude towards change. Like the ancient Greek, the West kept an open mind without shutting out new ideas whereas India, like the Egyptian priest, represented orthodoxy, a long memory of the past pressing down on her consciousness. When religion in this country was progressive, the Indian possessed mental resilience, and flexibility and elasticity of temper. In every age there were reformers who were repudiated by orthodoxy. Sankaracharya who was today acclaimed the champion of orthodoxy was in his days denounced as a heretic by Mandanamisra. India found herself in a condition of stagnation today because she gave up that instinctive attitude of challenge to authority, of rebellion against things repugnant to reason.

But this did not mean the giving up of religion in the hope that this would solve all problems as some people believed. For even if all the worldly needs of men were satisfied, they could not remain contented like cattle. In every man there was the dream of a higher life. So long as higher aspirations existed in man, so long as there was in him a perpetual endeavour, a ceaseless striving for something higher, nobler and better, man could not but be a religious being. The failure of religion in the past was the failure of organised religions—the outcome of the efforts of priests who had no real insight into truth. God never addressed congregations. Each individual had to establish a private communion with Him. Beneath all different variations and details, religions had one authentic voice calling for universal compassion. Great religious teachers never said that if a man did not accept their respective teachings, he would be doomed. The basic truth was laid down in every religion that the performance of good to humanity constituted a true religious life.

We shall not give here in detail the other speeches delivered at the Parliament. All the three days the Cowasji Jehangir Hall was full to capacity, and the representatives of all the great world religions addressed the audience, giving their "interpretation of the messages of prophets in an atmosphere of amity and harmony, goodwill and understanding." On an impartial and critical mind these religions would leave the general impression that while there were inconsistencies and divergences among them, there was behind them all the consciousness of a common purpose, the eternal striving of man after truth, beauty and goodness. To review the theses of the different representatives, Zoroaster, the prophet of monotheism in Iran, developed the concept of an all-powerful, all-knowing, all-pervading Ahura Mazda, and of a pure and virtuous life as consisting not in meditation but in acts of positive good to fellow beings; according to the ideal of Jesus Christ a good man was not one who performed religious ceremonials meticulously but demonstrated his goodness by his deeds; the prophet of Islam taught the unity of Truth and the need for universal tolerance, and advocated a religious ideal having the service of man and the brotherhood of all as its ideal; Judaism agreed with all religions in its fundamental tenet of serving the One God and humanity, but differed from them all by being inextricably bound up with the history of the Jewish people; the ideal of Hinduism was to march ahead, to stop man from hating man, to teach the control of the mind, and to recognise the reality and the supremacy of spiritual values underlying all their differences in philosophy, mythology and rituals; Jainism was as old as any other Indian religion, and its ethical code coupled with its highly disciplined routine of life deserved careful consideration; Buddhism, besides teaching non-violence, universal love, service of mankind, equality and brotherhood, had the spiritual development of man through individual effort as its outstanding aspect; Bahaism stressed the unity of all religions and all countries; Theosophy was the soul of all religions, accepting the truth in them and rejecting the falsehood, and it taught the divinity of man and how to develop it; Arya Samaj wanted to make all people

noble and held that one should seek one's own welfare in the welfare of others.

It would thus be seen that all these great religions stand for a common ideal which may be described as the development of man to his fullest possibilities both through the culture of the soul and the service of society. One might, however wonder why in spite of this, religions come into clash with one another and often degenerate into the worst forms of irreligion. This is so partly because they do not study each other with mutual sympathy and a will to agree, and partly because they fail to see that this spiritual and secular elevation of man is possible only collectively and not sectionally. Let us hope that a Parliament of this kind, held in honour of Sri Ramakrishna, the prophet of religious harmony, would go a great way in promoting mutual understanding among religions.

The Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Celebration in Washington, D.C.

The Vedanta Society of Washington, D.C., celebrated the centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna in its own humble way, and it was a great success.

There were special services at the Society's Chapel for three consecutive days, beginning Sunday, March 8th. Visiting Swamis lectured on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Besides there were illustrated talks on the art and culture of India. The lectures were very well attended and everyone listened with great interest.

The local newspapers co-operated in giving good publicity to the celebration. The *Washington Post*, a prominent daily, published two articles on the centenary of the birth of Sri Ramakrishna and his life and teachings. The first article which was published on Sunday, March 1st, was contributed by Mr. Pierre de Remer, a friend of the Society. The second article which appeared in the magazine section of the Sunday number of March 8th was written by the Church Editor of the paper. It was illustrated by a picture of Sri Ramakrishna and covered half a page, giving a short narrative of the Master's life and his mission. The *Daily News* also gave a write-up and published the program of the celebration.

The program really started with a Radio Talk given by Swami Vividishananda over the station W. O. L. on Saturday evening, March 7th, his subject being, "The Centenary of the Birth of Sri Ramakrishna—The Great Mystic of Modern India." This talk must have been heard by a large number of Washingtonians.

The Mahotsav at Murshidabad

The celebration of the 8th Anniversary of the consecration of the Temple of Sri Ramakrishna at the Sargachhi Ashram came off successfully on the 10th Jaistha, the 24th May. The function began with Mangal Arati and Puja in the morning. During the noon, thousands of devotees, admirers and sight-seers coming from Calcutta, Murshidabad, Berhampore and other places of the locality were entertained with Bhajan and other songs.

The music being over, a meeting was held at 1-30 p.m., under the presidency of venerable Sreemat Swami Akhandanandaji Maharaj, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and a Bengali speech, regarding the lives and ideals of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, was delivered by Brahmachari Amulyakumar of Belur Math. The meeting came to a close with concluding remarks of the President.

Then a Sankirtan-party sang the holy name of Sri Krishna in chorus and satisfied the spiritual thirst of the devotees assembled there. After this about 2,500 Bhaktas and Daridra Narayanas partook of Prasadam.

Swami Agamananda's activities in Kerala (Nov. '35—Aug. '36)

Swami Agamananda of the Ramakrishna Mission began his lecturing tour in Travancore with an address at Vaikom, delivered at the invitation of the Asst. Devaswam Commissioner of that place on the occasion of the well-known Ashtami Festival. Since then he delivered lectures in different parts of Travancore, about 40 of them being under the auspices of the Devaswam Department and about 60 at the invitation of other bodies. Besides these he addressed also about 12 public meetings in British Malabar and 10 in Cochin State. Detailed reports of many of these lectures used to appear in the leading Malayalam papers like *Bharatapatrika*, *Malayala Rajyam*, *Matri-Bhumi*,

Gomati-Keralam, etc. While the average attendance at these lectures was above 1,000, some of them were attended by audiences consisting of more than 8,000 persons. The Swami is a gifted speaker and his lectures have been of immense value in strengthening the faith of people in Hindu religious ideals.

In the course of his lecturing work, a prominent landlord of North Travancore named Parayath Govinda Menon offered a plot of land and a building at Kaladi. Kaladi being the birthplace of Sri Sankaracharya, he accepted the offer and started an institution named Advaita Ashrama. The Swami also started a Students' Home on a small scale at Ernakulam. This Institution is run by a local Managing Committee and an Advisory Board consisting of important citizens of Ernakulam.

Ramakrishna Sevasram, Rangoon, 1935

The Burma branch of the Ramakrishna Mission has among its other activities a charitable hospital which starting in a humble way has now become a useful institution and has completed the fourteenth year of its philanthropic career. The patients treated did not belong exclusively to the city of Rangoon, a considerable number of them coming from the suburbs and from remote districts of Burma. Irrespective of caste and creed, food, shelter and medical relief were given to all who came to its door. The total number of patients including males, females and children, that were treated in the indoor hospital was 3,746 and in the out-door department 536 per day, thus showing an appreciable increase over the previous year's numbers. But the financial position is not quite satisfactory. A new Ward and a new Laboratory have been opened during the year. The Managing Committee most fervently appeals to the generous public to contribute liberally towards the Hospital Fund, so that it may carry on its work unhampered.

The Late Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukerji

The news of the sad and untimely death, at the early age of 46, of Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukerji, the talented Indian writer, poet

and speaker of America, has given a rude shock to all lovers of Indian culture, both at home and abroad. Born and brought up in a priestly family of Calcutta, the adventurous and ambitious spirit of Mr. Mukerji did not allow him to settle down to the dull life of a priest. With practically no money in his pocket, he left India at about the age of 20, and after a short stay in Japan, he crossed over to America. In 1914 he graduated himself at the Le Land Stanford University, and thenceforth for nearly 22 years Mr. Mukerji lived in the world of America and Europe as a true ambassador of Indian culture to the occident, lecturing at the great universities and on the public platforms of the West, and writing books in English prose which reads like poetry. He was one of the very few Indians who have written books in English for English-speaking people to read. Quite a number of his books are stories for children, and his service in this respect was recognised when he was awarded the John Newbery Medal for "the most distinguished children's book" of 1927. Of his major works for adults, the most famous is "A Son of Mother India Answers," which is a reply to Miss Mayo's notorious "Mother India," and enjoys a very wide circulation in the West.

We may mention in this connection that Mr. Mukerji was a great devotee of Sri Ramakrishna, and a warm friend of the Ramakrishna Movement, both at home and in America. He had close relations with several of the Vedanta Societies of America, and during his visits to India he used to stay at the Belur Math, the Ramakrishna Mission Headquarters. Sri Ramakrishna is the theme of his well-known book "The Face of Silence." It was this work that attracted the attention of Romain Rolland to Sri Ramakrishna and inspired him to write his book on the Great Master.

By his untimely death India has lost a great representative of her culture who had really gained the ear of the American public.

To be shortly out

THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF INDIA

SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY MEMORIAL VOLUME
IN TWO PARTS.

Will contain about 2,000 pages, D. Crown Octavo.

Profusely illustrated with more than 100 plates.

About ninety eminent scholars of India representing fifteen Indian Universities have contributed.

Part I.—THE FUNDAMENTAL UNITY (Introduction)

The main sections which again contain several chapters in each are:—(1) The Vedas and the Upanishads, (2) The Epics, (3) The Smritis and the Puranas, (4) Buddhism and Jainism, (5) Systems of Hindu Philosophy, (6) Systems of Hindu Philosophy (Vedanta Schools), (7) Other Schools of Thought, (8) The Saints of India.

Part II.—The SPIRIT of INDIAN CULTURE (Introduction)

Sections: (1) Landmarks in Indian Culture, (2) Institutions, (3) The Pursuit of Science, (4) Arts, (5) Literature, (6) Faiths other than Indigenous, (7) Hinduism, (8) Sri Ramakrishna Movement.

PRICE :

Inland (India, Burma and Ceylon) : Rs. 16 Foreign : \$ 10 or 40sh.
For Members of the Centenary Committees } Inland : Rs. 14 .. \$ 9 or 36sh.

N.B.—Mofussil subscribers are advised to send the postage, Inland Rs. 3-8, Foreign \$ 2-50 or 10 sh. along with the price while ordering.

For hand delivery at our office Rs. 1-8 will be charged as Railway freight from Calcutta to Madras.

Apply to :

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MYLAPORE,
MADRAS.

DRGDRSYA VIVEKA

(An analysis of the Seer and the Seen)

BY

Swami Nikhilananda

With Sanskrit Text—word for word rendering—English translation—notes—explanatory quotations—valuable and elaborate introduction and with a Foreword by Mr. V. SUBRAHMANYA IYER, B. A.

Drgdrrsyā Viveka is one of the most valuable compendiums of Advaita Philosophy and it deals with the central theme of the Vedānta.

Excellent Printing and Get-up.

Price Re. 1.

The Vedanta Kesari Office

Mylapore, Madras.

No presents !**No coupons !!**

For quality, taste and
lasting sweet flavour

use our famous
**L G Brand
ASAFOETIDA**

Look for this mark on the packet.

Price Rs. 1-14-0 per lb.

Head Office :
Yadgadi, Bombay.

Laljee Godhoo & Co.

Branch Office :
Kumbakonam.

SOWCARPET, MADRAS.

FREEDOM AND CULTURE

BY SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN

SPALDING PROFESSOR OF EASTERN RELIGIONS AND ETHICS
(OXFORD).

The contents are mainly from Sir S. Radhakrishnan's Convocation addresses to the Andhra, Mysore, Punjab, Lucknow, Nagpur and Allahabad Universities. Indeed, the addresses cover a wide field dealing with problems of individual and collective life such as Universities and National Life, Training for Leadership, The Spirit of Youth, Education and the New Democracy, Democracy and Dictatorship, A New Social Order and The Responsibility of the Intellectuals. In these addresses, Sir S. Radhakrishnan stresses the need for real Freedom and true Culture. In the words of Prof. Joad, he exhorts his countrymen "to shake off the oppressive traditions of the past and equip themselves to face the future, a future in which they will be called upon to play their part as leaders, statesmen, and administrators in the national life of a Self-governing India." But Sir S. Radhakrishnan does not content himself with an exhortation to his countrymen only. He warns the rulers that the basis of present association, the assumed racial superiority of one people over another, must go. Sir S. Radhakrishnan's vigorous handling of the many problems of the day can hardly fail to interest readers in India and abroad.

Price Re. One. To Subscribers of the "Indian Review." As. 12.
BY THE SAME AUTHOR

THE HEART OF HINDUSTHAN

A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES. "An admirable survey and interpretation of Eastern thought."

CONTENTS: The Heart of Hinduism, The Hindu Idea of God, The Hindu Dharma, Islam and Indian Thought, Hindu Thought and Christian Doctrine, Buddhism, and Indian Philosophy.

Price Re. One. To Subscribers of the *Indian Review*, As. 12.
Foreign 1sh. 6d. Postage 6d. each.

All Foreign orders must be accompanied with remittance in advance.

G. A. NATESAN & CO., PUBLISHERS & BOOKSELLERS.
GEORGE TOWN, MADRAS.

Swami Vivekananda's Works

Complete Works in Seven Volumes.

Each—Board, Rs. 3.

Cloth, Rs. 3-8.

Index to Complete Works 0-10-0

	Rs. As.		Rs. As.
Hinduism	0 10	Epistles,	
Raja Yoga	 1 4	I, II, III & IV series,	
Jnana Yoga	 1 12	each	 0 10
Bhakti Yoga	 0 12	Do. V & VI each	
Karma Yoga	 0 12	crown size	 0 8
The Science and Philo-		Do. III & IV	
sophy of Religion	0 12	Pocket Edn. each	0 6
A Study of Religion	0 12	The Vedanta Philoso-	
Realisation and its		phy	 0 6
Methods	 0 10	My Master	 0 8
The East and the		Chicago Address	 0 4
West	 0 12	Modern India	 0 6
Religion of Love	 0 12	Christ the Messen-	
Indian Lectures		ger	 0 3
(Colombo to Almora)	2 8	Pavhari Baba	 0 3
Inspired Talks	 1 4	Reply to Madras	
Do. Cloth	 1 12	Address	 0 4
Women of India	 0 3	India and her Problem	0 10
Thoughts on		Religion and Philoso-	
Vedanta	 0 10	phy, Part I	 0 12

JUST OUT!

SPIRITUAL TALKS

By the first disciples of Sri Ramakrishna

(THE HOLY MOTHER AND SWAMIS BRAHMANANDA, PREMANANDA, TURIYANANDA, SHIVANANDA AND SARADANANDA).

Contains rare spiritual counsels given by these great Souls to the spiritual aspirants and as such invaluable for all those who sincerely search after God.

Cloth-bound. Excellent get-up. Price : Re. 1-12

MESSAGE OF OUR MASTER

By the first disciples of Sri Ramakrishna

(SWAMIS VIVEKANANDA, BRAHMANANDA, PREMANANDA, TURIYANANDA, RAMAKRISHNANANDA, TRIGUNATITA, SHIVANANDA AND SARADANANDA).

Gives in a comprehensive way the spiritual message of the Master.

Cloth-bound. Excellent get-up. Price : Re. 1-4

Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, MADRAS.

WORKS BY SISTER DEVAMATA

Days in an Indian Monastery—Indian life has been described and interpreted in a very charming way by the writer who lived for some time in an Indian monastery.

Excellent get-up. With 10 Illustrations. Price Rs. 4-8-0.

Sri Ramakrishna and His Disciples—Will be read like a story book. Fluent style and nice get-up. Price Rs. 4.

The Open Portal—A large number of soul-stirring poems. Excellent get-up. Price Rs. 2-8-0.

The Habit of Happiness—Deals with the Technique of Meditation. Price Re. 1-8-0

Building Character—In this age of construction the many build houses, the few build character. Price Re. 1-8-0.

HEALTH AND HEALING & THE PRACTICE OF DEVOTION Price 7 As. each

(1) Sleep and Samadhi; (2) What is Maya; (3) Robert Browning & Vedanta; (4) Development of the Will; (5) The Indian Mind and the Indian Culture; (6) Eastern and Western Religious Ideals. At Four Annas each

Sri Ramakrishna and St. Francis of Assisi Price Re. 1-8-0

HINDUISM BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A collection of five lectures on Hinduism by the
Illustrious Swami

"It gives a clear and succinct account of the greatness of the religion—its all-comprehensiveness, and above all its wide tolerance, in eloquent and illuminating language." —*Theosophist*.

Every one ought to read it to have a clear idea on Hinduism.

"There can be no better popular handbook to our religion." —*The Hindu*. Price As. 10.

To subscribers of "The Vedanta Kesari," As. 8 only.)

The Vedanta Philosophy (Brahma Sutras)

By Sridhar Majumdar, M. A.

With original Sutras, their word for word meaning, explanatory quotations, and an unbiased and thoughtful exposition in most clear and lucid English, highly spoken of by the Press, 'The Vedanta Kesari' 'The Prabuddha Bharata' 'The Modern Review' 'The Statesman' 'The Amrita Bazar Patrika' 'The Indian Daily Mail' 'Peace' as well as by the eminent scholars of the world, Drs. Barnett, Keith, Jacobi, Jolly, Rapson, Hopkins, Winternitz, Thomas, Jackson, S. N. Das Gupta, Rabindranath Tagore, P. Narasimhaiah, Moreno, Lord Ronaldshay, Mahamahopadhyayas, Pramatha Nath Tarka Bhushan and Durga Charan Sankhya Vedanta Tirtha, Pandits Kokileswar Sastri, S. Radhakrishnan and Gopi Nath Kaviraj, Brajavidyal Mohant Maharaj Santa Das Babaji, etc. Most attractive and useful to beginners, over 800 pages in all, cloth bound with title inscribed in gilt letters. Price Rs. 5 only, postage extra.

To be had of The Author, Hastisunda Barisal, Bengal, India.

SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

It is a book of rare spiritual counsels, giving practical instruction about meditation, worship, continence, good company, mind control, ecstasy, Yogic practice, search for God, God vision, Tapas and the like. An invaluable handbook for all spiritual aspirants.

"Helps one to pass from Darkness to Light."—*The Hindu*.

"The seeker after truth, according to every faith and church, will find in the book light, hope, encouragement and inspiration."—*Bombay Chronicle*.

"The entire book is most practical and invaluable to seekers of truth of every phase and character."—*Liberty*.

"The book will be useful even to the more gross among laymen."—*Svarajya*.

Neatly printed in large types on good paper and attractively got-up.

With one portrait of the Swami, pp. Dc. 234. Price Rs. 2

TELUGU PUBLICATIONS

Life of Sri Ramakrishna
(In Telugu)

A comprehensive chronological account of the wonderful Life of the Saint of Dakshineswar. Very beautiful language. Excellent get-up. Demy 878 Pages, with many pictures. Price Cloth Rs. 5.

Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna
(In Telugu)

It is a series of conversations in which the highest spiritual truths were expounded by the Master in simple language with homely illustrations.

Price Re. 1-8-0.

Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna—The most exhaustive and comprehensive collection of sayings and parables. Price Board Re. 1-8.

The Life and Teachings of Swami

Vivekananda	...	0 8 0
Chicago Address of Swami Vivekananda	...	0 6 0
Words of the Master by Swami Brahma	...	0 6 0
nanda	...	0 12 0
Karma Yoga	...	0 8 0
Bhakti Yoga	...	0 4 0
Narada Bhakti Sutras	...	0 2 0
Path to Perfection	...	0 3 0
My Plan of Campaign	...	0 8 0
Anushtana Vedanta	...	0 8 0

"The Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore Madras.

"The Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore, Madras.

TAMIL PUBLICATIONS

Life of Sri Ramakrishna (in Tamil)

A comprehensive account of the wonderful Life of the Saint of Dakshineswar.

Beautiful language—Excellent get-up—Demy 970 Pages with many pictures.

Price : Cloth Rs. 5.

(To Subscribers of "Ramakrishna Vijayam" Rs. 4-8-0)

Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda

(Vivekananda Jnana Deepam)

(in Tamil)

Contains Chicago lectures,
Karma Yogam & Raja Yogam.

Excellent get-up

VOL. I Price Rs. 2.

	To subscribers of Ordinary R.K. Vijayam	
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Sri Ramakrishna Vachanamritam Part I ...	1 8 0	1 6 0
Karma Yogam by Swami Vivekananda ...	0 12 0	0 10 0
The Universe and Man by Swami Ramakrishnananda. ...	0 12 0	0 10 0
Bhakti Yogam ...	0 10 0	0 8 0
Life Sketch of Sri Ramakrishna by Swami Chidbhavananda ...	0 8 0	0 7 0
Life Sketch of Swami Vivekananda ...	0 8 0	...
Epistles of Swami Vivekananda Part I ...	0 8 0	0 6 0
India and Her Problem ...	0 8 0	0 7 0
Words of the Master by Swami Brahmananda ...	0 8 0	0 7 0
Do. Paper ...	0 5 0	0 4 0
Path of Devotion by Swami Paramananda ...	0 5 0	0 4 0
Chicago Address by Swami Vivekananda ...	0 5 0	0 4 0
Pavhari Baba ...	0 3 0	...
My Plan of Campaign by Swami Vivekananda. ...	0 3 0	...
God in Everything ...	0 2 0	...
Path to Perfection by Swami Ramakrishnananda ...	0 2 0	...
Nataraja Vadiyam and Thillai Thirunadanam by Swami Vipulananda ..	0 2 0	0 1 6
Vidhivasam ...	0 0 6	...
Raja Yogam by Swami Vivekananda ...	1 4 0	1 2 0
Balabodha Vivekananda by Swami Kedareswarananda ...	0 7 0	...
Sarada Devi Charitam ...	0 6 0	...

The "Vedanta Kesari" Office, Mylapore, Madras.

Editors : Swami Amriteswarananda and Swami Tapasyananda.

Publisher : Swami Hrishikesananda.

Printed by : Mr. V. Sundram Iyer at the Kesari Printing Works, Madras.