

Trabuddha Bharata

Arise ! Awake ! and stop not till the goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

BHAKTI—VIII

DEVOTION to God would increase in the same proportion as attachment to sense objects would decrease.

THE more Radha neared Sri Krishna, the stronger did she perceive a sweet fragrance. The nearer one approaches God, the more is one's heart flooded with blessed feeling and love for Him. The nearer a river comes to the ocean, it is marked with more ebb and flow.

THE Ganges of even current flows in the heart of the Jnani. To him it is all like a dream, he remains absorbed in his own Self. But in a Bhakta, it is not so ; he has the ebb and flow in him, he laughs, cries, dances and sings, moved by different emotions. The Bhakta loves to live in and enjoy God's Presence—in that Ocean of Bliss he loves to cast himself, sometimes swimming, sometimes sinking, and again floating, like as a block of ice dances in water, tossing up and down.

To B :—The renunciation of karma comes of itself when the love of God swells up in the heart. Let them work

who are made to do so by God. The time is ripe for you to do away with it. Renounce everything and say "O my mind, come and let us together watch the Divinity installed in the heart."

TAKE refuge in God and forsake shame and fear. "If I dance in the name of God, what would others say?"—cast off all such ideas.

GOD can never appear where there are shame, hatred and fear.

IT is a rare thing—this love of God. Bhakti can only occur when there is a whole-hearted devotedness to God like that of a wife for her husband. Pure Bhakti is so very difficult to obtain. In Bhakti, the mind and the soul must be absorbed in God. Then comes *Bhava*, (the higher form of Bhakti). In *Bhava* a man becomes speechless, his breath is stilled, the *Kumbhaka* (a process of Yoga) sets in of itself. like as when one shoots at an aim one becomes speechless and one's breath is stopped.

LECTURES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

II

STEPS OF HINDU PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT

(Concluded from page 138)

Next comes the higher Vedantic Philosophy which says that this cannot be. God is both the material and the efficient cause of this universe. If you say there is a God who is an infinite being, and a soul which is also infinite, and Nature which is also infinite, you can go on multiplying infinities until there are twenty thousand jumping about together, which is simply absurd; you smash through all logic. So God is both the material and the efficient cause of the universe; He projects this universe out of Himself. Then how is it that God has become these walls, and this table, that God has become the pig, and the murderer, and all the evil things in the world? We say that God is pure. How can He become all these degenerate things? Our answer is, just as I am a soul, and have a body, this body is not different from me in a sense, yet I, the real I, in fact am not the body. For instance, I say, I am a child, a young man, or an old man, but my soul has not changed. It remains the same soul. Similarly the whole universe, comprising all Nature and an infinite number of souls, is, as it were, the infinite body of God. He is interpenetrating the whole of it. He alone is unchangeable, but Nature changes, and soul changes. He is un-

affected by changes in Nature and soul. In what way does Nature change? In its forms; it takes fresh forms. But the soul cannot change that way. The soul contracts and expands in knowledge. It contracts by evil deeds; those deeds which contract the real natural knowledge and purity of the soul are called evil deeds. Those deeds, again, which bring out the natural glory of the soul, are called good deeds. All these souls were pure, but they have become contracted; through the mercy of God, and by doing good deeds, they will expand and recover their natural purity. Every one has the same chance and in the long run, must get out. But this universe will not cease, because it is eternal. This is the second theory. The first is called dualism. The second holds that there are God, soul, and Nature, and soul [and Nature form the body of God, and therefore these three form one unit. It is called qualified monism. In dualism, the universe is conceived as a large machine set going by God, while in qualified monism it is conceived as an organism, interpenetrated by the Divine Self.

The last are the non-dualists. They raise the question also that God must be both the material and the efficient cause of this universe. As such, God

has become the whole of this universe and there is no going against it. And as to what these other people say, that God is the soul, and the universe is the body, and the body is changing, but God is changeless, they say all this is nonsense. In that case what is the use of calling God the material cause of this universe? The material cause is the cause become effect; the effect is nothing but the cause in another form. Whenever you see an effect, it is the cause reproduced. If the universe is the effect, and God the cause, it must be the reproduction of God. If you say that the universe is the body of God, and that body becomes contracted and fine and becomes the cause, and out of that the universe is evolved, they say it is God Himself who has become this universe. Now comes a very fine question. If this God has become this universe, you and all these things are God. Certainly. This book is God, everything is God. My body is God, and my mind is God, and my soul is God. Then why are there so many *jivas*? Has God become divided into millions and millions of *jivas*? Does that one God appear as millions of *jivas*? Then how did it become so? How can that infinite power and substance, the one Being of the universe become divided? It is impossible to divide infinity. How can the pure Being become this universe? If He has become the universe He is changeful and if He is changeful He is part of Nature, and whatever is Nature and changeful is born and dies. If our God is changeful He must die some day. Take care of that. Again, how much of God has become this universe? If you say X (the unknown

algebraical quantity), then God is God minus X now, and therefore not the same God as before this creation, because so much has become this universe. So the non-dualists say "This universe does not exist at all; it is all illusion. The whole of this universe, these Devas, these gods and angels, being born and dying, all this infinite number of souls coming up and going down, are all a dream." There is no *jiva* at all. How can there be many? It is the one Infinity. As the one sun reflected on various pieces of water appears to be many, millions of globules of water reflect so many millions of suns and in each globule will be a perfect image of the sun, yet there is only one sun, so are we all. So are all these *jivas* but reflections on different minds. These different minds are like so many different globules, reflecting this one Being. God is being reflected in all these different *jivas*. But a dream cannot be without a reality, and that reality is that one infinite existence. You, as body, mind, or soul, are a dream, but what you really are, is existence, knowledge, bliss. You are the God of this universe. You are creating the whole universe and drawing it in. Thus says the Advaitist. So all these births and rebirths, coming and going are the figments of *maya*. You are infinite. Where can you go? The sun, the moon, and the whole universe are but a drop in your transcendent nature. How can you be born or die? I never was born, never will be born, I never had father or mother, friends or foes, for I am Existence, Knowledge, Bliss absolute. I am He, I am He. So, what is the goal, according to this Philosophy? That those who receive this

knowledge are one with the universe, for them all heavens and even Brahmaloaka are destroyed, the whole dream vanishes, and they find themselves the eternal God of the universe. They attain their real individuality, with its infinite knowledge and bliss and become free. Pleasures in little things cease. We are finding pleasure in this little body, in this little individuality. How much greater the pleasure when this whole universe is my body! If there is pleasure in one body, how much more when all bodies are mine. That man has attained to freedom, gone beyond, and this is called Advaita, the non-dualistic Vedanta Philosophy.

These are the three steps which Vedanta Philosophy has taken, and we cannot go any further, because we cannot go beyond unity. When a science reaches a unity, it cannot by any manner of means go any further. You cannot go beyond this idea of the Absolute.

All people cannot take up this Advaita philosophy; it is hard. First of all it is very hard to understand it intellectually. It requires the sharpest of intellects, a bold understanding. Secondly, it does not suit the vast majority of people. So there are these three steps. Begin with the first one. Then by thinking of that and understanding it, the second will open itself. Just as a race travels, so individuals have to travel. The steps which the human race has taken to come to the highest pinnacles of religious thought, every individual will have to take. Only, while the human race took millions of years to reach from one step to another, some may reach it quickly, perhaps in six months. But each one of us will have to go through these steps.

Those of you who are non-dualists, look back to the period of your lives when you were strong dualists. As soon as you think you are a body and a mind, you will have to take the whole of this dream. If you have one piece you must take the whole. The man who says here is this world, and there is no God (personal), is a fool; because if there is a world there will have to be a cause of the world, and that is what is called God. You cannot have an effect without knowing that there is a cause. God will only vanish when this world vanishes, then you will become God (absolute) and this world will then be no longer for you. So long as the dream that you are a body exists, you are bound to see yourself as being born and dying, but as soon as that dream vanishes, will the dream vanish that you are being born and dying, so will the other dream that there is a universe vanish, and that very thing which we now see as the universe will appear to us as God (absolute) and that very God who has so long been external, will appear to be internal, as our own Self

ONE of our great needs is the discovery that we build our own spiritual prisons, that we are frightened at our own self-evolved hobgoblins, that we shudder before home-made Gods and Hells. In a way this can be proved: and it can perhaps best be proved by tracing the march of Man through his jungles and his battle-fields. From what evil dreams has he awakened! What delusions has he outgrown! What winter-terrors have disappeared with fresh summer dawns! Already he is smiling as he looks back to his half-savage, half-childish atrocities and fears.—*Light.*

NOTES ON THE IDEALS OF THE INDIAN WOMEN

AS the light of dawn breaks on the long curving street of the Indian village, the chance passer-by may see at every door some kneeling woman busied with the ceremony of the Salutation of the Threshold. A pattern drawn on the ground in lines of white rice-flour with blossoms placed within it at central points remains for a few hours to mark the fact that cleansing and worship have been performed. The joy of home finds silent speech in the artistic zest of the design. Wealth or poverty is betrayed according as the flowers are a bright net-work of winter gourd blossoms, a stiff little row of two or three white daisies or some other offering, more or less humble as the case may be. But everywhere we read a habit of thought to which all things are symbolistic; the air upon the doorsill full of dim boding and suggestiveness as to the incomings and the outgoings which the day shall witness; and the morning opening and setting-wide the door, an act held to be no way safe unless done by one who will brood in doing it upon the divine security and benediction of her beloved.

Such thought was the fashion of a very ancient world—the world in which myths were born, out of which religions issued and wherein vague and mysterious ideas of “luck” originated. The custom bears its age upon its brow. For thousands of years must Indian women have risen at dawn to perform the Salutation of the Threshold. Thousands of years of simplicity and patience like the patience of the peasant, like that of the grass, speak in the beautiful rite. It is this patience of woman that makes civilizations. It is

this patience of the Indian woman mingled with this large power of reverie, that has made and makes the Indian nationality.

For the habit of the country, in and by itself, is complete and organic. The steps by which it manifests its orderly unfolding are sequent and harmonious, and imply none of those violent digressions known as progress and reform. The women of Bengal worship their husbands and serve their children and their households, with the rapt idealism of the saints. The women of Maharashtra are as strong and determined as any in the West. The Rajputana queen prides herself on the unflinching courage of her race that would follow the husband even into the funeral fire, yet will not allow a king to include his wife amongst his subjects. The woman of Madras struggles even with agony to reach the spiritual pole-star, and builds up, again and again like some careful beaver, any fragment of her wall of custom that the resistless tides of the modern world may attempt to break away. And the daughters of Guzerat are, like the women of merchant-peoples everywhere, soft and silken and flower-like, dainty and clinging as a dream. Or we may penetrate into the Moslem zenana, to find the same graceful Indian womanhood, sometimes clad in the *Sari*, sometimes in the short Turkish jacket, but ever the self-same gentle and beautiful wifehood and motherhood, though here it beats its breast and cries upon Ali and Hussain instead of prostrating itself before some image.

Nor is there any real monotony of type. Every order of woman finds its strong individ-

ual representation. Brunehild herself was not more heroic than thousands of whom the Rajput chronicles tell. Nay, in the supreme act of her life, the mystic death on the throne of flame beside the dead Siegfried, many a quiet little Bengalee woman has been her peer. Joan of Arc was not more a patriot than the wonderful queen of Jhansi, who in the year 1857 fought in person with the British troops. The children of men who saw it talk to this day of the form of this woman's father swinging on the gibbet high above the city walls, hanged there by his daughter's orders after she had killed him with her sword, for the crime of making a treaty with the English to deliver the keys into their hands. They talk, too, of her swift rush across the drowsy midday camp at the head of her troops, her lance poised to pierce, her bay mare Lakshmi straining every muscle, the whizz of the charge so unexpected that only here and there a dazed white soldier could gather presence of mind to fire a shot at the cavalcade already passed. And old men still sing her glory with tears choking their voice.

The Rani of Jhansi was no purdah woman. She was a Mahratta with a passion for her country, and practised since girlhood in the chase. She had been the real head of the kingdom ever since her marriage, for her husband was only a handsome figure-head, who spent in making feeble poetry the time he might have given to rule or to his wife. Her life had been in fact as solitary as that of a mediæval saint. And her ostensible reason for fighting was the right to adopt an heir. There has always indeed been a great development of the political faculty amongst Mahratta women. It is well known that long before the time of Jhansi, the great Sivaji owed the inspiration that led to the national re-awakening to his mother, rather than his father.

The custom of secluding women is thus not nearly so universal in India as is imagined by people who gather their ideas from unreliable accounts of the woes of high-caste women in Bengal. The lower classes move freely in all countries, for household work and the earning of their livelihood compel; and in the aristocratic closeness of her retreat, the Mahomedan woman ranks first, the Rajput second and only thirdly the Bengali, the screen is always more easily lifted for the Hindu than for the Moslem. A thousand considerations intervene to mitigate its severity in the case of the former. And in the South and West it is actually non-existent. By this it is not to be understood that any Hindu women meet men outside their kindred with the same freedom and frankness as their Western sisters. Very old adaptations of the Ramayana shew us the brother-in-law who has never looked higher than the heroine's feet, and the wife who blushes rather than mention her husband's name. But this power of the individual to isolate himself in the midst of apparently unrestrained social intercourse is necessary in all communities, and has its correspondences in Western society itself. Freedom is granted only to those who are self-disciplined. It might be added too that a true wife has as little occasion to realize the possible jealousy of her husband in the East as in the West and that an unreasonable fit of suspicion would be considered the same weakness and insult by the one society as by the other. Yet the liberty of Madras and Bombay for all its limitations is a reality and in the province of Malabar woman is actually in the ascendancy. The curious country of learned matriarchs and kings who rule as the regents of their sisters will have many disclosures to make to the world, when India shall have produced a sufficient number of competent sociologists of her own blood. It is commonly said to

be characteristically polyandrous, but it is not so in the same sense as Thibet. For no woman regards herself as the wife of two men at once. The term matriarchal is more accurate inasmuch as the husband visits his wife in her own home and the right of inheritance is through the mother.

Thus, far from India's being the land of the uniform oppression of woman by uniform method, it represents the whole cycle of feminist institutions. There is literally no theory of feminine rights and position, that does not find illustration somewhere within its limits. If we ask for the dominion of individual beauty and charm, there is the queen to whom the Taj was built. Or the "four perfect women" of Islam—the foster-mother of Moses, Mary the Madonna, Khadiza and Fatima—offer a world in themselves including each of the main types of grave, sweet womanhood, according as her power is temporal or spiritual, individualistic or communal in its display.

But if we look for the unique dignity of ethical achievement for the translation of wifehood not into a novel, but into a religion, we must turn to the Hindu life, suffused as that is with the pursuit of the ideals of the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Puranas. Savitri, the Indian Alcestis; Sati, who gave up the body as one carelessly throws aside a mantle, because it had been guilty of hearing her father abuse her husband; Uma, who wooed the great God with penances; and Sita, divine embodiment of steadfastness and strength; all these are held as the great Hindu exemplars from Malabar to Nepal.

Throughout Asia where social theory has never been confused by the existence of a privileged class regarded as the type, labour, rising into Government, stands side by side with prayer and motherhood as the main opportunities of woman. The cowhouse, the

dairy, the kitchen, the granary, the chapel, with a hundred other offices, divide the attention of the ladies of the household. A rich family will have its large cooking room for the cooks, and in addition, not one, but a series of kitchens, for the use of wife and daughters. Old houses are built with their finest gardens and orchards accessible only from the zenana. Nothing is more noticeable in the lives of Indian women than the readiness and spontaneity with which work is sub-divided and the peaceable way in which it is carried out. This is most striking in regard to the preparation of food. Every Indian woman is a cook, often highly skilled, and some years ago there was no compliment so great as an invitation from a neighbouring family, on the occasion of some important festivity, to come and help with the *cuisine*. Even Hindu society, however, is affected by the ideals of Western organization and emergency. Work nowadays tends more and more to be laid on the shoulders of Brahman servants, imported for the occasion.

Modern sociologists say that the theory of the equality of man and woman is essentially a phenomenon of coast life and fisher communities. It is interesting to note in this regard that in the fishing villages outside Calcutta, the wife buys his take from the husband and sells it in the market at her own risk. If on his way home her man has disposed of his load to some merchant, she will follow the matter up and buy it back for her own trade. Possibly the same process of keeping an account against the husband is gone through in Madras and Bombay also, for in all parts of India, it is the woman who brings the fish to the bazar. In this class, there is no question of seclusion, and the fisher-wife in the matter of her freedom and responsibilities is a European woman.

A like liberty obtained, however, amongst

the women of the Sanskrit drama. Whatever be the date or the play of Kalidasa, it is evident that that traditional story of Shakuntala round which it is constructed, must have pictured her as studying with the boy disciples of her father and receiving his guests during his absence in unquestioned propriety. It is to be inferred then that such a code of manners was not inconsonant with the memories and the general ideas of the race who transmitted the tale, and if this be so, it cannot be natural to Hindus to cloister and veil their womankind.

But we cannot on the other hand admit that the seclusion of woman is a custom introduced into India by a kind of Mahomedan contamination. This thoughtless explanation, even if historical, would only drive the question a point further,—what induced the Musalman to screen his women? It is unfortunate, for those who hold the theory, that Islam derives the religious sanction of its social institutions from Arabia and that the Arab woman is said to enjoy considerable freedom and power. Hence it would seem that even the Mahomedan adopted the practice from Persia, from China or from Greece. If he, again, had been responsible for the custom in India, we might have expected that in the neighbourhood of Delhi and Agra, the capitals of the Mogul empire, Hindu *pardah* would have been the strictest. This, however, is not the case, Rajputana and Bengal being far more deeply permeated by the habit. The degradation of attempting to explain away a reproach by fastening it on some one else is surely obvious. We must seek elsewhere for the reason of a convention that seems almost instinctive in certain parts of the Orient.

There is some degree of truth in the supposition that society in a military state tends to seclude its women. The mistake probably lies in thinking that this is the only factor

in moral evolution that affects their position in this way. Rather it would appear that amongst the primary occupations of mankind,—hunting, fishing, tillage and what not,—there is a distinct tendency to promote different types of institutions. Other things being equal, those occupations that imply a sustained and arduous conquest of Nature tend to equality of rights and similarity of manners for men and women, whereas, under long-settled conditions from which anxiety is somewhat eliminated, there is a progressive inclination towards divergence of their lines of activity, accompanied by the more complete surrender of woman to the protection of man. Thus an important feature of the Hindu as of the Anglican wedding ceremony is the fact that her father “gives away” the bride into the keeping of her husband.

The tendency to divergence of function would be accelerated in Asia by the nature of the climate which makes stillness and passivity the highest luxury. This fact again combines with military prepossessions to make the custom of seclusion especially characteristic of royal households and having once achieved such social prestige, it speedily extends over wide areas. It may be pointed out that even in Europe, the freedom of woman differs widely with her nationality, and that in England and America the accumulation of fortune is often an influence towards restricting the social intercourse of the women of the wealthy family.

If this theory be correct, it would explain the freedom of woman in India during the first Aryan period as an outcome of the struggle with earth and forest. The early immigration of agricultural races across the Himalayas from Central Asia must have meant a combat with Nature of the severest kind. It was a combat in which the wife was the helpmeet of the husband. If he cleared the jungle and hunted the game, she

had to help in field and garden. The Aryan population was scanty and she must be ready to take his place. Vicissitudes were many. At a moment's notice, she must be prepared to meet an emergency, brave, cheerful and self-helpful. In such a life, woman must move as easily as man.

It was far otherwise however when the country was cleared, agriculture established on the Aryan scale and when the energy of of the race was concentrated on the higher problem of conserving and extending its culture of the mind and spirit. It is doubtful whether Indian philosophy could ever have been completed on any other terms than those of the seclusion of woman. "This world is all a dream: God alone is real,"—such an ultimatum could hardly have been reached in a society like that of Judaism where love and beauty were avowed before all as the seal of divine approval on a successful life. Not that India despises these happy gifts. But they are the joys of the householder in her eyes, not of the spiritual seer. "The religion of the wife lies in serving her husband: the religion of the widow lies in serving God," say the women, and there is no doubt in their minds that the widow's call is higher.

But while we talk of the seclusion of woman as if it were a fact, we must be careful to guard against misconception. In society and in the streets of Indian cities, it is practically true that we see men alone. This fact makes it a possibility for the religious to pass his life without looking on the face of any woman save such as he may call "mother." Inside the home, if we penetrate so far, we shall probably meet with none but women. But if we live there, day after day, we shall find that every woman has familiar intercourse with some man or men in the family. The relation between brothers and sisters-in-law is all gaiety and sweetness. Scarcely any

children are so near to a woman as the sons of her husband's sisters. It is the proud prerogative of these, whatever be their age, to regard her as their absolute slave. There is a special delicacy of affection between the husband's father and the daughter-in-law. Cousins count as brothers and sisters. And from the fact that every woman has her rightful place in some family, it follows that there is more healthy human intercourse with men in almost every Hindu woman's life than in those of thousands of single women living alone or following professional career in the suburbs of London and other Western cities. It is a social intercourse, too, that is full of a refined and delicate sense of humour. Men who have been to Europe always declare that the zenana woman stands unrivalled in her power of repartee. English fun is apt to strike the Indian as a little loud. How charming is the Bengali version of the "bad penny that always turns up" in "I am the broken cowrie that has been to seven markets," that is, "I may be worthless, but I am knowing."

We are apt to think only of that towards which we aspire, as an ideal. We rarely think of those assimilated ideals that reveal themselves as custom. Yet if we analyse the conventions that dominate an Indian woman's life, we cannot fail to come upon a great ideal of self-control. The closeness and intimacy of the family life, and the number of the interests that have to be considered, have no doubt made strict discipline necessary for the sake of peace. Hence a husband and wife may not address each other in the presence of others. A wife may not name her husband, much less praise him, and so on. Only little children are perfectly untrammelled and may bestow their affection when and where they will. All these things are for the protection of the community, lest it be outraged by the parading of a relationship

of intimacy, or victimised by an enthusiasm which it could not be expected to share.

This constant and happy subordination of oneself to others does not strike the observer, only because it is so complete. It is not the characteristic of the specially developed individual alone, for it is recognised and required, in all degrees of delicacy, by society at large. Unselfishness and the desire to serve stand out in the Western personality against a background of individualistic institutions, and convey an impression of the eagerness and struggle of pity, without which the world would certainly be the poorer. But the Eastern woman is unaware of any defiance of institutions. Her charities are required of her. Her vows and penances are unknown, even to her husband, but were they told, they would excite no remark in a community where all make similar sacrifices. This is only to say that she is more deeply self-effacing and more effectively altruistic than any Western. The duty of tending the sick is so much a matter of course that it would not occur to her to erect a hospital or to attempt to learn nursing. Here she misses something doubtless, for the modern organisation of skill has produced a concentration of attention on method that avails to save much suffering. Still, we must not too readily assume that our own habit of massing together all the sick and hungry and insane and isolating them in worlds visited throughout with like afflictions to their own proceeds entirely from a sense of humanity on our part, though it has not failed to secure some excellent results.

Much is sometimes made of the fact that Gautama Buddha, brought face to face with weariness, disease and death, went forth to find for man a new religion, whereas the Christ put out His hand to heal the leper and raise the dead. It would be cruel at such a juncture to point out that both these great

personages were orientals, manifesting different phases of the Asiatic attitude towards pain. It is better, leaving to Europe her unaccountable assumption that she has some exclusive right in the Teacher of Galilee, to enter into the question as it appears to the Eastern mind, on its own merits. So viewed, it would be pointed out that the dead raised must still die again, that the leper healed was still in danger of disease, whereas Nirvana means release as it were into a new dimension, whereupon no consciousness of either health or sickness can ever intrude. Again taking the story of Buddha as it stands, we must remember its background of the *Jataka* Birth stories. And here we see that the Great Renunciation is only accounted for in the eyes of the Indian people by the unwrought power of the sacrifice of his own life repeated five hundred times for the immediate good of others. The establishment of hundreds of hospitals for men and beasts, nay, the filling of countless hearts with pity and with peace, are only some of the results of prince Siddhartha's choice.

Women are the guardians of humanity's ethical ideals. The boy would not volunteer to carry the dead to the burning-ghat, if his mother had not brought him up from babyhood to admire the deed. The husband would not be so strenuous to return home at his best, if his wife did not understand and appreciate his noblest side. But more than this, they are themselves the perpetual illustrations of those ideals. The words, "He that will be chief among you, let him be your servant," fall on Western ears with a certain sense of sublime paradox. But the august speaker uttered the merest truism of that simple Eastern world in which He moved. He roused no thrill of surprise in the minds of His hearers. For to each, his own mother was chief and yet servant of all.

Those who, knowing the East, read the list

of the seven corporal works of mercy, may well start to imagine themselves back in the Hindu home, watching its laborious, pious women as they move about their daily tasks, never forgetting that the first necessity is to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to clothe the naked, to harbour the harbourless, and the like, and that till these things are done, their own wants must not be met.

Truly the East is eternally the mother of religions, simply solely because she has assimilated as ordinary social functions what the West holds to be only the duty of officialism, or the message of the church. To those who deeply understand, it may well seem that Christianity in Europe is neither more nor less than a vast mission of the Asiatic Life.

NIVEDITA

LEO TOLSTOY'S APPEAL TO THE CLERGY

WHETHER you may be : popes, cardinals, bishops, or pastors, of whatever Church, forego for a while your assurance that you are the only true disciples of the God Christ, and remember that you are first of all men : and ask yourselves what you are doing. Your whole life is devoted to preaching, maintaining, and spreading among men a teaching which you say was revealed to you by God Himself, and is, therefore, the only one that is true, and brings redemption.

To whichever one of the so-called Christian Churches you may belong, you acknowledge that your teaching is quite accurately expressed in the articles of belief formulated at the Council of Nicæa 1,600 years ago. Those articles of belief are as follows :

First : There is a God the Father (the first person of a Trinity), who has created the sky and the earth, and all the angels who live in the sky.

Second : There is only one Son of God the Father, not created, but born (the second person of the Trinity). Through this Son the world was made.

Third : This Son, to save people from sin and death (by which they were all punished for the disobedience of their forefather Adam), came down to the earth, was made flesh by the Holy Ghost and the virgin Mary, and became a man.

Fourth : This Son was crucified for the sins of men.

Fifth : He suffered and was buried, and rose on the third day, as had been foretold in Hebrew books.

Sixth : Having gone up into the sky, the Son seated himself at his Father's right side.

Seventh : This Son of God will, in due time, come again to the earth to judge the living and the dead.

Eighth : There is a Holy Ghost (the third person of the Trinity) who is equal to the Father, and who spoke through the prophets.

Ninth : (held by some of the largest Churches) : There is one holy, infallible Church (or, more exactly the Church to which he who makes the confession belongs is held to be unique, holy, and infallible). This Church consists of all who believe in it, living or dead.

Tenth : (also for some of the largest

Churches): There exists a sacrament of baptism, by means of which the power of the Holy Ghost is communicated to those who are baptised.

Eleventh: At the second coming of Christ the souls of the dead will re-enter their bodies, and these bodies will be immortal ; and

Twelfth: After the second coming, the just will have eternal life in paradise on a new earth under a new sky, and sinners will have eternal life in the torments of hell.

The above twelve points embrace the fundamental positions of that truth which you say has been revealed to you by God himself for the redemption of man. Some of you preach these doctrines simply as they are expressed ; others try to give them an allegorical meaning, more or less in accord with present-day knowledge and common sense ; but you all alike are bound to confess, and do confess, these statements to be the exact expression of that unique truth which God himself has revealed to you, and which you preach to men for their salvation.

Very well. You have had the one truth capable of saving mankind revealed to you by God himself. It is natural for men to strive towards truth, and when it is clearly presented to them they are always glad to accept it, and be guided by it.

And, therefore, to impart this saving truth revealed to you by God himself, it would seem sufficient, plainly and simply, verbally, and through the Press, to communicate it with reasonable persuasion to those capable of receiving it.

But how have you preached this truth ?

From the time a society calling itself the Church was formed, your predecessors taught this truth chiefly by violence. They laid down the truth, and punished those who did not accept it.

Another means was through external action on people's feelings—by solemnity of setting, pictures, music, even dramatic performances, and oratorical art.

But all the strength of the clergy is now directed to a third and most powerful method, that of instilling Church doctrine into people who are not in a position to judge of what is given them : for instance, into quite uneducated working people who have no time for thought, and chiefly into children, who accept indiscriminately what is imparted to them and on whose minds it remains permanently impressed.

This teaching generally begins with what is called Scripture History : that is to say, with selected passages from the Bible : the Hebrew books of the Old Testament, which according to your teaching are the work of the Holy Ghost, and are therefore not only unquestionably true, but also holy. From this history your pupil draws his first notions of the world, of the life of man, of good and evil, and of God.

This Scripture History begins with a description of how God, the ever-living, created the sky and the earth 6,000 years ago out of nothing ; how he afterwards created beasts, fishes, plants, and finally man : Adam, and Adam's wife, who was made of one of Adam's ribs. Then it describes how, fearing lest the man and his wife should eat an apple which had the magic quality of giving knowledge, he forbade them to eat that apple ; how,

notwithstanding this prohibition, the first people ate the apple, and were therefore expelled from Paradise; and how all their descendants were therefore cursed, and the earth was cursed also, so that since then it has produced weeds. Then the life of Adam's descendants is described: how they became so perverted that God not only drowned them all, but drowned all the animals with them, and left alive only Noah and his family and the animals he took into the ark. Then it is described how God chose Abraham alone of all people, and made an agreement with him; which agreement was that Abraham was to consider God to be God, and, as a sign of this, was to be circumcised. On his side, God undertook to give Abraham a numerous progeny, and to patronise him and all his offspring. Then it tells how God, patronising Abraham and his descendants, performed on their behalf most unnatural actions called miracles, and most terrible cruelties. So that the whole of this history—excepting certain stories, which are sometimes naive (as the visit of God with two angels to Abraham, the marriage of Isaac, and others), and are sometimes innocent, but are often immoral (as the swindles of God's favorite, Jacob, the cruelties of Samson, and the cunning of Joseph),—the whole of this history, from the plagues Moses called down upon the Egyptians, and the murder by an angel of all their first-born, to the fire that destroyed 250 conspirators, and the tumbling into the ground of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and the Destruction of 14,700 men in a few minutes, and on to the sawing in pieces of enemies with

saws, and the execution of the priests who did not agree with him by Elijah (who rode up into the sky), and to the story of Elisha, who cursed the boys that laughed at him, so that they were torn in pieces, and eaten by two bears,—all this history is a series of miraculous occurrences and of terrible crimes, committed by the Hebrew people, by their leaders, and by God himself.

Your teaching of the New Testament consists not in its moral teaching, not in the Sermon on the Mount, but in conformity of the Gospels with the stories of the Old Testament, in the fulfilment of prophecies, and in miracles, the movement of a star, songs from the sky, talk with the devil, the turning of water into wine, walking on the water, healings, calling people back to life, and, finally, the resurrection of Jesus Himself, and His flying up into the sky.

If all these stories, both from the Old and New Testaments, were taught as a series of fairy-tales, even then hardly any teacher would decide to tell them to children and adults he desired to enlighten. But these tales are imparted to people unable to reason, as though they were the most trustworthy description of the world and its laws, as if they gave the truest information about the lives of those who lived in former times, of what should be considered good and evil, of the existence and nature of God, and of the duties of man.

People talk of harmful books! But is there in Christendom a book that has done more harm to mankind than this terrible book, called "Scripture History from the Old and New Testaments"? And all the men and women of Christen-

dom have to pass through a course of this Scripture History during their childhood, and this same history is also taught to ignorant adults as the first and most essential foundation of knowledge,—as the one, eternal, truth of God.

You cannot introduce a foreign substance into a living organism without the organism suffering, and sometimes perishing, from its efforts to rid itself of this foreign substance. What terrible evil to a man's mind must, then, result from this rendering of the teaching of the Old and New Testaments—foreign alike to present day knowledge, to common sense, and to moral feeling—and instilled into him at a time when he is unable to judge, but accepts all that is given him !

Every man comes into the world with a consciousness of his dependence on a mysterious, all-powerful Source which has given him life, and consciousness of his equality with all men, the equality of all men with one another, a desire to love and be loved, and consciousness of the need of striving towards perfection. But what do you instil into him ?

Instead of the mysterious Source of which he thinks with reverence, you tell him of an angry, unjust God, who executes and torments people.

Instead of the equality of all men, which the child and the simple men recognise with all their being, you tell them that not only people, but nations, are unequal ; that some of them are loved, and others are not loved, by God ; and that some people are called by God to rule, others to submit.

Instead of that wish to love and to be loved which forms the strongest desire

in the soul of every unperverted man, you teach him that the relations between men can only be based on violence, on threats, on executions ; and you tell him that judicial and military murders are committed not only with the sanction but at the command of God.

In place of the need of self-improvement, you tell him that man's salvation lies in belief in the Redemption, and that by improving himself by his own powers, without the aid of prayers, sacraments, and belief in the Redemption, man is guilty of sinful pride, and that for his salvation man must trust not to his own reason, but to the commands of the Church, and must do what she decrees.

It is terrible to think of the perversion of thought and feeling produced in the soul of a child or an ignorant adult by such teaching.

The well-known preacher, Pere Didon, in the introduction to his *Vie de Jésus-Christ*, announces that he believes, not in some allegorical sense but plainly, without explanations, that Christ, having risen, was carried up into the sky, and sits there at the right hand of his father.

An illiterate Samara peasant of my acquaintance, in reply to the question whether he believed in God, simply and firmly replied, as his priest told me : "No, sinner that I am, I don't believe." His disbelief in God the peasant explained by saying that one could not live as he was living if one believed in God : "one scolds, and grudges help to a beggar, and envies, and over-eats and drinks. Could one do such things if one believed in God ?"

Pere Didon affirms that he has faith both in God and in the ascension of

Jesus, while the Samara peasant says he does not believe in God, since he does not obey His commandments.

Evidently Pere Didon does not even know what faith is, and only says he believes : while the Samara peasant knows what faith is, and, though he says he does not believe in God, really believes in him in the very way that is true faith.

What will happen if the people of Christendom cease to believe in Church doctrine? The result will be—that not the Hebrew legends alone but the religious wisdom of the whole world will become accessible and intelligible to them. People will grow up and develop with unperverted understandings and feelings. Having discarded a teaching accepted credulously, people will order their relation towards God reasonably, in conformity with their knowledge ; and will recognise the moral obligations that flow from that relation.

“ But,” I hear a last objection, “ will the result not be worse if we—educated, moral men, who desire to do good to the people—abandon our posts because of the doubts that have arisen in our souls, and let our places be taken by coarse, immoral men, indifferent to the people's good ?”

Undoubtedly the abandonment of the clerical profession by the best men, will have the effect that the ecclesiastical business passing into coarse, immoral hands, will more and more disintegrate, and expose its own falsity and harmfulness. But the result will not be worse, for the disintegration of ecclesiastical establishments is now going on, and is one of the means by which people are being liberated. And, therefore, the quick-

er this emancipation is accomplished, by enlightened and good men abandoning the clerical profession, the better it will be. And so, the greater the number of enlightened and good men who leave the clerical profession, the better.

I know that many of you are encumbered with families, or are dependent on parents who require you to follow the course you have begun ; I know how difficult it is to abandon a post that brings honor or wealth or even gives a competence and enables you and your families to continue a life to which you are accustomed, and I know how painful it is to go against relatives one loves. But anything is better than to do what destroys your own soul and injures your fellowmen.

Therefore, the sooner and more definitely you repent of your sin and cease your activity, the better it will be not only for others, but for yourselves.

That is what I—*standing now on the brink of my grave*, and clearly seeing the chief source of human ills—wished to say to you ; and to say not in order to expose or condemn you, but in order to co-operate in the emancipation of men from the terrible evil which the preaching of your doctrine produces, and at the same time to help you to rouse yourselves from the hypnotic sleep in which now you often fail to understand all the wickedness of your own actions.

May God, who sees your hearts, help you in the effort !

—*Condensed from the OPEN COURT.*

They were human ; they were imperfect men, those who wrote the Bible. They stumbled as we stumble.—*Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott.*

REVIEWS

SRI SANKARACHARYA : HIS LIFE AND TIMES by *C. N. Krishnasami Aiyar*, M.A., L.T., and **HIS PHILOSOPHY** by *Pandit Sitanath Tattvabhushan*.*

The book consists of two parts, the first dealing with the life and times of the great Acharyya and the second with his philosophy. We can understand the difficulty under which Mr. Aiyar, the writer of the first part, labours to collect the threads of what may be regarded as a more or less reliable and historic story of the Acharyya's life. His chief sources of information are the *Sankaravijayas*. It is disgusting to observe how the different writers of the *Sankaravijayas* differ in describing the same event and how they jumble together fact and fiction so that, as the writer complains, few of the facts of the Acharyya's life "can be narrated with certainty, not even the time and the place of his birth." Yet the writer must be credited for presenting in this brief sketch a connected account of, and thereby acquainting the reader with, the life and the works of one of his great national heroes. The description of the state of Hinduism at the time of his advent, the means and method of his work and the practical reforms he effected in the short period of his life shew how Sankara was the product of his age and help to form a proper appreciation of his tact, genius and and impressive personality. We congratulate Mr. Aiyar.

Defining philosophy as a reasoned theory "that endeavours to explain the mutual

relations of Nature, Man and God," the writer of the second part proceeds to shew that Sankara was not "a mere expounder of the utterances of the ancient sages of India," but he "reasons a good deal, and defends all his leading doctrines by arguments addressed to the understanding of his readers," and has therefore a system of philosophy of his own. What Sankara calls *Sruti* or Revelation is "nothing but spiritual insight and experience" and his appeal to Scripture is "not as to an external authority to be blindly received, but as to a valuable help to the attainment of true wisdom—wisdom which is attainable by every qualified seeker after truth." Then are set forth the main doctrines of his philosophy and his arguments in defence of each. We do not wish to undervalue Pandit Tattvabhushan's ability but we confess we cannot congratulate him on his present work. We cannot call his exposition of the Acharyya's philosophy happy. He has succeeded in giving us a skeleton of it, but, if we may say so, we would have liked a little life.

His treatment of the *pāramārthika* and the *vyāvahārika* existence of the world is pretty exhaustive but somewhat obscure.

What does he mean by stating "it is not easy to see what difference *in kind* exists between him (Sri Krishna) and other individuals" (p. 116)? Does not the Acharyya in his introduction to the Gita Bhashya and commentary of *shloka* 6, chapter IV of the Gita indicate all the difference that exists between an individual and the Lord Krishna? One is a bond-slave of Maya and the other the Master. What room in Sankara's doctrine of the rigorous unity of Selfhood of all existence is there of a question of the

* G. A. Natesan & Co., Esplanade, Madras. Price Re. One.

difference *in kind* between two individuals?

It is difficult to say how far his unfavourable attitude towards the doctrines accounts for it but his criticisms of the fact of the ability of action in the relative world by an incarnation of the Deity, an *ādḥikarika puruṣha* and a *jīvanmukta* (pp. 117, 118, 121) betray their origin in misunderstanding. What ground has Pandit Tattvabhushan for imagining that Sankara claims for these the state of "absolute liberation"? The "conflict" the Pandit refers to in p. 117 seems to be due to a confusion of ideas on his part. Nowhere does the Acharyya say that action is possible in the absolutely liberated. An incarnation of the Deity is no more in the state of absolute liberation than Sankara's lower Brahman is. The liberated soul who incarnates for doing good to the world and the *jīvanmukta* are not absolutely liberated as stated clearly by the Acharyya in his commentary on the 32nd aphorism of the 3rd *pada* of the 3rd chapter of the Vedānta Sūtras. We quote a portion: "As the present knowers of Brahman (*jīvanmuktas*) reach the state of absolute liberation after the enjoyment of those results of action, which have begun to operate, has come to an end, according to Ch. Up. VI. 14, 2., 'For him there is only delay so long as he is not delivered from the body'; so Aparāntamas and other lords (*ādḥikārīka puruṣhas*), to whom the highest Lord has entrusted certain offices, last—although they possess complete knowledge, the cause of release—as long as their office lasts, their works not yet being exhausted, and obtain release only when their office comes to an end."

YOGAVASHISHTHA MAHA-RAMAYANA. By *Pandit Thakur Prasad Sharma*. Published by *Rai Bahadur Lala Baijnath B. A., F. A. U.*, of the U. P. Judicial Service. *Samvat 1960, Bombay.**

We had the pleasure of reviewing, in September 1900, the first part of this volume published separately, comprising *Vairagya* and *Mumukshu Prakaranas*. This volume contains, in addition to the above two, *Utpatti*, *Sthiti* and *Upashama Prakaranas* of the Maha-Ramayana, with the original text in Sanskrit, followed by lucid Hindi translation. The priceless gems of our religion, being stored up in the chest of Sanskrit language, are in the possession of a Sanskrit knowing few. We cannot too much extol the works of men like *Pandit Thakur Prasad* and *Lala Baijnath*, who undertake to make them the common property of all by translating the Sanskrit writings in a language of the people. The get-up and the printing of the book are excellent.

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WE beg to acknowledge with thanks "The Way to Realization of Self," a class lecture by Ram Swami and "Brahmacharyya or Student-Life," a short treatise in Hindi by Visvesvarananda Sarasvati, with an introduction in English by a member of the Muzaffarpur T. S.

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THE annual reports of the Hindu Religious Union, Trichinopoly, for the years, 1899, 1900, 1901 and 1902, have been sent to us. The Union was started on the 10th November, 1895, with the objects, (1) "Opening Girls' schools to educate Hindu girls on the lines of their own religion, custom and morality, (2) Forming a Reading Room with a Library of useful religious books as would

* To be had of Pandit Sridhar Shivalal, Jnanasagar Press, Bombay. Price Rs. 5.

throw light on the comparative merits of several religions, (3) Arranging for periodical lectures on Hindu religion and philosophy, (4) Publishing tracts and pamphlets to enlighten the public on religion and (5) Helping the really poor students that prosecute their studies in Hindu schools and colleges." At present the Union has two Hindu Girls' Schools under its management. One was opened in 1896 and another in 1901. Last year, the number of girls on the rolls in the old school was 108 and that in the new 52. In addition to the compulsory subjects, the three R's, they are taught, as optional subjects, drawing, needle work, geography, hygiene, songs, *Kummi* (?) and *Kolattam* (?)

Kindergarten and object lessons have recently been introduced as optional subjects. Moral and religious instructions form the special feature of the schools. This is solid work. We regret want of space prevents us from noticing the other achievements of the Union, which are fair so far as they go and worthy of all praise. The institution is supported by monthly subscriptions and occasional donations. We heartily recommend the President's appeal to the public "to make this poor but useful Union an object of their help. Year after year the expenses of the Union are growing in proportion to its development and usefulness. The Union must have a decent building of its own to locate at least one of its Girls' Schools and the reading room and library, and a decent fund to fall back...The funds at the disposal of the Union do not permit the development which it requires and we earnestly appeal to the public at large to give us more help to enable us to carry on the work of the Union in the way it deserves."

Subscriptions and donations may be remitted to M. R. Ry. K. S. Ganapati Aiyar Avergal, M.A., M.L., President of the Hindu Religious Union, Trichinopoly, Madras.

NEWS AND NOTES

THE great iron bridge over the Danube near Jullor, which is nearly 800 yds. long and weighs 3,000 tons, has been shifted to a new position about 450 yds. distant. The whole work was done in 44 minutes.

THE Mexican postal department has taken a new and novel means of informing the public of weather bulletins given out by the weather bureau. Every letter which passes through the office is now stamped with the indications for the next twenty-four hours.

SWAMI SIVANANDA of Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Benares, acknowledges with thanks the receipt of Rs. 20 from Lala Badri Shah, Almora and Rs. 10 from Dr. Basudeo Sahai, Bisalpur, as contributions towards the maintenance of the Ashrama.

BABU MANINDRA NATH BANERJI, an officer under the Court of Wards at present acting as tutor to Rajkumar Janaknandan Sinha of Narhan in the district of Durbhanga, has been able to discover a most successful way of extracting and cleaning fibres from plantain-stalks.

ALL things come to him who works with confidence while he waits. The man who believes that happiness and success are for him, and goes to work to prove his belief with a heart full of hope and with a determination that nothing can discourage is the one who will know by experience that there is no such a word as fail.—*Light*.

IN a cave in Silesia a pool was filled with sightless fish. About a year ago the place was utilized as a store, when the electric light was installed. Since then many of the fish

have actually developed normal-looking optics. Formerly, when the cave was pitch dark, the eyes of the creatures were covered with a thick film.

THE English language—according to a German statistician who has made a study of the comparative wealth of languages—heads the list with the enormous vocabulary of 260,000 words. German comes next with 80,000 words; then Italian, with 75,000; French, with 30,000; Turkish with 22,500; and Spanish, with 20,000.

BEWARE, my son, of self-incense. It is the most dangerous on account of its agreeable intoxication. Profit by thine own wisdom, but learn to respect the wisdom of thy fathers also; learn, O my beloved, that the light of Allah's truth will often penetrate an empty head more easily than one too crammed with learning.

—*Barrachus Hassan Aglu, an Arab Sage.*

AFTER all other remedies fail, there still remains a way of getting rid of rats, and that is by depriving them of water. They can live for a very long time without food, and when hard pressed, will not hesitate to eat each other; but no rat can go twenty-four hours without drink. Therefore, if every possible means of obtaining water is taken from the rats, they will desert the vicinity.

THE power of endurance of the Chinese coolie is marvellous. Many will travel over forty miles, carrying a heavy load on their backs, and think nothing of it. A writer mentions the case of certain coolies who, after going twenty-seven hours without food and having carried a heavy burden in the meantime, still had strength enough left to offer to carry a man fifteen miles farther!

AFTER nearly thirty years of constant effort and the expenditure of nearly £100,000, scientists have succeeded in accurately measuring the earth. They have learned that its diameter through the Equator is 7,926 miles; its height from Pole to Pole 7,899 miles. The earth, therefore, is flattened at the Poles; and while this fact has long been asserted, the actual measurement has removed the question from the domain of doubt.

THE story of an unprecedented heart operation is telegraphed by the St. Louis correspondent of the *New York Herald*. A 13 years old girl in that city had been stabbed, and Dr. Boyle, of the city hospital, fearing that the knife had penetrated the heart, removed the organ with a pair of forceps, elevated it into view, and examined it for two minutes. No injury could be found, and the heart was put back in its place with no apparent injury to the patient. The actual removal was effected by cutting through two ribs and pushing the lung aside.

A REMARKABLE project is to be put into operation at Tacoma, Oregon. The scheme is to freeze fish alive, to ship them to Eastern markets and then by thawing them to restore them to life. The chief care to be observed is that the cold shall not exceed 14 degs. below freezing point, and that when in a frozen condition the fish shall not be exposed to the sun. The idea is based upon an act of Nature in some of the rivers and lakes in Alaska. These bodies of water freeze solid from surface to bottom during the winter. The ice is filled with fish which return to life in the summer.

IN connection with the first Anniversary of the Arya Matha Abivirthi Sangam of Coonoor, there was a public meeting on Saturday, the 19th September, between 4 and 5 P.M., at the

Empress Hall, Coonoor, with Captain P. C. Gabbit, I. M. S., District Medical and Sanitary Officer in the chair. The proceedings began with a recitation of the "Song of the Sannyasin" by Swami Vivekananda, by a member of the Sangam. Mr. N. Sambasiva Pillay, the Secretary, then read his report on the working of the Sangam. Mr. J. E. Jones of the Cordite Factory entertained the audience with Gramophone. The proceedings closed with a short address from the chair. In the course of the day, 700 to 800 poor were entertained in honour of the occasion.

A FRENCH scientist has made some interesting observations as to the love of different wild animals for the sea. The Polar bear, he says, is the only one that takes to the sea and is quite jolly when aboard ship. All others violently resent a trip on water, and vociferously give vent to their feelings until sea-sickness brings silence. The tiger suffers most of all. The mere sight of a ship makes him uncomfortable, and when on board he whines pitifully, his eyes water continually, and he rubs his stomach with his terrible paws. Horses are very bad sailors and often perish on a sea voyage. Oxen are heroic in their attempts not to give way to sickness. Elephants do not like the sea, but they are amenable to medical treatment.

It is reported that a new type-setting machine for composing by telegraph has recently been invented and is on exhibition in Paris. If all that is claimed concerning it is true, it certainly accomplishes wonderful results.

It consists in reality of four separate machines. The first resembles an ordinary typewriter, by means of which the characters are inscribed on a band of paper by a peculiar system of perforations. This can be telegraphed anywhere and distributed in thousands of copies without necessitating any transcrip-

tion. The band of paper, when it arrives in a printing office, is simply passed through the apparatus number four, and the composition is done. In this way news may be distributed among hundreds of newspapers and printed in a few minutes by means of a copy of the perforated matrix. The inventor of the machine is M. Rozar, a Hungarian, of Budapest, who has been working on his invention for a number of years.

Do not hesitate at any experiment because of its novelty, do not draw back from any way because you never have passed there before. The truth, the task, the joy, the suffering, on whose border you are standing, go into it without a fear.—*P. Brooks.*

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