

Prabuddha Bharat

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत.



प्राप्य वराणसगतम् ।

Katha Upan. I. III. 6

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

—Sri Sri Yickhananda

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

THE JNANI AND HIS BODILY ILLNESS

WHEN the mind is attached to the consciousness of the external world it sees gross objects and abides in the Annamaya-Kosha, —the physical sheath of the soul, which depends on food. When the mind turns itself inward, it is like shutting the door of a house and entering its inner apartments; that is to say, it goes from the gross into the subtle, thence into the causal, till it reaches the final causal state. In that state the mind is merged in the Absolute and nothing can be told.

PANDIT Sasadhara seeing the Master's illness asked him: Why dost thou not concentrate thy mind upon the diseased part and thus cure thyself?

The Bhagavan replied: How can I fix my mind which I have given to God, upon this cage of flesh and blood?

Sasadhara said: Why dost thou not pray to thy Divine Mother for cure of thy illness?

The Bhagavan answered: When I think of my Mother, the physical body vanishes and I am entirely out of it, so it is impossible for me to pray for anything concerning the body.

WHEN Sri Ramakrishna's illness was so bad that he could hardly speak or swallow any food, he exclaimed: I am how speaking and eating through so many mouths. I am the Soul of all the souls, I have infinite mouths. I am the Infinite Spirit covered by a human-skin which has a wound somewhere in the throat. When the body is ill, the illness reacts upon the mind. When one is burned by hot water one says: "The water has burned me," but the ~~trains~~ ~~heat~~ burns and not the water. All pain in the body, all disease is in the body but the Spirit is above pain and beyond the reach of disease.

THE Mother has brought on this illness in me to teach man how to illumine the Spirit and how to live in God ~~con~~ even when there is extreme pain ~~in~~ when the body is suffering from agony of pain and starvation, ~~where~~ ~~no~~ remedy within human power: even the Mother shows me that Spirit is the ~~owner~~ of the body. My Divine Mother has brought this illness upon this body to convince the sceptics that Atman is divine, that God-consciousness is true, that when one reaches perfection, freedom from all bondage is attained.

OCCASIONAL NOTES

WE fail oftentimes to give the deserved credit to the People for their part in the making of our Hindu culture. This defect prevents many of us from forming a true conception of the greatness of our People; it prevents us likewise from having a sense of true and organic nationalism and a truly-placed patriotism. The People are as much necessary in the history of any religious culture as its greatest exponents: What would even Sankaracharya be without the Sadhana of the People as the background of his sublime utterances! Sri Krishna and Sri Rama Themselves are only creations of the nation's faculty for idealising. Great men are the expression, the embodiment of great nations. Let us look, henceforth, at the character of the People through the perspective of the greatness of its representatives, and vice-versa. Then alone shall we understand that devotion to the Sages, aye even to God—and devotion to the People is identically the same and equally spiritual. Sankaracharya, Chaitanya, Ramanuja, Kabir, Guru Nanak and other makers of religious character in Hinduism are only the point of condensation, from the ideal into the real, from the abstract into the concrete, of the general tendencies of the Indian mind in its entirety.

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One of our greatest drawbacks is that we are not sufficiently scientific in our metaphysics. We are too complacent in the acceptance of the logic of former ages; but, if we are to make progress we must introduce originality and freshness of thought into our metaphysical philosophy. As it is, many of our metaphysics are so many photographic records of the Past. Great minds have arisen in our midst in the last half of the nineteenth century,

developing new aspects in our national thought and outlook. Why not study these as well as—if not, indeed, more than—the sages and logicians of centuries long dead? Because a philosophy or epic is old is no sign that it has any right, strictly speaking, to be venerated or regarded as infallible. The Sages of old, let it be remembered, were MODERN in their time. They expressed the new national vigour and renaissance of their own age. So in our own day, the prophets of our own time must be revered and their ideas heeded and assimilated. Let us keep abreast with "To-day." Just as it is physically true that "To-morrow" and "To-day" precede "Yesterday," so it should be equally morally and intellectually true that the revelations of the future and the present should receive a prior attention over those of the remote, or even the immediate past.

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"The spirit of modernism" may not be propitious to archaic and time-ridden institutions, but it is essentially necessary for the progress of all social and truly religious life. One of the greatest prophets of "modernism," and particularly as it affected the present transition in India, was unquestionably the Swami Vivekananda. His prime motto—which has become so current in our present national life—was, "If I find something better, some greater truth on the morrow, I shall change it immediately for what I possess and believe to-day." The intensification in our midst of such courageous determination with reference to the problems which confront us in the adjustment between "Old India" and "New India" would assuredly develop marvellously our progressive tendencies. We must be ready to change century-worn theories at a moment's notice if better theories are offered

us. The spontaneity with which India as a whole has responded to the "new ideas" propagated in Hinduism by the Swami Vivekananda, on his triumphant return from his religious reform-work in the West is an unimpeachable testimony that India is not only alive but is ready and eager to enter vigorously into the open fields of a complete Renaissance.

Europe awoke to a new order of life at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Though it was a religious awakening it proved to be an influence in every phase of Western civilisation, creating new nationalities and the scientific and modernist movements which affect us even to this present moment. India is awakening in the twentieth century, but this does not imply that she possesses less vitality than the West. The period "for the germination of ideas and the transposition of forms of racial thought and feeling" may have taken some time longer, but we believe that the longer the developing process, the surer and the more invincible the translation of national potentiality into power. India, it may be, is somewhat slow in her rotation upon the axis of her culture, *but she is infallibly sure.* No one knew that better than the Swami Vivekananda, for the furtherance of whose ideas this magazine exists. A few centuries of latent development, here and there, in the course of her history does not mean that India is asleep or dead. In the wake of the great silence of the Vedic periods we come suddenly upon the glories of the age of the Mahabharata, and so it will always be. There is no occasion for "hope" because there is no occasion for "despair." Hoping and despairing are the business of dreamers. *We are awake.*

It is well enough to call loudly and extravagantly for the education of our Indian women and to deplore their present condition, but in doing so we are apt to lose sight of

a very important fact, namely, that they are already highly cultured and refined. It is only a cad that runs down the institutions of his country, wholesale or speaks of its women as "inferior." We may be confronted, it is true, with certain woman's problems, but knowing well the value of our Dharma we know also the value of our Indian women. If we have national self-respect, and are the sons of Mother India, we are also the sons of our mothers and proud to be known as such. Is a smattering of secular knowledge, and that mostly foreign which reformers import, or *character* of final value? And if we believe that character is the goal, then will we say that our women have no character? That would be bastardy, indeed!! We all Indians know that the Dharma holds "equal opportunities for its sons and daughters in the development of character. Let us always bear in mind that, though we may have problems in connection with Indian Womanhood, before we are reformers, we are, above all, the sons of our mothers and Indians to the core.

SHRINES

About a holy shrine or sacred place
Where many hearts are bowed in earnest prayer,
The loveliest spirits congregate from space,
And bring their sweet uplifting influence.

If in your chamber you pray oft and well,
Soon will there winged messengers arrive,
And make their home with you; and where
All worthy toil and purposes shall thrive.

I know a humble, plainly furnished room,
So thronged with presences serene and bright,
The heaviest heart therein forgets its gloom,
As in some gorgeous temple filled with light.

These heavenly spirits, glorious and divine,
Live only in the atmosphere of prayer.
Make for yourself a sacred, fervent shrine,
And you will find them swiftly flocking

Elfr Wheeler Wilcox

THE NATURE OF THE SOUL AND ITS GOAL

Unpublished lecture by Swami Vivekananda

THE earliest idea is that a man, when he dies, is not annihilated. Something lives and goes on living even after the man is dead. It would be better to compare the three most ancient nations, the Egyptians, the Babylonians and the ancient Hindus, and take this idea from all of them. With the Egyptians and the Babylonians we find a sort of soul idea,—that of a double inside this body; according to them, there is another body which is moving and working even when the outer body dies, the double continues to live on for a certain length of time; the life of the double is limited by the preservation of the outer body. If the body which the double has left is injured in any part, the double is sure to be injured in that part. That is what we find among the ancient Egyptians such as to preserve the dead body of a person by embalming, building pyramids, etc. We find among the Babylonians and the ancient Egyptians that this double cannot live on through eternity, but at best, live on for a certain time, just so long as the body it has left can

maintain its vitality is that there is an element connected with this double. It is always in a state of misery; its state of existence is one of intense pain. It is again and again coming to those that are living, asking for food and other elements that it can no more have. It is like a drunk of the waters of the Nile, the Nile which it can no more drink. It wants to get the goods it used to enjoy while in the world, and when it finds it cannot get them, the double becomes fierce, sometimes threatening the living and disaster if it is not supplied.

In the Aryan thought, we at once find a different nature. There is still the double, but it has become a sort of spiritual being. The great difference is that the life of the double is not limited by the body it has left. On

the contrary, it has obtained freedom from this body, and hence the peculiar Aryan custom of burning the dead. They want to get rid of the body which the person has left; while the Egyptian wants to preserve it by burying, embalming and building pyramids. Apart from the most primitive system of doing away with the dead, amongst nations advanced to a certain extent the method of doing away with the bodies of the dead is a great indication of their idea of the soul. Wherever we find the idea of a departed soul closely connected with the idea of the dead body, we always find the tendency to preserve the body, and we also find burying in some form or other. On the other hand, with those in whom the idea has developed that the soul is a separate entity from the body and will not be hurt if the dead body is even destroyed, burning is always the process resorted to. Thus we find among all ancient Aryan races burning of the dead; although the Parsees changed it to exposing the body on a tower. But the very name of the tower means a burning-place, showing that in ancient times they also used to burn their bodies. The other peculiarity is that among the Aryans there was no element of fear with these doubles. They are not coming down to ask for food or help; and when denied that help, they do not become ferocious, or try to destroy those that are living. They rather are joyful, are glad at getting free. The fire of the funeral pyre is the symbol of disintegration. The symbol is asked to take the departed soul gently up, and to carry it to the place where the fathers live, where there is no sorrow, where there is joy forever, and so on.

Of these two ideas we see at once that they are of a similar nature: the one optimistic and the other pessimistic, being the elementary. The one is the evolution of the other. It is quite possible that the Aryans themselves had, or may have had, in very ancient times exactly the same idea as the Egyptians. In studying their most ancient records, we find the possibility of this very idea. But it is

quite a bright thing, something bright. When a man dies, this soul goes to live with the fathers and lives there enjoying their happiness. These fathers receive it with great kindness; this is the most ancient idea in India of a soul. Later on this idea becomes higher and higher. Then it was found out that what they called the soul before was not really the soul. This bright body, fine body, however fine it might be, was a body after all; and all bodies must be made up of materials, either gross or fine. Whatever had form or shape must be limited, and could not be eternal. Change is inherent in every form. How could that which is changeable be eternal? So, behind this bright body, as it were, they found something which was the soul of man. It was called the *Atman*, the Self. This Self idea then began. It had also to undergo various changes. By some it was thought that this Self was eternal; that it was very minute, almost as minute as an atom; that it lived in a certain part of the body, and when a man died his Self went away, taking along with it the bright body. There were other people who denied the atomic nature of the soul on the same ground on which they had denied that this bright body was the soul.

Out of all these various opinions rose Sankhya philosophy, where at once we find immense differences. The idea there is that man has first this gross body; behind the gross body is the fine body, which is the vehicle of the mind, as it were; and behind even that is the Self, the Perceiver, as the Sankhyas call it, of the mind; and this is omnipresent. That is, your soul, and my soul, and everyone's soul, is everywhere at the same time. If it is formless, how can it be said to occupy space? Everything that occupies space has form. The formless can only be infinite. So, each soul is everywhere. The second theory put forward is still more startling. They all saw in ancient times that human beings are progressive, at least many of them. They grew in purity and power and knowledge, and the question was asked, whence was this knowledge, this purity, this strength, which men manifested. Here is a baby without any knowledge. This baby grows and becomes a strong, powerful and wise man. Whence did that baby get its wealth of knowledge and power? The

answer was that it was in the soul; the soul of the baby had this knowledge and power from the very beginning. This power, this purity, this strength, were in that soul, but they were unmanifested; they have become manifested. What is meant by this manifestation or unmanifestation? That each soul is pure and perfect, omnipotent and omniscient, as they say in the Sankhya, but it can manifest itself externally only according to the mind it has got. The mind is, as it were, the reflecting mirror of the soul. My mind reflects to a certain extent the powers of my soul; so your soul, and so everyone's. That mirror which is clearer reflects the soul better. So the manifestation varies according to the mind one possesses; but the souls in themselves are pure and perfect. There was another school who thought that this could not be. Though souls are pure and perfect by their nature, this purity and perfection become, as they say, contracted at times, and expanded at other times. There are certain actions, and certain thoughts which, as it were, contract the nature of the soul; and then also other thoughts and acts which bring its nature out, manifest it. This again is explained. All thoughts and actions that make the power and purity of the soul get contracted, are evil actions, evil thoughts; and all those thoughts and actions which make the soul manifest itself, make the powers come out, as it were, are good and moral actions. The difference between the two theories is very slight; it is more or less a play on the words expansion and contraction. The one that holds that the variation only depends on the mind the soul has got, is the better explanation, no doubt, but the contracting and expanding theory wants to take refuge behind the two words, and they should be asked what is meant by contraction of soul, or expansion. Soul is a spirit. You can question what is meant by contraction or expansion with regard to material, whether gross which we call matter, or fine, the mind; but beyond that, if it is not matter, that which is not bound by space or by time, how to explain the words contraction and expansion with regard to that? So it seems that this theory which holds that the soul is pure and perfect all the time, only its nature is more reflected in some minds than in others, is the best. As the mind changes, its character grows, as it were, more and more

clear and give a better reflection of the soul. Thus it goes on, until the mind has become so purified that it reflects fully the quality of the soul; then the soul is liberated.

What is the nature of the soul. What is the goal? The goal of the soul among all the different sects in India seems to be the same. There is one idea in all, and that is liberation. Man is infinite, but the limitation in which he exists now is not his nature. But through these limitations he is struggling upward and forward until he reaches the infinite, the unlimited, his birthright, his nature. All these combinations and recombinations and permutations that we see round us, are not the aim of the soul, but merely by the way and in the passing. These combinations as earths and suns and moons, right and wrong, good and bad, our laughter and tears, our joys and sorrows, are to enable us to experience through which the soul manifests its perfect nature and throws off limitation. More than, is it bound by laws either of in-

ternal or external nature. It has gone beyond all law, beyond all limitation, beyond all nature. Nature has come under the control of the soul, not the soul under the control of nature, as it thinks it is now. That is the one goal that the soul has; and all the succeeding steps through which it is manifesting, all the successive experiences through which it is passing in order to attain to that goal,—freedom,—are represented as its births. The soul is, as it were, taking up a lower body and trying to express itself through that. It finds that to be insufficient, throws it aside and a higher one is taken up. Through that it struggles to express itself. That also is found to be insufficient, is rejected, and a higher one comes, so on and on until a body is found through which the soul manifests its highest aspirations. Then the soul becomes free.

(Concluded in the next number.)

—From *The Message of the East*, Boston.

IN THE HOURS OF MEDITATION.

XVII.

One making himself heard in the stillness of meditation, said:

There is the bondage of this world. It is to escape from out the net of this world. It teaches us that in order to live beyond life; one must conquer this is the supreme task, and this conquest is through the control of those physical instincts that lead to temptation. I speak deeply to thee, my son, to keep wide, wide awake and vigilant that which comes to tempt thy way in which to progress. To anticipate the faintest rise of temptation keep strict guard over thy mind. Beware thyself with that which is temptation. In this manner, thou shalt be free. Temptation comes, it often comes, as

it were, of a sudden, before the mind has time to become aware of what is happening. One is apparently hurried on to the point of yielding. All saints understand this. Therefore they anticipate evil thought, defeating its strength and the possibility of its arising by strenuous good thought. By thought is one made and unmade. Beware then, that thou dost think good thoughts.

“Remember that it is the mind which thou must keep constantly buoyed up. Never let it be idle. Idleness is the counterpart of evil, the nest wherein it bears itself most fruitfully. Beware of idleness. Take life seriously. Realise the shortness of time and the greatness of the task of self-unfoldment before thee. Now is thy time; now is thy opportunity. Bitterly shalt thou repent if thou dost allow thyself to drift carelessly into conditions of limitations and struggle,

worse than those in which thou dost now find thyself. Be worthy of a better future, a better birth, by making thy present life a success of the spirit.

"The world abounds with death. The law of Karma is inevitable. Take heed, lest death find thee in the midst of thy sinning and lest Karma follow thy yielding to physical desire with increased bondage and dire misery. My son, after thou hast once tasted of the nectar of immortality, how is it possible for thee to feed on the husks of swine?

"Yet, do not be alarmed. The Grace of God is greater than mountain-loads of sin. So long as thou dost believe, so long is there hope. But the way is almost infinite in length. Think of the life-times necessary for the complete eradication of evil, for the final transformation of the human into the divine consciousness. Canst thou, then, not understand how seriously thou shouldst labour for thine own good? And if thou dost love me, wilt thou not for my sake at least try to reach the Goal? How long have I waited for thee to be made whole and to struggle manfully? I have yearned for thy righteousness. I shall always stand by thee; I shall always love thee, but thou must shake off thy lethargy. Come out of thy moral slothfulness; come, be a man!

"Thy love for me is the pole-star of thy life. It is the basis of thy being. And there is good reason, for by thy love for me thou shalt be saved. Devotion to the Guru is the one thing needed. That will straighten out all thy difficulties. So be of good cheer. Know, always, that I am with thee. My longing for God, my realisation, all that I am or possess, shall be given unto thee, for it is the pleasure of the Guru to give even himself, if need be, for the good of the disciple. Once that I have accepted thee, it is forever, for eternity. Now, go in peace, and be mindful that if thou art true to thyself, thou dost add even unto my glory and even unto mine own vision."

THE SHIVA DANCE

Let the cymbals clash, the tom-toms drum,
Now the whirling, wheeling, reeling dance begins,
With the name of Mahadev, rending all the depths
of space,
With the name of Mahadev echoing triumphantly
Across the distances of sense and thought.

Hara! Hara! Vyom! Vyom!

Behold the world-renouncing devotees leaping mad
with joy
Midst the burning flames of the desires of the world,
Themselves untouched and scattering the flames,
Drowning their lurid, blood-red glare
With the strong celestial Light of G.M.

Hara! Hara! Vyom! Vyom!

The dancer-in-chief is Mahadeva Himself,
Great Shiva, adamant in form and thought;
Death is His form: His thought is, Multi-formed,
With but one step He stops the path of life;
He stamps upon the nalyche itself.

Hara! Hara! Vyom! Vyom!

His dance beats hollow-like and void
And yet it drowns the thundering noise of life,
His leaping form of death obscures the universe,
Suns and moons and worlds are lost to view,
E'en thought becomes non-thought.

Hara! Hara! Vyom! Vyom!

Now the Glory of Great Natraj shines,
Adding effulgence to His glorious voices,
Seeing the ecstasy on the face of Mahadev,
My soul is overcome. It too joins in the Dance,
Singing, shouting, dancing, whirling, leaping.

Hara! Hara! Vyom! Vyom!

Swami Bhairavananda

Shivaratri, 1913.

The Belur Math.

THE SEARCH, THE STORM, THE DIVINITY OF REALISATION.

AND I stood alone in the world; and mine eyes were red with unceasing weeping; weeping that had lasted through the ages. I had been toiling throughout the ages; and my soul was weary, for in all the universe I had not found Him for Whom I was searching. And I had ascended the great mountain of life, and all beneath my feet was the dust of illusion; and terrible clouds of strange darkness, the darkness of doubt, covered the face of the sun, and the glistening heights of the great peak of life seemed sombre shining under the strange colour of the clouds; and I felt the chill air of the heights, when by chance my eye fell upon the distance I had travelled, and I saw that I had lost the path by which I had come and precipices frowned on all sides. And I cried out, "If there be a God in this wide, wild state, let Him come unto me for I shall either fall from the precipices, or the very distance between me and the terrors of the ascent and the steepness of the Path will rob me of my strength. Every soul must tread the Path—through doubt and pain and much experience under the summit of

life. I cried out the cry of the ages; and the world itself was weeping; and the past, and the present and the future, accused bitterly the mountains. And the clouds grew blacker and the peaks of the mountain of life frowned with menace and the white heights were rent with madness and to crush me. And then—from the mysterious depths of my soul there came powers the like of which I had never known and all the great things being proceeded from me with the force of a numerous earthquake. And then arose a conflict and all the world of the scene universal pent up for

centuries of illusion stormed and cursed and fumed and were mad with destruction, but the Strength of Him Whose Voice I had heard tore asunder everything and rent the veils of the world as though they were made of fine threads; and all the forces of illusion were hurled upon themselves; and then a transformation occurred. The clouds were gone. They had melted into floods and the precipices had been filled with the ruination of all things that had peopled the scene and had defied the progress of the soul; and the Presence of the Most High within me had transfigured itself into a wonderful sheen of glory; and by the light of that glory I saw the hillsides green with promise and the forests alive with beautiful forms that awakened in me the sense of the beautiful, whereas before only the terrible existed. But as I gazed on high I knelt and wept in adoration and my adoration merged itself in ecstasy for I saw the Sun. "The Sun, The Sun," I cried "The Sun!" Ah, it was the Sun for which I had been searching. "Glory to the Sun of Life, the Atman within, for I am the son of that Brahman. Verily, I am that Brahman."

—A Seer of Truth.

GATHER US IN:

Each sees one colour of Thy rainbow light,
Each looks upon one tint and calls it Heaven;
Thou art the fulness of our partial sight;
We are not perfect till we find the seven.
Gather us in.

Thine is the mystic life great India craves,
Thine is the Parsee's sin-destroying beam;
Thine is the Buddhist's rest from tossing waves,
Thine is the Empire of vast China's dream.

Gather us in.

—George Mathison.

IN THE LAND OF THE MUMMY

(Continued from page 39)

THE RIVER.

ONE of the greatest features of Egypt is the Nile, to whose beneficent agency the ancient Egyptians owed their greatness and which was, with their characteristic reverence of spirit, regarded by them as peculiarly sacred. It received divine honours from them, and at a later period, also from the Greeks and Romans. It is hallowed with associations which take us back to the very dawn of civilisation.

It may be of interest to my Indian readers to insert here an ancient hymn to the Nile, translated by Mr. F. C. Cook.

The Nile deified under the name of Hapi,
"The Hidden."

"Hail to thee, O Nile!
Thou showest thyself in this land,
Coming in peace, giving life to Egypt;
O Ammon, thou leadest night and day,
A leading that rejoices the heart!
Overflowing the gardens created by Ra;
Giving life to all animals;
Watering the land without ceasing;
The way of heaven descending;
Lover of food, bestower of corn,
Giving life to every home, O Phthah!.....

O inundation of Nile, offerings are made to thee;
Oxen are slain to thee;
Great festivals are kept for thee;
Fowls are sacrificed to thee;
Beasts of the field are caught for thee;
Pure flames are offered to thee;
Offerings are made to every god,
As they are made unto Nile.
Incense ascends unto heaven,
Oxen, bulls, fowls are burnt!
Nile makes for himself chasms in the Thebaid.
Unknown his name in heaven,
He doth not manifest his forms!
Vain are all representations!

Mortals exult him, and the cycle of gods!
Awe is felt by the terrible ones;
His son is made lord of all,

To Enlighten all Egypt.
Shine forth, Shine forth, O Nile! Shine forth.
Giving life to men by his omen;
Giving life to his oxen by the pastures!
Shine forth in glory, O Nile!

As rain rarely falls in Egypt the prosperity of the country entirely depends upon the over-flowing of the Nile. That source of perennial life and freshness to the land, as of old, rises and falls and fat and lean years come and go. On the subsiding of the water the land is found to be covered with a brown, slimy deposit, which so fertilises the otherwise barren soil, that it produces two crops a year. The river begins to rise in June and continues to increase until September, attaining the height of about 26 feet in Cairo. The water remains stationary for a few days, when it gradually begins to subside, until by the end of October the land is left dry again. The seed is then sown and an artificial irrigation is continued by means of the *Sakya* water-wheels, or by the *Shaduf*, both similar to those found in India in the present day. The latter has been in use from very early times, and pictures of this mode of raising water are depicted on the walls of the ancient tombs of Egypt. The land is soon covered with green crops, wheat, millet and maize being the principal grains. Cotton, sugar-cane and tobacco are also being widely cultivated. The harvest is in March.

Some plants conspicuous in ancient sculpture have disappeared, such as the divine pink lotus, the beautiful form of which suggested the elegant shafts and capitals of the columnar architecture, and the valuable papyrus, the paper of the ancient Egyptians. The only trees are the palms, which singly or in groups form a characteristic feature of the landscape.

The Nile abounds in fish, and water-fowls

are plentiful. Crocodiles are now never seen in lower Egypt. Plutarch states that the crocodile was used as a symbol of Deity among the Egyptians, because it is the only aquatic animal that has its eyes covered with a thin transparent membrane, by reason of which it sees and is not seen. He also gives another reason for this. "The Egyptians worship God symbolically in the crocodile, that being the only animal without a tongue, like a divine Logos, which standeth not in need of speech."

Over the spirit of everyone who arrives as a stranger in Egypt, whether or not a votary of the river, a new sentiment slowly and mysteriously reveals itself. The importance and dignity of the Nile reveal themselves in an entirely new light when one finds a whole population concentrated, so to speak, round the river, and the diurnal duties and associations of the inland country people alike, circling as it were round the Nile.

At the bidding of a new, strange sentiment, perhaps, rather than of a new love, one falls into the gentle passion, and no wonder, therefore, with the lure of the Nile that when the call of the Nile comes one responds gladly.

The voyage to Upper Egypt constitutes the life of the Nile. The first stop is Assouan, and the whole trip is more than 500 miles long, but with the numerous excursions which it often entails, it is so numerous that the tourist can spend several weeks in exploring the Nile and the beguiling Nile. Those who have a short time at their disposal can take a boat to Luxor and Assouan, and return all the way to Cairo. With a moderate amount of time and a moderate amount of money, one can spend a profitable and delightful holiday on the Nile.

The weather on the afternoon when I left Cairo and ceaseless activities

of the town for the restful change and quiet majesty of the river. The steamer was anchored at the quay near the Kasr-en-Nil bridge. At this point the Nile is about half-a-mile in width, and a busy and lively prospect it affords. Scores of boats of all sorts and descriptions are dotted about; *dehabeahs* and the quaint native crafts line the banks, and steamers are alongside their pontoons, ready to convey passengers to Luxor and Assouan.

Once on board the steamer, the luxury of life on the water came home to me, mental as well as physical. Favoured by the natural clemency of the climate, which offers such inducements for out-of-door life, I, amid these pleasant and placid scenes, was content to sit under the awning of the boat idly revelling in the present and dreaming lazily of things past and things to come. Leaving the quay, the steamer passes the British Agency, the Palace of Ibrahim Pasha and of the Khedive Ismail's mother, and the Island of Roda on the left and Gezira on the right. Then the Pyramids spring into view and on the left the quarries of Tura and Masana, from whence the stone was brought for the great Pyramids.

As afternoon grew to evening, the sun set red upon the Pyramids seen afar above the green plains, and the after-glow was strangely seductive, burnishing the sands of the Libyan desert and giving a touch of mystery to the grandeur of the scene. The first stopping-place, where the steamer was moored beside the bank for the night, was not of any great interest; but I found some entertainment in watching the poor native passengers embarking and landing with queer odds and ends of luggage that continually got mislaid, and caused endless excitement and confusion.

The night was exquisitely warm and balmy. In a beautiful and almost magical stillness, beneath the silvery moon, the river lay calm and sparkling, while overhead thousands of golden stars keeping their loving vigil, gleamed out of the blue firmament. Now

and again the deep silence was broken by the sound of splashing oars, and picturesque boats with their lateen sails glided mysteriously past us.

Beautiful is the daybreak in every land, but in the Orient it is peculiarly grateful from its softly refreshing coolness, too soon exchanged for the glare and heat of the day. The first morning on board, I rose early and gave myself up to the witchery of the sunrise. The incipient blush of pale opal dawn flashed the sky with roseate hues, and gradually the orb of day shed its glorious radiance over the horizon and like a ball of fire rose over the tawny desert and the river. It was a gorgeous sight!

Nothing can be more delicious than these morning experiences on the Nile as one moves slowly along the shore in the freshness and serenity of the morning glory.

On this river journey the scenery constantly changes. Sometimes, we see the peasant ploughing with his antiquated plough, or reaping his clover which makes bright patches of cultivation along the banks, with the arid desert on one hand and the life-giving river on the other. Sometimes the river narrows with high sun-baked cliffs on either side. Occasionally, we pass clusters of palms, a creaking water-wheel, and tiny villages of mud huts scattered over the plain. From time to time, a string of laden camels with tinkling bells, accompanied by Arabs of stately mien are clearly silhouetted against the sky, and then long stretches of bare hills stand out in strong relief.

One of such hills is called "Bird-mountain." On the top is a Coptic Convent. In bygone days the monks used to descend and swim out to passing boats to beg for alms.

Some miles from the town of Minia is a large modern cemetery. The bee-hive-like tops of the tombs are visible from the river. Three times a year the relatives of the deceased cross the river to visit the tombs and make

offerings of dates and other gifts to them.

Beni Hasan attracts much notice on account of its fine rock chambers cut in the face of the cliffs, the walls of which are covered with pictures representing the life of the period. Further inland are many tombs and rock temples which claim attention, if time permits. Not far distant is a cemetery of mummied cats where the goddess Bast, with a cat's head, was worshipped, and farther south lies Kynopolis with a cemetery of dog mummies.

The town of Asyut is one of the most important places in Egypt, and we passed through the Barrage just below the port. The rocky hill-side is full of tombs in which are found remains of embalmed wolves. It was from the worship of these animals that the town took the ancient title of Lycopolis or city of Wolves.

Red and black pottery, inlaid ebony sticks, and black and white net shawls decorated with scraps of gold or silver metal are specialties of Asyut. A merchant came on board here and displayed his wares to our admiring gaze to so much advantage, at the same time using such persuasive language, that many of the passengers, myself among the number, were induced to purchase some of the pretty bespangled shawls.

We now approached a hill called Gebel Sheikh Heridi. Under the name of this Sheikh is venerated a serpent with miraculous healing powers, which tradition says has inhabited this mountain for ages. The serpent can reunite itself if cut in half. There is an annual festival in its honor.

At Abydos the principal god worshipped was the jackal-headed Anubis, but later he became the chief seat of the worship of Osiris. Here was discovered the celebrated tablet of Abydos, giving in hieroglyphics a genealogy of the eighteenth dynasty of the Pharaohs, and throwing much light on Egyptian history. It is now in Paris.

Beyond Abydos we next see the shrine dedicated to Sheikh Selim, at which the boatmen generally make an offering for a safe passage.

Sixty miles above Abydos, the boat gradually slackened and stopped at Taramsa. Here we found boys and donkeys at the landing stage, in readiness to take us to Denderah. We were excessively amused as well as provoked at the donkey-boys who rushed upon us simultaneously with their animals, assailing us the while in a deafening chorus of invitations, in ludicrous variety, to purchase their special beast, in a mingled Egyptian and Western dialect. After mounting we proceeded at a smart trot of the little donkeys, followed by the clamorous shouts of drivers, and reached the temple in about half-an-hour. The inhabitants of the ancient Denderah were crocodile-eaters, which led to a deadly war with the neighboring city, where the reptile was worshipped.

The temple is dedicated to Hathor, the goddess of beauty, love, and joy, and is one of the best preserved temples in Egypt. The principal festival of Denderah is sculptured on the walls, and gives in detail the rites in use for the worship of Osiris. Many hieroglyphics and pictures decorate the walls and pillars, and many of these pictures here and there have been defaced by some iconoclast. Cleopatra is supposed to have commenced this temple, and several representations of her are to be seen.

With the remembrance of Cleopatra it is an effort of the imagination to fill the ruins with the life of her times. The stately edifices, the watery highway on which she travelled, the gaily adorned and decorated awning, the long line of majestic temples crowning the banks, the laughing population

crowding its waters; the dancing, the thrilling of harp and lute, the songs, the games, the wrestlings, the feasts; the boats of pleasure jostling with the sacred funerary barques of the dead—set in the brilliant clearness of the cloudless sky in an Oriental atmosphere, this motley pageant seemed to pass in review before me.

After sauntering about these fascinating ruins for sometime, the spell breaks and one lapses into the present prosaic world.

We then made our way back to the boat. On the road thither we came upon a group of peasant children dancing and singing in the green clover, their supple brown bodies girdled only with a circlet of leaves about the waist, a garland round the neck, and a wreath on their shining black hair. These blithesome little dancers with their airy grace and soulful eyes, looked like gods and seemed intoxicated with gaiety and the joy of life. It was a pretty sight which gladdened my heart, and I had the happiness of adding to their glee by throwing a few *piastres* in their midst, which resulted in a picturesque scramble with much laughing and shouting.

I rose on the last day of my river voyaging full of glowing anticipation, which in travel as in everything, carries with it half the charms of existence. A few hours, and Thebes with all its wonders opened before us. As you approach Luxor some of the ruins come in sight. The situation is one of the best on the Nile. The hills are far enough away to allow of a broad belt of cultivation. On the left bank gradually appeared the pylons (gateways) of Karnak, and later the village of Luxor with the beautiful colonnades of its great temple reflected in the water.

Luxor being my present destination I bid adieu to my companions of the last few days and with many regrets quitted the boat, which continued on its course to Assouan.

(To be continued.)

C. E. S.

GLIMPSES

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heavens' light for ever shines, Earths' shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.

—Shelley.

I am *all* that *was*, all that *is*, all that *will be*. No mortal has lifted my veil.

—Inscription from the Temple of Sais, Egypt.

Be content with doing with calmness the little which depends upon yourself, and let all else be to you as though it was not.—Fénelon.

God is, being an essence; but His existence is known only by being manifested in His works.

—From the Sanskrit.

Man is the soul using the body as an instrument.—Proclus.

Strength at the centre, freedom at the circumference.—Delsarte.

To *do* something is the ideal of the Philistine, and to *be* something the ideal of the noble.—Goethe.

Never value anything as profitable to thyself which shall compel thee to break thy promise, to lose thy self-respect, to hate any man, to suspect, to curse, to act the hypocrite, to desire anything which needs walls and curtains.—Marcus Aurelius.

Whoso setteth his face towards God with a perfect self-surrender, is a doer of that which is good, hath indeed laid hold on the surest handle.

—The Koran.

The greatest prayer is Patience.—The Buddha.

They who know, do not speak, and they who speak, do not know.—I do not know its name and for want of a better, I call it Tao, the Way. Its excellence and discipline consist in becoming at one with the law which is in and yet above all, and in moving spontaneously with it.—To know the unknowable, that is elevating: Not to know the unknowable, that is sickness.—Lao-tse.

That unchangeable and One Nature, which reaching after he would not err, and reaching to, he would not grieve.—St. Augustine.

God is not God without me. I am a necessary element to His existence.—Angelus Silecius.

O, Nānak, everyone in this world is unhappy, it is only the name of the All-supporter that is happy.—Nānak.

There is no difference between God with attributes and God without attributes. That which is without attribute, form, beyond the reach of thought, becomes associated with attribute out of love for His devotees. But how can that which is without attributes, become associated with attributes? Just as water crystallised into ice is not different from water.—Tulsidas.

ON THE ROAD TO MAYAVATI

Two hundred feet in splendid height,
And yet below my mountain level,
Stand those noble groves of pine,
On the sloping mountain side,
Each tree like a wondrous pointed arrow,
So straight, so slender in its shape,
Park-like the earth beneath their shade
Strewn lavishly with needles and with cones,
The ground like to a carpet seems
That stretched lays as if
Should tread that gorgeous carpet
With spreading boughs for royal canopy,
Higher than my standing level,
The vast Himalayan peak,
Above a cloudless sky,
At break of day, the mountain peaks
Her lustrous glory, the eastern sky
Lies bathed in opal and in amethyst,
Fresh the odours of this new-made morn
As wafted on the gentle mountain breeze,
Unto my ears come distant murmurings
Of falling, speeding waters,
In swaying music sigh the forest trees,
Here and there a sweet-sung bird doth sing,
I am alone amidst the scene,
Folded by the morning sun my thought,
And the mystic deeps of the forest of those peaks
That stand so picture-quely on this road
Made me reflect, "No wonder here,
That sages long to meditate."

A Western Pilgrim.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: A STUDY.

[A lecture by Mr. T. G. Harrison at the Fifty-first Birthday Celebration of Swami Vivekananda by the Vivekananda Society of Colombo.]

We have met here to-day to honour a great, good, and spiritual devotee, a saint whose ideal was to raise humanity above their animal tendencies and attributes into the knowledge of a virtuous, moral and spiritual life. Within the last fifty years or more an intellectual revolution has taken place in the Western world, a revolution which has swept away, as it were, the old dogmas, or confusion; silent, sweeping, and unopposed, nothing stayed by nothing, nothing stayed by nothing, the mighty change has gone on. Old traditions, old sanctities have been swept away or dying in their desolation. The thought of the Western world has changed. Theories that have been cherished from immemorial time are discredited.

What has been cherished in simplicity and sincerity by generations are being steadily swept away. Venerable dogmas that had boasted of their age are ruthlessly shorn of power. What were valiantly defended and insistently proclaimed as fundamental and ultimate truths are now being regarded as the pathetic mistakes of an unenlightened age, and this religion which the Western world has adopted for its own and vainly proclaimed as universal is now but a mournful relic of a departed greatness. Of these things we are thinking, all the intelligent, all the thoughtful are aware. The pulpit is apologetic, the olden times has ceased to exist, the present time is not a factor, to the thought and potency of the message he was wont to proclaim, he is silenced by knowledge and light, as the night bird is silenced by the dawn.

For fifty years or more the savants of the world have not been idle, but have been studying the religions of the East, adopting and imitating them. At the present moment in the Western World, the intelligent classes are studying the two principal and scientific religions—Hinduism and Buddhism. A new view of our Hindu sages have been concentrating their energies into the following results:

1. Power, concentration, is not an abstract influence. It is an actual power which man can attain on his own. It is a power which is moving all the spiritual forces in man. This power of concentration is an essential part of man's nature, and once man rises to that height of enlightenment, he, then and

then alone, stands not only as a religious and spiritual instructor and preacher but also as a Redeemer. The highest success in spiritual life is always associated with this inward search or concentration on the Divine within. Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva, Swami Vivekananda's Guru, used to be seated for days and nights in steadfast concentration, (being in a state of Samadhi) dead to the world and its surroundings, and while the busy world slept, he was in communion with the Divine in him.

If ceaseless meditation was essential to his effectiveness in the mission he had taken upon himself, what greater necessity must press upon his disciples and upon us his disciples' disciples! Consider the fearful magnitude of the interests that gather round one in ceaseless meditation towards the development of his spiritual forces and the advancement of his fellow-men. Life or death, heaven or hell stands connected with such a life, for one mis-step, one sensual thought throws one back in despair.

Swami Vivekananda from his boyhood cherished the idea of cultivating a spiritual life. Highly educated and with the highest abilities a worldly life could procure for him and which were at his disposal, he discarded all, and dressed in the robes of a Sannyasi he sat at the feet of his Divine Master, Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva, to learn of him the Path that leadeth unto Righteousness and Peace. Having attained his aim by dint of perseverance and with a will that dared and defied everything, he launched his barque on the spiritual waters of the Divine within him, and with the last blessings of his great and Divine Master he left the precincts of his Master's sacred institution invested with the office of a Sannyasi and entered upon his awfully responsible work. After his Master had passed away, he felt the call to proceed to the Congress of Religions in America to preach the inspired doctrines of Hinduism. He went out strong with all spiritual power to preach the inspired doctrines of Hinduism, and they fell from his lips touched by the Divine fire that illumined his bodily form.

His labours and their results we need not repeat. Suffice it to say, his words kindled a spark in every heart that listened to him; this set in motion a blaze and its action is since then the outcome of Hinduism spreading among the educated and intelligent classes who can comprehend its philosophy and penetrate into the depths of Divine Knowledge attainable by concentration and the inward search of the Divine. It is only a sermon matured amidst these fervent communions with the Divine within one that will bring everlasting realities vividly before one and fit one to utter the eternal truth with the burning zeal of a true disciple; and the

astounding results are noticed in the conversion of thousands in America and other Western lands, gained through the spiritual power of Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva and his enlightened disciple Srimat Swami Vivekananda.

There are salient points in the characteristics of different ages which we may compare, and upon which we may profitably reflect. Rishis flourished in the age when spirituality was in its full-blown glory, and if without entering into a minute comparison we contrast that age with this, it might safely be affirmed that, whilst ours is the age of materialistic devices and designs, that was pre-eminently the age of gigantic minds—of India's loftiest spiritual heroes. We are too much moulded in the manufactory of custom. In the days of the gigantic minds some of the noblest thoughts were evolved and by some of the noblest and spiritual intellects that time ever produced. The age was one of great men, who laboured and men like Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva, Srimat Swami Vivekananda and others entered into their labours—aye, their labours wrought out in deep sufferings, agonising thoughts, tears and their life-blood. Their very words bore the impress of their spiritual grandeur. In those days through the earnest religious stress of the times, every man was compelled as we would say, to think and to act in reference to the greatest subjects that touch human nature.

Those who had entered into the labours of the gigantic minds of that age had derived a peculiar character—from the daily contemplation of those superior beings and eternal interests; and of the impulse of their earnestness many partook and are partaking. Swami Vivekananda combined the heart of an innocent child with the imagination of a poet and the magnanimity of a divine spirit. His soul was large, benignant and sincere, and within his bosom throbbed a heart of Infinite Love.

He preached and was favourably received, and lectured and discoursed in various parts of America. His silvery eloquence was irresistible in its charm and awakened in every heart a feeling for the knowledge of that Inward Search for the Divine. His works do follow him. The Shastras teach that the Supreme whose work is the Universe, always dwelling in the heart of all beings, is revealed by the heart. Those that know Him become immortal and this knowledge is gained by ceaseless concentration.

Swami Vivekananda's sermons, lectures and discourses have fulfilled the expectations of those who appreciate the highest class of religious literature. Many have expressed their conviction that they deserve to be ranked among the very noblest productions of spiritual eloquence which have reached them for many years. They are full of thought and vigour and surpass anything yet known in their simplicity for the illustration of

spiritual truth, which is the greatest boon conferred on the Western student. The Swami's works are unutterably precious and a combination of the richest and priceless gems. How many troubled hearts have they comforted! How many fears dispelled! One can scarcely conceive the blank their obliteration would leave among the spiritually inclined.

When his theme brings him into the presence of the Divine agency working within him in nature or in mind he never fails to glow into fervour, and rise to strains of lofty and spiritual eloquence. In his lectures in India, he bitterly moaned the disastrous state into which metaphysical studies among the Brahmans had fallen, which were unmeritorious and injurious to the position they held and detrimental to the development of righteousness among the Hindus. He remarked that the Shastras had lost precision and depth among them, and their science was taking a materialistic turn and that mental discipline which was the key to spiritual training among the Brahmans had lacked that element which such studies can supply. It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the remarks here suggested. Are they in a position to decide that the intuitions at present posed are absolutely trustworthy? Are they in a position to accept with unfaltering confidence the instinctive judgments of their intellectual and moral nature? How are they going to distinguish between those judgments which are intuitive and those which only seem so? By what process do we arrive at a knowledge of axiomatic truths? Are they innate or acquired, and if acquired—how? Brahmans who ought to be conversant with the philosophical, metaphysical and ethical speculations and opinions of the Hindu Shastras will at once perceive the grave importance and the critical character of these inquiries, and we may, in passing, mention that before all is lost the Brahmans were the inheritors, custodians and interpreters of the Hindu Shastras should. The greatest of their ancestors had endeavoured to put into the minds of one and all the message of Peace the Shastras inculcated, and that concentrative energy which is the search for the Divine within us, whereby we become immortal and not only God-like but God. The Bhagavad-Gita, says, "He who keeps his mind undiverted by any other objects, and Me, I will at all times be ready to join him by a constant devotion to Me."

Swami Vivekananda's works are mainly, and godly, and should be read by all who wish to see the world developed in contemplative exercise. For the sake of the devoted labour and energy which have been put into Sannyas and household.

—From *The Hindu Organ*

INDIA'S MESSAGE TO THE WORLD

The London Correspondent of "The Advocate,"
 writes to the paper as follows:—

The study of Comparative Religion has seriously undertaken in this country and a new note has been struck by many English men in their references to the belief of non-physical peoples. I have been so much impressed by a sermon which I heard last Sunday in Christ Church, Wimbledon (Congregational) dealing mainly with the Indian idea of transmigration of Souls, that I feel sure your readers will thank me for sending them a fairly full account of what was said. The preacher was the Rev. Mr. Sadler, M. A., L. L. B. Minister of the Church for some years been one of our ablest exponents of the modern view of religion. Mr. Sadler took for his text the

And some men say that the son of man is? And some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, some Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

As implied in these words, said the preacher, the idea of the transmigration of souls is characteristic a part of the Hindu

of the course of Hindu religious thought take this central idea as our

religious thought may be said to have had its origin about 800 B. C.—The period of the Vedas were written in Sanskrit. The Vedas are devoted to the powers of Nature—Surya the sun, Aditi the earth, etc. All religions began in this manner. In Canaan and Egypt the storm-god was the thunder, in Greece

800 B. C. The period of the Brahmins was chiefly on ritual and ceremonial, as prescribed by the priests of the time.

500 B. C. Gautama the Buddha appeared. He protested against the accretion which had gathered round the teaching of the Vedas. He taught a life of asceticism and pity for all. He taught Nirvana. But he believed in the transmigration of souls, and Nirvana was not reached after one had been reborn. He taught that one must go through many births to reach Nirvana. From India the Buddhist religion spread to China, which had also had a religion of asceticism, purity, and simplicity. About 300 B. C. the Upanishads began to appear. They were philosophic works and told

of the descent of the Supreme Self into myriads of souls who lived in the illusive phenomenal world of sense, but who could move from body to body up again into blissful union with Brahman, the all-inclusive God.

(5) About 400 to 200 B. C. there came ideas of the gods being Avatars or Incarnations, the most cherished of these conceptions being that of Vishnu, the Life-Principle of the universe, having incarnated in Krishna. This was told in a long collection of poems known as the Mahabharata, in which is included the Bhagavad-Gita, or the Lord's Song. The story of Krishna includes certain elements which have been called by some immoral, but which were undoubtedly symbolic of spiritual ideas. The account of Krishna's life also embodies episodes very like those contained in the Christ story.....Such elements, however, are to be found in many faiths, and the Bhagavad-Gita was written long before Christianity could have reached India. Sir Monier Williams will not allow that there was copying by the Hindus, but reminds us that "the Bible is a thoroughly Oriental book." It is more likely that Hindu ideas had filtered through to Palestine via Persia. The belief in the incarnation of Vishnu in the person of Krishna came as a solace to the people, who craved an incarnate loving deity, one who pitied and saved men.

THE TEACHING OF THE UPANISHADS.

We come now to the main message of the Upanishads (of which there are 108). It tells of the descent or self-differentiation of the Universal God Brahman into myriads of souls who needs must struggle through bodily lives (vegetable, animal, human, and angelic) up to union with God. As a matter of fact, this conception is not the monopoly of India. It is religion in its universal aspect, for we can feel Infinity within us moving us upward and our great ideal—as yet unrealised—is a witness thereto.

The characteristic and difficult part of the message is that souls pass through several bodies or vehicles of self-culture and self-expression, but it is One Life in all, and of that we must become conscious. The Upanishads thus speak (I quote the translation by Srish Chandra Vasu of Allahabad):

"Though this body be reduced to ashes, the Indwelling Spirit, the Lord, does not die. He is immortal. The support of the Universe is the Dweller in the hearts of all creatures. No man is ever satisfied with wealth. The Inner Self of all creatures is One only. He is awake when men sleep. He is the Inner Self of all creatures. He makes his form manifold. By truthfulness, right knowledge and self-control is Atmaic bliss (of soul) reached.....God is far, yet near. He is within the Universe. Whoever beholds all living creatures as

in Him, and Him the Universal Spirit, as in all, henceforth regards no creature with contempt."

Thus the Upanishads regard one life as being in all souls, and salvation consists in striving in bodies and forms to become conscious of the One instead of being lost in the sensations (which are illusive). That our senses do deceive us is evident, because colour, size, opaqueness, hardness, sweetness, do not really belong to objects themselves, but exist only in relation to our minds, (e.g. in X-rays wood and flesh are no longer opaque; we can see through them).

CAN CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IT?

Can we believe in the transmigration of soul? Probably we shall at first reject the idea with scorn. It sounds so different from anything we have been taught, and it cannot be proved. But a few thoughts about it may help us to give the idea at least a place in our minds.

The doctrine of transmigration is believed, and has been believed, all over the world. Chamber's Encyclopædia has an article on "Transmigration" which shows it to have been held among Buddhists in many parts of Asia, by the Egyptians, the Druids, the ancient Greeks, the people of Madagascar, various African tribes and by several races in North America. Ovid, too, the Roman poet, said,—

"Dies not the spirit,
But new life repeats,
Into other forms,
And only changes seats.

Even I, who these mysterious truths declare,
Was once Euphœbus, in the Trojan war;
My name and lineage I remember well.
Thus all things are but altered, nothing dies,
And here and there the unbodied spirit flies."

The idea is also in the Bible. Jacob's dream of a ladder reaching to heaven is probably an old myth, by means of which the idea of believing in transmigration was thrown back in history, even to Jacob, who was an eponymous ancestor of the Jews.

Origen (about 250 A. D.) said that the descent of souls was described symbolically by a ladder reaching from heaven to earth, and in the cult of Mithras a ladder was placed in the cave (the temple) to represent souls coming from heaven to earth. So in Jacob's dream, the angels (souls) were descending and ascending.

Further, in Mathew XVI, 14, and XVII, 12, we get the same idea, for it undoubtedly lies behind the sayings that Elijah had come again in John the Baptist and Jeremiah had come again in the Messiah. The Jews certainly believed in transmigration. Many Rabbis taught it. They said

that Adam came again in David and would come again in the Messiah.

EMBRYOLOGY AND HEREDITY.

We know from embryology that we have had some kind of a pre-existence. We come from the union of two germ-plasms or cells. But these cells each come from two other cells, and so backwards. Thus the germ-plasm of which our bodies are made had a pre-existence in many bodies; and if our bodies explain us we have existed long ago. But embryology although it explains our physical form, does not explain us. We are souls, and use our bodies as vehicles. Embryology cannot explain why variations of species occur. Professor J. Arthur Thomson and D. Archdall Reid, in their books on heredity, frankly confess this. "What explains variations then, but various souls which form bodies."

Souls permeate all things. Indeed, we have the authority of Dr. Mac Taggart of Cambridge for the statement that nothing exists but souls and their states. Physically, therefore, we have had an existence backward, a pre-existence.

Then, as Christians, we believe in a future life, which will be in a body. See Corinthians XV, 1, where Paul argues for a spiritual body hereafter. Now, if there is to be a transmigration from a body here to a body yonder after death, is it impossible to believe that we have come into these bodies from a previous existence? Surely, it sounds very reasonable.

KARMA.

Further, the doctrine of transmigration would help us to explain geniuses and prodigies, as well as vicious-born characters. These are feeling the good or bad results of a previous life. This is not a crude and hard Karma of the East. Karma here is simply the law of cause and effect, such as we all believe in. It does not mean that a man cannot become better, but that if he is continually vicious he becomes more vicious—until he changes, by some good influence working in or upon him.

There are many who say that they remember a past life.....

The alternative to reincarnation is predestination. Why should one man be born a miser and another a lunatic, one a criminal and another of saintly desires? True, Eugenics explains much and our bodies affect us in many ways, but some capricious god must have created us, and we believe that the god who created us has created such bodies by its character in our previous bodies. So we seem eternal in retrospect as well as prospectively, and we ought at least to entertain the message of the best thought.

real India as a "working hypothesis" and being to enquire into it. Anyhow, we can feel we are souls—focus-points of the infinite and inclusive God, and that we are moving up to it by His help.

The modern missionary, going to India, ought to be as a comrade in truth-seeking, not as a conqueror. He must not judge India by the crude superstitions of the peasant, bow before a snake or an elephant, or an idol of these; any more than he would judge of America by the babblings of a child.

The Christian missionary has a message to take to India as well as something to learn from India. His message will be comprehended in the words "The Word (habitually) is born of God and made flesh." The craving for the incarnate Word is the need of the heart for a loving presence. The modern and true missionary will not depend on sacraments, or creeds, or politics, but will live and teach what he feels in his heart. Love is the nature of God. Life, from whom, and through whom, all things are made.

BY THE WAY

Readers will be immensely amused at the article taken from "Great Thoughts," of the 10th vol., published in London. We are sure whether these lines were not meant to entertain the readers of that paper at the expense of the Hindus. For otherwise it is hard to believe how any learned person can write

THE LIFE OF A HINDU WOMAN.

A Hindu woman lives in a small room of mud and walls are of clay with no ornaments of any sort whatever, and the least of furniture. Every morning she has to pray for her husband for rain, and general prosperity. She spends two or three hours in the morning breakfast. She doesn't eat it with her husband, perhaps, fans him at his request. At other times, she either sleeps, gossips with her friends, or sometimes a reader reads to her the lives of the gods. These stories are very interesting. They are vile from begin-

ning to end. The children and women are taught them. At night they prepare their husband's meal in the same manner. They are not protected at all against the weather and dampness, nor are they properly fed and clothed. The rich live the same as the poor. If sick, they are deemed cursed by the gods, and are taken to the stable and left alone. The only food they can get is left by stealth. Thousands die of neglect. The first day that a Hindu boy abuses his mother is a festive occasion with his father, who boasts of it to his friends.

"To be a widow is the sum of unhappiness. She is especially cursed by the gods. As the husband dies, half a dozen barbers' wives rush upon her and tear the jewellery from the ears and nose. She is kept in a darkened room for fourteen days. At the end of this time her husband's ashes are taken to the river, and, after a peculiar ceremony of prayers, the soul is supposed to be free. It may enter an insect or an animal. The worst punishment the soul can sustain is to enter the body of a woman."

How remarkably cheap were the prices of food-stuffs in Bengal in the middle of the last century, can be gleaned from the following items mentioned in a list of marriage expenses incurred in the year 1847 A. D. :—

Rice, 1 maund	...	...	Re. 1 — as. 2.
Kalai (lentil), 1 "	...	...	" 1 — " 1
Fine Flour, 1 "	...	...	Rs. 2 — " 4
Ghee, 20 srs.	...	...	" 3 — " 2
Sandesh (sweets), 1 maund	...	...	" 12 — " 0
Curds, 1½ maund	...	...	" 4 — " 0
Milk, 20 srs.	...	...	" 0 — " "
Potato, 21 srs.	...	...	" 0 — " 10½
Salt, 5 srs.	...	...	" 0 — " 8½

Total Rs. 25—0—0

So in those days a sumptuous feast could be given to about 300 persons with Rs. 25 only!

WANTED a qualified medical man to take charge of our Mayavati Charitable Dispensary. One desirous to lead a retired spiritual life, but willing to do a little professional work freely for the good of his fellowmen will be welcome.

Apply for particulars to
The Editor of this paper.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES

(CULLED AND CONDENSED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

THE prehistoric clay figures of bisons were discovered recently in a cave at Montesquieu. They are supposed to be 20,000 years old.

AN offer of £24,000 has been refused for a carpet in the possession of Johan Kernowsky, a Prague antiquary, who claims that he can prove it to have been used by the Prophet Mahomet when at prayer.

ACCORDING to a German paper a Starch and Potato drying corporation has placed a new syrup upon the market which is obtained from the potato-starch, and is to be used for preserving fruit of all kinds. It is excellent for table purposes.—Indian Trade Journal.

MR. Divachand Dharan, a well-known Jain merchant, is going to visit Europe for commercial purposes. During his stay in London he will make arrangements to establish there a first-class Hotel for orthodox Hindus. A strong committee is being formed to finance the scheme.

It gives us great pleasure to announce that the late Babu Nibaran Ch. Das, the famous Rudraksha-dealer of Benares city, bequeathed by a will to the Benares Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, his house and business proceeds for the accommodation and maintenance of the poor and the destitute. Consequently the Jamgambari Branch has been removed to his house near Dasaywamedh from April.

A SMALL though pretty mirage may be seen at almost any time of the day in Calcutta, just now. Singular to relate, it always appears in one place, the north of Red Road, now regarded as the hottest thoroughfare in the city. On entering the south end of the road there appears in the distance what seems to be a pool of water reflecting Old Court House Street and the traffic in the foreground, the detail of the buildings even of St. Andrews Church which

is nearly a mile from the spot, being particularly clear.—'Englishman.'

A STRANGE scientific discovery has been made by Professor Quervain, the well-known Swiss explorer of Zurich, on the Jungfrau mountain. The workmen employed 25 tons of dynamite while constructing the highest section of the line and there were explosions which were distinctly heard within a radius of 30 miles, then within a zone of the next 14 miles there was silence, but further up to a concentric circle of 50 miles the noise was again heard clearly. The Swiss scientist states that he is unable to account for the phenomenon.

THE 'plumotor, an apparatus for saving life by automatic respiration, was among the many interesting exhibits at the International Gas Exposition at Amsterdam. Packed in wooden case, it weighs 45 pounds, and it includes an appliance for automatically forcing air into the lungs and sucking it out with regulated force, a cylinder of oxygen sufficient for 40 minutes, and tongs for manipulating the tongue. The apparatus provides for all operations in respiration, including the revival of persons overcome by gas, nearly drowned, or stunned by electric shock.

THE "Ramakrishna Ashrama, Haridwar" was opened by His Holiness Swami Nirmalananda on the 14th. of May. The following programme was duly observed: 4th. May: 6 to 10 a. m. Suktas, Japam, Gita Parayanam, Devi Mahatmya Parayanam &c. 8 to 10 a. m. Procession from Vahakotaram to the Ashrama with Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna's Photo mounted on an elephant. 10 to 11 a. m. Installation, a short speech by H. H. Swami Nirmalananda, and Bhajanam. 11 to 12 noon, Refreshments. 5th. May 10 to 2 p. m. Feeding the poor. 3-30 to 5-30 p. m. Meeting and speech.

A BAVARIAN newspaper presents its readers with a striking record of the wars of the last fifty years. Under a series of little pictures of fallen soldiers on the battlefield it gives the number of the killed in each great war of that period, with the exception of the Boer War. Here is the record. Crimean War, 750,000; Italian War of 1859-60,

25,000; American Civil War of 1861-65, 800,000; Spanish War of 1804, 8,000; Austro-Prussian War of 1866, 45,000; Franco-German War, 215,000; Russo-Turkish War, 250,000; Russo-Japanese War, 200,000. The addition of these figures shows that no less than 2,313,000 men were killed in these wars.

MARCONI was a mere lad when he made his epoch-making discovery of wireless telegraphy. He was indeed little more than a boy when he actually brought the almost perfected instrument to the notice of the world.

Another notable invention by a boy is the derrick crane which stands to the credit of **WATSON**, the founder of the wonderful engineering works and great ship yards at New York.

Another boy, **John Brown**, was the inventor of the railway buffer, which has made such a difference to the wear and tear of rolling stock, and the health of the nervous systems of the passengers.

The world's largest railway station covering 100 acres and costing £36,000,000 will be opened in New York next month. The station is 672 ft. long, 310 ft. wide, and 45 ft. long, 15 ft. deep below the street level. It will have 100 rails and 69 separate tracks. It will have 10 platforms, and provision has been made for handling 800 trains and 100,000 passengers. Every train will enter and leave the station by electric locomotives, the substitution of which is being made ten miles north of New York. By this system smoke and din are eliminated. The largest interlocking switch and signal system in the world controls the arrival and departure of trains. There are 760 levers in

the frontier three times to see her sister in Tibet. She has travelled also through Russia and the Caucasus.

Mrs. Olive Temple made a daring and romantic journey of 4,500 miles to Wadai, and Central Africa, to pay a last tribute to Lieutenant Boyd Alexander, who was murdered by natives of Wadai in May 1910. She was the first white woman to make the journey and described her adventures in her book, "Chiefs and Cities of Central Africa."

Miss Gertrude Bell and Miss Emma Bell, daughters of Sir Hugh Bell, have both travelled extensively. Miss Gertrude Bell was once robbed by Kurds at Midiyad in Asiatic Turkey. She also achieved fame by making several first ascents of mountains in the Burmese Oberland.

Mrs. Longstaff, wife of Dr. Thomas Longstaff the mountaineer, has climbed in the Alps, Caucasus, Himalayas and Rockies.

THE following Sunday lectures were delivered by the Swamis Trigunatita and Prakashananda at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, U. S. A., during March and April:—

March 2: Can We Harmonise Religion with Business-life? The Inner Consciousness. How to Develop the Art of Forgetting and Forgiving.

March 9: Do we Need a Guru? Priests and Prophets. The Divine Inspiration.

March 16: Sri Ramakrishna: The Modern Incarnation of Divinity. Sri Ramakrishna: His Universality. Sri Ramakrishna as an Ideal for all Classes of Men.

March 23: Have We Chosen Our Path? Mystery of Good and Evil. The Divine Awakening.

March 30: As Thou Thinkest Thou shalt Become. Self-will Merged in Divine Will. Ask and Ye Shall Receive.

April 6: Significance of Resurrection. Spiritual Unfoldment. Meditation—Its Utility in Our Active Life.

April 13: Karma and Fatalism. The Search after the Beyond. The True Basis of Civilisation.

April 20: Are Teachings of Jesus New? Divine Grace and Our Free Will. The Need of Personal Ideals.

April 27: The Fourth State. The Soul's Conquest. The Mystery of Vibrations.

Some distinguished Fellows of the Royal Society are travellers of wide experience.

The sister of Miss Annie Taylor, who was the first woman to live in the Gumbi Valley, has also travelled round the world and crossed