

ISSUED MONTHLY

# Prabuddha Bharata

OR

## Awakened India



उचिष्टत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।

*Katha Upan. I. ill. 4.*

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# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य परान्निबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

Vol. XVIII ]

SEPTEMBER 1913

[ No. 206

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

### ON HOLY PLACES AND PILGRIMAGE.

MY boy, know that there must be manifestation of God in places where countless people have long practised austerity, Japam, meditation, concentration, prayer and worship with a view to realising Him. Through their devotion spiritual ideas have become as if condensed there ; hence in those places one feels easily an awakening of spirituality and realises Him. From time immemorial numberless Sadhus, devotees and men of realisation have come to these holy places (*tirthas*) to have a vision of God, and have called upon Him with an outpouring of their heart, setting aside all desires. Therefore, God, though equally present everywhere, manifests Himself specially in these places ; in the same way as water can be had anywhere by digging into the ground, but where there is a well, a tank or a lake, one has not to dig for water, but can get it whenever one likes.

As cows after eating their fill of fodder lie quietly down at a place and chew the cud, so after visiting a holy spot or a place of pilgrimage, you must take hold of the holy

thoughts that rise in the mind there, sit down in a solitary spot and think of them till you be immersed in them. You must not let them slip off from your mind as soon as you turn away from those places and attach yourselves to sense pursuits. In that case the divine thoughts bring no lasting effect on the mind.

MY boy, he who has ( God ) here, ( in the heart ), has Him there ( in the *tirthas* ) also. He who has Him not here, has Him not there.

HE who has the spirit of devotion in him receives an awakening in holy places and that spirit becomes intensified, but what will one gain in particular who has not that spirit in him? Even going to live in holy places his mind will all the same be engaged in worldly thoughts and pursuits.

TRAVEL in all the four quarters of the earth, you will find nothing ( no true religion ) anywhere. Whatever there is, is here ( he said pointing to his heart ).

## OCCASIONAL NOTES

**L**OVE and sympathy are wonderful qualities. Even the beasts understand these. And the sage, who has become one with the universe, through the power of his universal love and sympathy, commands the devoted love even of the wildest animals. Many are the incidents in early Christian and in Indian monasticism wherein beasts figure as the companions and servants, and even as the protectors of the saints. The man who has seen God is, as it were, saturated with a certain irresistible lovableness and glory. He has nothing to fear; for all nature loves him. How delightful and how true is the portrait—unforgettable to one who has seen it—that represents Saint Francis of Assisi, sitting in the forest, while doves rest on his shoulders, little birds feed from his hands of the grain he has gathered for them, and the wolf, the bear, the deer are seated as so many brothers at his feet! How often has the ferocious tiger become the obedient servant of the fearless Sadhu! And Nag Mahashaya, of our own day, the disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, had the same power of fearlessness and love; and one remembers how, at his entreaty, even the venomous and threatening serpent retired peacefully to its hole!

How great indeed is the power of love; how over-mastering, in its power, is the ideal of true oneness realised! Before the Realised Oneness, all the pleasures and terrors alike of the manifold fade out. That which is the Real embodied in all forms shines forth as the Same Spirit in all forms. All love that spiritual giant who has found Him Who is the One in all. It could not be otherwise. That which all, consciously or instinctively, endeavour to become, *HE IS*. That is the secret of the real attraction a true Sadhu exer-

cises. Indeed, even the lion and the tiger, the elephant and the rhinoceros, as well as man and the Gods, worship Him who has realised the Self.

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Genius is always a unit,—particularly a spiritual genius. It is all-sided and all-inclusive. That is why the Maharshis, on whatsoever subject they may speak, are as it were, infallible. Invariably their words are aspects of Truth. They bring the luminosity of the Self-realised Nature to bear on all the phenomena of human life. It may be that at certain times their utterances are true only in a certain relation, as when they speak on the modification of social laws as these relate to the growing revelation of the Spirit in society—but true they are always. The Sages come, not to deny, but to fulfil; and on all matters, be these even purely temporal, they cast light and insight.

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There is no end to education. Each moment may be transformed into opportunity for the progress of the soul, instead of being allowed to slip by carelessly. Why live the animal, when one may live the spiritual life! The entire process of religion consists in the transformation of instinct and in the strengthening of the highest tendencies. To make spiritual ideas cover the whole field of consciousness is the one aim of him who has come to know a greater outlook on life than that which guides the worldly man.

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Religion does not consist in any specified ecclesiastical forms or in any particular system of ideas, nor is it confined to any special *church*. It is a purely individual affair; and in the end each must become his own Guru, the mind being shifted through various

experiences to constantly higher and more spiritual levels of consciousness.

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Nowhere in the world has the spiritual consciousness permeated the masses as in India. The illiterate peasant bathes in the same Living Waters as the learned Advaita philosopher. In the very songs of the villagers one reads the very highest philosophical flights. Indeed, Sankaracharya and Buddha were only as two great voices for the eloquent silence of the People's lives. The People are always the background. That must never be forgotten, for otherwise we should lose the real perspective in which to regard Indian culture truly.

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There are certain very high spiritual moments when even the life intellectual is looked upon as an inferior form of consciousness. The greatest intellectual knowledge is never in itself realisation. It can only be an approximation thereunto; generally it is not

divorced from the most reprehensible egotism.

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The intellect should be made subservient to the spirit, if it is to take a true and essential place in human progress. It must *explain*, not *determine* the spiritual consciousness. When it goes beyond the boundary lines of its proper functioning—that of stating the spiritual experience—it is to be combated, by the spiritual man, even as a form of *Maya*.

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The Vedanta calls for the manifestation of the highest courage; it demands that such discrimination shall be achieved as will make a man fearless and recollected even in the presence of immediate death. It calls for an unbroken concentratedness of mind on the Highest. It will have none but the perfect character as its manifestation, a character from which weakness, vacillation and all forms of lust are forever eradicated, a character which has become the meeting-place between the human and the divine.

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## THE DEIFICATION OF LIFE.

**T**HE continuity of thought, the definiteness of idea, the persistency of volition in consonance with a lucidity of mind, these constitute a highly integrated personality even from a worldly point of view. The man who can think clearly and continuously on complex and research-demanding thought is reckoned as intellectually and personally accomplished. Should not, therefore, consistency and unbrokenness of thought along spiritual lines be reckoned equally as a faculty desirable and praiseworthy?

The worth of an idea is always the guarantee of its being practically carried out and lived. The practicality of worldly ideas is sufficient evidence, to the worldly-minded,

for their being allowed ample scope in the making and modification of individual and communal life. The social and commercial worlds are made up of social and industrial ideas. It is true that in life, either from an elevated or a degraded standpoint, we live the life of ideas. Personality is only ideation incarnate.

Thought indeed enters largely, if not completely, into man's daily life; for even instinct is thought become sub-conscious, or better said, modified into the form of respective tendencies. Our whole past, pressing in upon us, through the gateways of instinct and of memory, is one of thought. The foundation of man's being is intelligence, an intelligence

illuminated in progressive souls and darkened in souls given over to a purely animal existence.

The purpose of life, it would seem, would be the manifestation of perfect thought and supreme intelligence; it would be the letting-loose of now-pent-up and unexplored energies. In each individual there are, as it were, pressing in upon the conscious mind, the burden of potentially greater and vaster phenomena of personality. There are always undiscovered regions wherein the extending consciousness might move on subtler and yet profounder planes of faculty and function. But what of the efforts in these directions! Certainly, as in the temporal, so in the mental and moral worlds, nothing can be gained without strenuous and well-directed effort. That is an axiom, universally applicable in every department of human experience.

What is the method in effort? it might be asked. There is but one answer, and that is, supreme concentration of all the functions of personality. The whole man must be actively engaged in it. Alertness, at all angles, must be maintained. Uninterrupted intention must possess the whole mind. When the entire mind, the body, the emotions, the very nerves are enlisted in any task, then one may speak of concentration. Concentration is not a phenomenon of any one aspect of faculty; it is a phenomenon of entire being. The mind is only one of the departments of personality employed.

It is not necessary to enter in this article into a long survey of the worth of spiritual ideas and the necessity, from this viewpoint, of concentration upon them. Suffice it to say that an idea is real if it is practicable. And that spiritual ideas are practicable, the lengthy and voluminous history of mysticism attests; and, for the matter of that, even the higher forms of poetry, art and music may be adduced as witnesses in this regard. This granted, the value of concentration, for the sake of the spiritual realisation, is at once

cognised. Entering the spiritual process can, therefore, be no mistake. With the same boldness, persistence and whole-heartedness with which the man of the world seeks worldly experience in the endeavour to embody so-called practical ideas,—with these same qualities one may, and should, step fearlessly, and with supreme expectancy, upon the spiritual paths. There can be no misgiving.

Worldly life is a demonstration of the existence of the body and physical ideas; spiritual life offers proof, in the practice, of the existence of the soul and spiritual ideas. Only because the latter require more of true manliness, devotion, renunciation and persistent diligence are they the rarer instances in the demonstration. The path of sensuous existence is the wide, open, rose-strewn path that leads the individual onwards and seemingly never-endingly in the pursuit of physical ideas. The faculties of personality are engaged in gathering a purely sensuous experience, dooming the traveller to a continuously more physical life. The path of spiritual existence is narrow, difficult and beset with obstacles, but it draws out the finest and mightiest in man and reveals, in the struggle to travel, the spirit as more real than the form; and in the distance, like a pillar of cloud by day and a column of fire by night, moves forward the ideal of emancipation from a purely animal consciousness and the attainment of other and purer regions of existence. Is it not worth while to make effort to have "the beast within" die utterly so that the True Man may be revealed!

So concentration along the spiritual line is an essential need for such as choose the loftier, though perhaps the most difficult, path. They will embody the spiritual ideas and lead that life which makes a man shun the meaner elements in human nature and ennobles him with the realisation of his very highest possibilities.

Anything that uplifts, that takes one out of one's commonplace or self-satisfied environ-

ment is spiritual. Anything is spiritual that makes for the overcoming of the sense of that self which desires indiscriminatingly and which is dominated by avarice and passion. Concentration, that faculty by which everything is attained, can and when founded on sincerity *must* induce a complete transfiguration of the individual temperament. Concentration is a most positive attitude of personality, involving a constant battling with disturbing elements of sense, and an ultimate conquest thereof. It is a focussing to one common centre *all that one is* in order to rebound on experience in general *in the very highest forms of response*. It implies an endeavour to mould the whole field of consciousness according to a definite spiritual pattern. One ideal, having been perceived as spiritually most adaptable to individual temperament, must be placed high, and as a banner as it were on the spiritual path, and all other ideals and ideas be made subservient thereunto. Concentration, it is true, must first be induced through conscious and repeated efforts; but the aim, finally, is that that habit of single-mindedness on one ideal, which is concentration, may become instinctive. Whatever the ideal, or its character, whether it be an abstract principle or a masterful personality, it must absorb the whole man. It must become part and parcel of his mind, it must enter every nerve and course through every vein, until the abstract principle, in turn, becomes transformed into an actual, concrete, throbbing force, or until the ideal personality one worships becomes, as it were, visualised in a very ardour of loyalty and devotion.

Self-overcoming in order to acquire Self-realisation, self-renunciation in order to acquire Self-discovery, self-losing in order that the True Self be found—these are the objects of the spiritual life. And for this all attention, all effort and all concentration are necessary. Has one the courage to uproot physical individuality and embrace all that physical indivi-

duality detests? For it is such courage as is required. Has one that faith which knows no limitations or boundaries, which embraces the most difficult of tasks in order to overcome the sense of self and master conditions leading to the unfoldment of a richer, vaster Self? For such faith is indeed required. The same energy that is devoted to temporal pursuits must be spiritually directed. It is not the energy or faculty which is at fault, but its misdirection. All that is in or of man may be translated from its present human to a super-human plane, the plane of realisation, where vision is surest and clearest, where desire is transmuted into aspiration, where passion becomes spiritual fervour, where the very man becomes one with Divinity.

How long is the process of physical evolution, how much longer mental evolution, and how very much longer is the process of moral evolution! But the farthest may be made nearest, the last, first, ~~if~~ religious earnestness and sincerity are in the background. It lies with the soul to increase the speed of spiritual experience and progress by intensifying the spiritual yearning. Time may be gained by taking advantage of time itself. The dilatoriness which encumbers us spiritually must be overcome. There is always the tendency to put off and off, to defer until to-morrow what may be done this very moment. That is the greatest curse that may befall the seeker after truth. Opportunity must be embraced *at the moment*, otherwise it passes like the wind.

Most of life is smothered under the heavy burdens of the commonplace. The selfless, almost divine enthusiasm that sometimes visits the soul is often succeeded by the interests of selfishness and vanity, unless immediately translated into action. Therefore the necessity for seizing opportunity, in the spiritual direction, when it comes, cannot be too highly emphasized. Enthusiasm to be real must become practical. Better what the mystics have called "dryness of soul" and a real

effort to overcome it, than no effort and a mass of frothy enthusiasm. Enthusiasm, unless transformed into earnest spiritual work, may be reckoned generally as false. Even the spiritual experience itself is incidental to the effort leading thereunto. What is desirable is a combination of boundless enthusiasm and boundless effort.

The great ideal is that enthusiasm be the impelling stimulus, action the guarantee of its worth; and let insight cover the whole field of enthusiasm and action. Above all, let the *whole of life* be spiritualised and deified.

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## IN THE HOURS OF MEDITATION

### XXIV.

And the Voice of the Guru said:—

“My son, draw thyself within the Innermost! Outward things are like darts and arrows that do but bruise the soul. Make thine Inner Self thy true abode. The great Rishi Solomon hath said, ‘Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!’ Ah indeed so! What is even the treasure of the whole world at the moment of death! How well also did Nachiketas of Upanishadic fame know! He conquered Yama himself through that great victory which renunciation brings. All that which possesses form must suffer death,—the fate of all form. Even the mind itself is a form. It, too, is subject to change and to disintegration. Go thou, therefore, beyond both mind and form.

“From the highest standpoint nothing matters. In the supreme sense, once thou hast given thine heart to thy Lord, nothing can bind thee. This should give thee a wonderful sense of freedom and expansion. This should make thee fearless. Love is the greatest power. By the power of love all veils which blind thy vision of the Beloved One can easily be rent asunder.

“Purify the mind! Purify the mind! That,

once and for all, is the whole and only meaning of religion. Develop continuity of thought along the highest line. More and more develop consistency of purpose. Then nothing can withstand thee. Thou shalt move unto thy goal as readily as the eagle flies. O that one could think at all times of the Highest! That in itself would be Freedom.

“Rouse thyself from thy sluggishness! Reconstruct thy whole nature. Open thine eyes to the beauty which is everywhere. Commune with Nature. She shall teach thee many lessons, now unknown to thee. She shall bring to thee great calm of personality. See the Invisible Divinity e’en in the visible universe about thee. Be the witness! The actor is burdened with the effects of action; if thou must act, even in action be thou the witness. Concern thyself with nothing but Self-realisation and self-analysis, Strengthen that which in thee is best. Pay no attention to the opinions of others. Be strong! Make thy very own mind thy Guru. Saturate it to such an extent with great purposes and ideas, that of itself it shall seek and express the highest. Once strengthened it shall arouse itself, and things undreamed-of shall be revealed to thee.

“Refrain from criticism! Art thou thy brother’s keeper! Art thou the custodian of his actions! Who has placed thee as a judge above him! Blot out the slightest memory of another’s evil conduct. Be thou concerned with thyself. Thou shalt find enough in thee to condemn and criticise. And yet thou shalt also find enough to give thee joy. For each unto himself should be his own universe. Let the human in thee die, so that the Divine shall be revealed. Is it not better to be at Peace! Disturb thyself about nothing! Trust not in man, but in God! He will lead and guide thee.

“Stand like a rock in this *samsara*, the sea of unrest. Walk through this interminable jungle of the manifold like a lion,

Omnipotence is behind thee; but first crush out all desire for earthly or purely physical power. With the sword of discrimination cut in twain all that comes of Maya within thy path. Dictate to none; let none dictate to thee! Be unafraid of death, for if it should overtake thee even at this moment, know that thou art already on the Path and walk on fearlessly. Death is only an incident in a larger life. Even beyond death the possibilities and opportunities for spiritual progress exist. There is no end to what one may become. Everything depends on individual effort, and the Mercy of God is always at hand.

“Study everything about thee; and thou shalt find that for thee in everything there is a spiritual message. The One reigns supreme, the One that is in every aspect of the Many. Worship the Omnipresent Unity even when the manifold, by its distracting variety, would give the lie thereto. Appearances deceive, as the proverb says, but it is man's duty to detect this deception and see Reality behind all appearance. Each is the custodian of his own Karma; each is the breaker of his own bondage; each must for himself discover Reality. There is no other way. Each stands on his own ground; each must fight his own battles; and realisation is always a wholly individual experience. Ultimately, each is his own Saviour and his own Lord. For the Divinity-That-Is shall shine as the Unit Whole through each and every fragment of personality. Such is the teaching. That is to be realised. And That realised, the Great Goal will have been attained.”

## XXV.

Again the Voice of the Guru spoke unto my soul:—

“Treat thy body as though it were a thing apart from thee. If thou shalt say unto it, ‘Do this,’ that it shall do. The Master has said, ‘Imagine thyself seated as a clock upon the mantlepiece and study thy daily comings

and thy goings. Thou shalt find how vain and useless most of them are.’ Therefore cease placing any undue importance or attachment upon the incident of the hour. Ignore the physical, if thou canst not spiritualise it. To bring divinity even into commonplace daily life is difficult, indeed; but that is the test. It is not only upon the Heights, but in the valleys, as well, that we must come face to face with God. How truly concentrated that mind that can gather glimpses of the Spirit even from the most ordinary circumstances!

“Root out the slightest trace of egotism. The more thou dost study thy personality, the more shalt thou find that egotism rushes forth in almost every experience, whether of action or of thought. Egotism is not only to be overcome, but verily to be entirely crushed out. Even in self-blame or self-pity this cursed phenomenon is seen to exist. The true man of realisation blames neither others nor himself. He ignores circumstances, being covered with mightier things.

“See thyself as already dead. Even in life separate thyself from the body. See the spirit, not the form of things. Then, in thy new and clearer vision the whole of life shall be seen in a new light and be made manifest to thee in new, and loftier and altogether spiritual forms.

“Reflect much on the immense continuity of mental and moral experience. That man is born and re-born, until progress has become merged in perfection, will then become self-evident. Each is creating, through thought, desire and action, a world of which he himself should be the governor. It is not one, but innumerable bodies which the soul creates in its effort to sound the very bottom of the ocean of objective experience and pass beyond such experience into the full and subjective consciousness of Pure Spirit.

“Kill out any hankering for the occult and merely speculative. The increase of false



knowledge or the acquisition of so-called psychic powers, in and for themselves, is pernicious as it intensifies the ego and makes for added selfishness. The extension of consciousness in various ways in the spiritual process is an acknowledged phenomenon, and strictly incidental. When this, however, is placed superior as the aim of Self-realisation, the process on the Path is hampered a myriad-fold. Beware of the ego as thou wouldst beware of a mad dog. As thou wouldst not touch poison, or play with a poisonous snake, even so keep aloof of psychic powers and those who pretend to these. Let all the faculties of thy mind and heart be directed to the Lord. What else shall be the aim in the spiritual life!

“Be independent! By all means, be independent! Place thy trust in thine own possibilities and the mercy of the Supreme. Faith in others will only make thee more and more helpless and miserable. If thou dost not believe in thyself, the most painful experiences will force thee to do so. The Law knows nothing of sentiment or self-commiseration. It shall grind thy animal nature into spiritual shape. It has but one aim, that of transforming thy character! Why tarry, then? Why put off until another life that which may be realised this very moment. Be sincere! Be tremendously sincere! Worthiness or unworthiness is not the question. Thy salvation is *assured*; for thou shalt be *forced* into the higher life. That is the destiny of each individual. Divinity *must* be made manifest.

“A glorious spiritual indifference is likewise necessary. Why take notice of the thousand and one irritating details the day may bring forth? Be thou free; realise that all these are only the currents of that mighty flow of past *samskara* from which thou must forever sever thyself. Let come what may; let concerning thee be said what may. To thee all these things must become as un-

substantial as a mirage. If thou hast really renounced the world, how canst thou be troubled any longer! Be consistent in effort as well as in idea and ideal.

“In the galleries of art, the critic studies various paintings, some ghastly tragic, some radiantly beautiful, but he himself is not actually affected by the emotions portrayed. Do thou similarly. Life is an art-gallery; experiences are, as it were, so many paintings hung upon the walls of time. Study them, if thou dost choose to do so; but free thyself from any emotional interest. Study, but be unaffected. Bearing this in mind thou shalt become, in very truth, the witness. Study thy mind and all thy experiences as a physician might study the body or its diseases. Be unsparing in thy criticism of thyself. Then shalt thou truly progress.

“The way is long. The process of education necessitates repeated lives. But one may live intensively and thus avoid the circuitous paths which are trodden by such as live extensively and only on the surface of their personality. Thinking deeply and continuously on spiritual subjects, and moulding desire into aspiration and passion into spiritual fervour,—these are among the ways and means. Determine to be consistent each hour of the day until thy whole nature become charged with the spiritual idea and intention. Be always on the guard. Resign everything to Him Who is the Dispenser of all good things. Embrace whatever will keep thee steady on the spiritual path, even though it be the fear of death. Thou art the young plant that needs support; catch hold of anything that makes thee strong. Cling unto it with might and main. Be steady, sincere, earnest-minded, righteous, and avail thyself of each moment and opportunity. Long is the way; time is flying. Therefore, as I have counselled repeatedly, set thyself to the task, devoting thy whole soul to it, and thou shalt reach the Goal!”

## THAT SILENCE WHICH IS PEACE.

Come, my soul, let us the Silence seek,  
 Far, far removed from the tumultuous noise of sense.  
 Come, let us seek that Silence which is peace,  
 Where e'en the most secret inner thought is hushed.  
 On the wings of highest thought let us take flight  
 Beyond the boundaries of thought itself,—to God!  
 On the surface there may be tempestuous dis-  
 tractions,  
 The waves of angry passions loud may roar;  
 The mind in a thousand varied ways may beaten be  
 By the myriad experiences to which cursed form  
 is heir;  
 But deep below the surface, be thou sure, my soul,  
 There is the undertow of a deeper state of things.  
 Make thyself one with that! Make thyself one  
 with that!  
 There, there alone is Peace,—there, there alone!  
 The false, the commonplace, the interests of self,  
 The pain, the ugliness that are seen everywhere,—  
 Come, my soul, let us recoil from these;  
 Let us the Undying Isolation seek!  
 For that alone is Silence, that alone is Peace.  
 The rude, disturbing, ruthless clash of life,  
 The strife and contradiction that surround us,  
 Come, my soul, let us depart from these,  
 Let us cut off the bondage which such living brings;  
 Let us renounce the lie and vanity of things,  
 Let us seek that Great Silence which is Peace!

—Brahmachari Sankaradas.

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## HINDU CULTURE AND THE DOCTRINE OF MAYA

[ By the late Swami Swarupananda, Editor of the  
 Prabuddha Bharata. ]

**I**F the working of the Hindu mind is the despair of his Western brother, the reason should be sought, not in individual perversity on either side, but in the fundamental disparity of ideals of the cultures of the two peoples. The Hindu culture has perhaps more than any other in the world striven to idealise the real and realise the ideal. It has essentially been spiritual, and in advance of the cultures of younger nations. Hence its unintelligibility.

Princes throwing away their kingdoms and turning into monks, men of superior capacities and accomplishments embracing the lives of beggars, a handful of men rushing upon thousands to die fighting rather than give up their swords, hundreds of women cheerfully walking into huge flames of fire rather than be polluted by the touch of strangers,—phenomena of conduct, such as these, have always been the characteristic features of the Hindu culture.

The keynote of the culture is renunciation, the effacement of the man-self for the God-self.

“Not by work, not by progeny, not by wealth, but by renunciation alone can Immortality be gained,” says the Kaivalya Upanishad.

“The Unchanging cannot be gained by means of the changeful,” says Yama to Nachiketas in the Katha Upanishad.

Here is the secret of the Hindu's renunciation. Immortality or perfection in the life spiritual cannot be attained by things of the world which are inherently changeful and unreal.

“The One remains, the many change and pass;  
 Heaven's light forever shines, Earth's shadows fly;  
 Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,  
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity.”

The One remains. The many change and pass,—they are shadows of the Real; give up their attraction, if you wish for the Substance. In other words, the phenomenal world, a bundle of relativity, from the viewpoint of Reality is an illusory affair, Maya. Hence renunciation.

The whole of the Hindu social superstructure is built on this foundation of renunciation of the transient and striving after the permanent. Life is divided into four stages, in all of which vibrates this note. The student or Brahmachari is grounded in asceticism and renunciation of sense-pleasures. The student life over, a man becomes a householder for the maintenance of the three other Ashramas and for service. “He should,” say the wise, “devote himself to the gaining of knowledge and wealth as if he would never age nor die, and practise Dharma as if death held him by the hair.” The Grihastha's is the strenuous life, one of constant sacrifice and selfless work, a fitting preparation, therefore, for the complete renunciation in Vânaprastha and Sannyâsa which follow.

Spiritual perfection being the aim of life, its

opposite, life in the senses, is undesirable. Hence the two ideals of chastity and poverty. The widow, likewise, has a good opportunity of departing from the sense life, of living a life of celibacy, self-denial and meditation, in a word, the life spiritual. Let occasion be seized, and let re-marriage of widows be looked down upon and laid under a ban. This is the unwritten motive against widow marriage. The Brâhman, the highest evolution of the social body, must be a concrete example of plain living and high thinking. He must be poor in the things of the world, the Brâhman, in whose keeping are education and power. He must remain content with poverty, for the sake of the purity and excellence of his soul. How could truth exist in a man who has any regard for riches? And must not the Teacher be the votary of *Truth* above all things? Apropos of this, the following reflections of Prof. James of Harvard are worth quoting.

“Poverty indeed is the strenuous life,—without brass bands or uniforms or hysteric popular applause or lies or circumlocutions; and when one sees the way in which wealth-getting enters as an ideal into the very bone and marrow of our generation, one wonders whether a revival of the belief that poverty is a worthy religious vocation may not be the transformation of military courage, and the spiritual reform which our time stands most in need of. Among us English-speaking peoples especially do the praises of poverty need once more to be boldly sung. We have grown literally afraid to be poor. We despise any one who elects to be poor in order to simplify and save his inner life. If he does not join the general scramble and pant with the money-making street, we deem him spiritless and lacking in ambition. We have lost the power even of imagining what the ancient idealisation of poverty could have meant: the liberation from material attachments, the unbribed soul, the manlier indifference, the paying our way by what we are or do and not by what we have, the right to fling away our life at any moment irresponsibly—the more athletic trim, in short, the moral fighting shape.”

But there has been the proverbial ‘other side’ too. It is meet we take note of it at the outset.

There are two distinct types among the Hindus, representing the two sides of the Hindu culture. They usually go by the names, the higher and the

lower classes, but more correctly, though speaking generally, education is their differentia. The ancient inherited culture is present in all, but while with the educated it is organically assimilated and dynamic, with the great mass of the uneducated it is exotic, though living in the system, and therefore only static.

Spontaneity is the soul of culture. The culture imposed by custom is a sham article, a straw rosette fixed in place of a thistle bud, a make-believe. The demonstration of this truism is found here in India. Though Hinduism has through centuries inburnt its culture into the great masses under its sway by means of that most potent of instruments, custom, though its culture has thus found its way to the marrow of the people, it has failed to touch their emotion. No doubt the great majority of the Indian people have culture, but it is that of rote, not of feeling. It is automatic, not spontaneous.

To take a homely illustration, how is it that though the same yeast is present in the whole dough, it has succeeded in raising only a bit? The bit which has risen is the stuff that has passed through the electric mill of education, is, in a word, fine, free from the clogging chaff, responsive, developed; the rest is only crushed in the antedeluvian water mill of tradition. The masses through the ages have been denied education, the opening within. Hence the difference, and the futility of the Hindu people as a nation.

To return to our subject.

From ‘the inspiration of his Satanic Majesty’ to ‘the enervating climatic influence, every conceivable reason has been brought forward to account for the origin of the strange Maya doctrine. Some of the more thoughtful of its foreign critics say, it is the logical extreme of Hindu pessimism. Maya is the philosophical form, only extremely magnified, of the mood which created the lines,—

“The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e’er gave  
Await alike the inevitable hour;

The paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

say others, a hopeless reconciliation to the transience of life. Others again put it down as the highly coloured creation of the metaphysical Hindu mind, in its despair to ignore the phenomenon of inequality of conditions of life it could not

explain—a despair akin to Huxley's when he wrote :  
 "If it is true that the increase of knowledge, the winning of a greater dominion over nature which is its consequence, and the wealth which follows upon that dominion are to make no difference in the extent and the intensity of want with its concomitant physical and moral degradation amongst the masses of the people, I should hail the advent of some kindly comet which would sweep the whole affair away as a desirable consummation."

These and many other guesses at the truth about Maya have been evolved showing how impatient is the head to explain away what the heart is not able to feel.

( To be continued. )

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FROM THE PSALMS OF TAYUMANA  
 SWAMI.—IV.

" O MASTER OF WISDOM'S BLISS ! "

I.

With flowers and strewing hands, with quiv'ring frame,  
 Melting with love, with eyes in streams of tears,  
 Drowned in the ocean of intense desire  
 For Freedom's Ecstasy insatiable,  
 To worship, and with falt'ring accents, cry  
 Shambho, O Self-Existent, Doer of Good,  
 I know not. Wilt thou ever with soothing Grace  
 Rule, too, this erring soul that knows no good.  
 Seated 'neath the Banyan-tree on lotus red,  
 With Sanaka and other ripened Souls  
 Exalted, shining by, in worship rapt,  
 Thou didst reveal Realisation's Way,  
 Teaching by a word the Life Ineffable,  
 O Thou Siddhanta's Goal and Prime Essence,  
 O Daksh'namurti that dost shine aloft  
 On Trichi's hill, O Mast'r of Wisdom's Bliss !

II.

For me, a wretch that holds this crumbling frame  
 As permanent, to seek Advaita's Life,  
 Is like a cripple's love for honey on high ;  
 Oh ! how to reach that Bliss where thought expires !  
 The Life, the Service, Discipline and all  
 Practised till now, but lead astray. Let go.  
 Thou Wisdom that transcends my life and ways,  
 Thou Perfect Being inaccessible  
 To mind and speech, When wilt Thou come Thyself  
 And stand revealed, that I may drink full well  
 Of th' Ocean of Delight, the Bliss Supreme

That doth not cloy, and revel too therein ;  
 O Thou Siddhanta's Goal and Prime Essence,  
 O Daksh'namurti that dost shine aloft  
 On Trichi's hill, O Mast'r of Wisdom's Bliss !

III.

While there is envy yet, and nescience too  
 That breeds the sense of 'I' has gathered thick,  
 While greed and dearth of love combine within,  
 And Demon Avarice and passions dire  
 Do throng within my heart, perhaps O Truth,  
 Thou hast no room to bide within my heart.  
 What then is meant by Omnipresence Thine ?  
 Thou Balm of Wisdom that spontaneous comes  
 And soon relieves the incubus of souls  
 Bound down by spell of hugging ignorance !  
 O Mount of Glory Divine that tow'rs aloft  
 Sublime and grand, up to the highest Heaven !  
 O Thou Siddhanta's Soul and Prime Essence,  
 O Daksh'namurti that dost shine aloft  
 On Trichi's hill, O Mast'r of Wisdom's Bliss !

IV.

Thou madest the elements five, and out of them  
 Didst form the mobile, immobile and all ;  
 Thou gavest wit and scriptures, sciences all ;  
 Thou didst give out the Saiva faith foremost  
 And countless other creeds, and yet besides,  
 The All-embracing Peace transcending all :  
 Hast Thou not love to draw me nigh to Thee ?  
 O Vision unknown in Whom illusion thrives,  
 O Thou the Truth that neither comes nor goes,  
 Thou Perfect All-pervading Light revealed  
 In Wisdom true from all delusion free !  
 Thou Sacred Word, Thou Goal of Holy Books,  
 O Thou Siddhanta's Goal and Prime Essence,  
 O Daksh'namurti that dost shine aloft  
 On Trichi's hill, O Mast'r of Wisdom's Bliss !

V.

Long had I lived in self-complacent ease,  
 Well pleased with food and dress and sense delights,  
 Not having known this frame of mine, built up  
 By combination of the elements five,  
 But as a bubble formed on water's face :  
 And yet enlightened by Thy Grace vouchsafed,  
 It vanished all and left no trace behind.  
 Whatever creeds they talk, nought pleaseth me ;  
 And yet when I do think of birth and death,  
 My heart is stunned, no wink of sleep have I,  
 By night and day my body melts away  
 As wax on red-hot coals, O what is it ?

O Thou Siddhanta's Goal and Prime Essence,  
O Daksh'namurti that dost shine aloft  
On Trichi's hill, O Mast'r of Wisdom's Bliss !

## VI.

Enwombed in Primal Nescience dense and dark,  
Like purblind babes enwrapped and bound were we ;  
Then sent abroad, bedecked with badge of woe,  
Christened with name, this cursed fleeting frame,  
Fed fat and strong. Thou didst besides set up  
This endless cosmic play of birth and death,  
Chastising all who do transgress Thy Law  
With agony of Death : Then, rid of woes  
Thou dost lull us to rest at ease in peace  
In the Home of Bliss beyond both night and day,  
O Sire, O Mother of the Universe,  
O Thou Siddhanta's Goal and Prime Essence,  
O Daksh'namurti that dost shine aloft  
On Trichi's hill, O Mast'r of Wisdom's Bliss !

## VII.

Setting me in th' alembic of this frame  
Like a piece of copper full of dross, impure,  
Thou didst enkindle me with Wisdom's fire  
To melt and clear ; and at the season due,  
Thou didst yet touch me with Thy Grace and lo,  
Didst turn me into first-rate virgin gold,  
And made me Thine forev'r : What shall I say !  
Thou One without a Second, thou Source and End  
Of Vedanta and Siddhant of rare repute,  
Thou yet didst mark me Thine. O Thou that shinest  
In the heart of all devoted servants Thine,  
As well as 'neath the Blessed Banyan-tree,  
O Thou Siddhanta's Goal and Prime Essence,  
O Daksh'namurti that dost shine aloft  
On Trichi's hill, O Mast'r of Wisdom's Bliss !

## VIII.

Nor union nor separation's there,  
Beyond duality evolution ends,  
And involution too : no attribute  
Nor birth nor death, nor lasting mark nor sin,  
Nor search nor access 'bove, below, between.  
Beyond creative force and still beyond  
The Vibrant Prime Essence, the elements five,  
And knowing Self, incapable of waste,  
Nor one nor two, beyond both mind and speech,  
There ends all search, in Ecstasy drunk deep  
Out of the Ocean of Perfection's Bliss :  
Thus hast Thou taught, O Silent Teacher mine,  
O Thou Siddhanta's Goal and Prime Essence,  
O Daksh'namurti that dost shine aloft  
On Trichi's hill, O Mast'r of Wisdom's Bliss !

## IX.

Thou camest as the Silent Teacher mine,  
Ready to grant all boons however rare,  
And with a mother's love Thou didst unfold,  
Decking my head with those Blessed Feet of Thine,  
The Eternal Law of Wisdom's Ecstasy.  
Bereft of thought or holy word revolved,  
The Superconscious Vision b'yond all thought  
Of Freedom's final state as one or two,  
As Light or Void or Form or Primal Sound :  
Such is Beatitude ; so hast Thou taught.  
Grant me Thy Grace, O Lord, to live that life  
Wherein are steeped time-honoured lovers Thine,  
O Thou Siddhanta's Goal and Prime Essence,  
O Daksh'namurti that dost shine aloft  
On Trichi's hill, O Mast'r of Wisdom's Bliss !

## X.

Wisdom Thou art, source, midst, nor end hast Thou !  
Thou art the Holy One beyond all change,  
Thou art the Bliss that neither comes nor goes :  
Thine is the Grace that shrouds the soul to err,  
Thoughtless of Thy Perfection's Sole Refuge ;  
Thine too the Grace that doth dispel the gloom  
And stands revealed : What then is knowledge mine ?  
And what is ignorance that breeds all woes ?  
Where then is Karma ? Whence this Karma's frame ?  
Free will nor choice, not ev'n a whit have I.  
When wilt Thou then, my glammers all dismissed,  
With Flawless Grace, illumine and rule me Thine ?  
O Thou Siddhanta's Goal and Prime Essence,  
O Daksh'namurti that dost shine aloft  
On Trichi's hill, O Mast'r of Wisdom's Bliss !

## XI.

Treading the path of faith, one may complete  
A holy circuit of this vast wide earth,  
Bathing in seas and sacred streams as well ;  
One may, in scorn of thirst and hunger too,  
Stand in the midst of fire and live on air,  
Water and fallen leaves in direst need,  
In silence vowed ; in mountain caves aloft  
One may cleanse all the nerves and concentrate  
The vital forces and the Basic Fire  
Within the Lunar Sphere, then drink therefrom  
Th' Ineffable Ambrosia in trance,  
And thus achieve the wondrous power to live  
For æons with this tiny frame intact :  
Can, yet, Salvation come, if Wisdom fails ?  
O Thou Siddhanta's Goal and Prime Essence,  
O Daksh'namurti that dost shine aloft  
On Trichi's hill, O Mast'r of Wisdom's Bliss !

## IN THE LAND OF THE MUMMY

*(Continued from page 154)*

## ASSOUAN.

**T**WO alternative routes lay open to the traveller from Luxor to Assouan; either he may elect to go by the river or he may go by rail. To economise time I decided on the latter course, a distance of about 80 miles. As the train steamed out of the station at Luxor into the brilliant sunlight, I rather regretted my determination, for it was necessary to keep the windows of the carriage closed on account of the dust. Even when shut, the dust penetrated to my lungs and the glare from the sun irritated my eyes. But these discomforts were utterly disproportioned to the interest I felt in new scenes, and the placid progress of the train was interrupted by several stoppages at wayside stations, which made a welcome diversion.

Assouan, situated near the first cataract of the Nile, is the southern frontier town of Egypt proper. It is a great centre for traffic in the interior. Caravans arrive from the desert; the camels are unloaded and in a few days start again with goods to barter with the native tribes. A brisk trade is done in ivory, skins, feathers, horns, india-rubber, etc.

Of late years, the river bank has been improved by an embankment, and from here the effects of strong colour in the scenery of this part of the Nile make a beautiful landscape. Opposite Assouan is the palm-fringed Island of Elephantiné. Nothing now remains of its two temples, for the inhabitants of Assouan, instead of going to the expense of fetching stones for the construction of their houses, quarried the ancient buildings and utilised the materials. At the south-east of the Island is the Nilometer for marking the Nile levels.

Even a one-day trip from Assouan will

provide the visitor with a number of interesting sights. Among these may be mentioned, the granite quarries, the road to which lies through the Arab cemeteries. It was from these quarries that the Pharaohs took the materials for their temples and statues. We noticed an obelisk in one quarry that had not been detached from its bed.

At the Bisharin Camp may be observed a tribe of wild-looking Bedouins. The children shouted at me vociferously for *bukshish*, the perpetual cry of the desert-born, and on my distributing some among them they executed a sort of unsophisticated dance.

Besides these things there are the Ptolemaic Temple, the Tombs at Mount Grenfell and the Convent of Saint Simeon.

An hour or two can be spent with much enjoyment and diversion in the bazaars, the great centres of both leisurely and vehement life. The best time to visit them is in the evening. The incessant play of movement and colour, the surging crowd of brown humanity and the rapid transformations of the human kaleidoscope attract the eye at every turn. Flames from tin oil-lamps streamed in the night air, and a mephitic atmosphere brooded over the narrow streets.

All kinds of Eastern merchandise are displayed in the shops and open stalls, such as, stuffs from Arabia and Persia, silks, shawls, beads, jewelry trinkets; whips and sticks made of compressed rhinoceros hide and vegetable ivory, and a variety of curiosities and nondescript articles. Each vendor wishes to voice his claims to the buyer's consideration and to make the merits of his particular wares heard, in spite of the babel of conflicting cries.

At these really wonderful emporiums one may purchase all sorts of singular and tempting souvenirs, and the acquisitive tourist goes

on his way rejoicing. After a strenuous amount of bargaining—my dragoman being the intermediary—I departed with my purchases at a third of what was originally asked, and the merchant appeared well content with his sale.

To the stranger this universal chaffering seems an anomaly. But in the East business is not the highest concern of life; consequently, time is not of the same value as in the West, and bargaining is apparently a part of the pleasure of life.

#### PHILÆ.

We went by train to Shellâl where we found boats in waiting to take people over to Philæ. Shellâl is the starting-place of steamers for the second cataract to Wâdy Halfa. It is also a forwarding station to the Sudan. Whatever of importance it may possess is due to the fact that the quarries in the neighbourhood supply stones for the Dam.

The boatman who rowed us over to Philæ, sang as they performed their task, or rather continued a monotonous chant, the words of which were quite unmeaning, so my dragoman said. The leader composed a single line, to which his companions added a chorus. It sounded fantastic on the still air and had a pleasing effect on my ears.

Of Philæ itself so much has been said and written, that it is superfluous for me to add another description. Suffice it to say, that its history is one of adventure, and vicissitude of fortune, and certainly if its ruined temples and walls could speak, they would unfold many dramatic happenings. Numerous are the legends, stories and romances that have had their origin and enactment here.

Fortunately, Philæ is easily accessible today, but in the future, she will be only a name to the Egyptians, for, now, alas! these ancient ruins are threatened with obliteration and destruction and they are passing away for ever. A gradual but sure submergence is inevitable, owing to the forming of the

great Dam at Assouan, which is needed to give cultivation to the land all the year round.

The pomp and glory of the past are gone, but the ruins still present a study of great interest, not alone to the antiquarian and historian but also to the lover of the romantic and beautiful.

The Island was sacred to Osiris, whose cult prevailed here. The tutelage of the priests exerted a mighty influence over the people, and the frequent services in the temple were most soul-stirring. The air which the worshippers inhaled wafted a thousand sweet odours, and mysterious music continued without intermission. They regarded with awe the officiating priests who in appointed form bowed and raised themselves, swung censers, poured clear water out of golden vessels as oblations to the god, and performed many other ceremonies. The prostrate worshippers, transported out of actual life, felt no influences of the outside world and, in response to the voices of the priests, joined with the deepest reverence in the swelling pæan, "Life is sleep; in the hour of death we shall first awaken to real existence in the realm of Osiris, the ruler of the spiritual world."

The soul was regarded as part of the World-soul Osiris, with which it united after death. One of the principal doctrines of the ancient Egyptian religion was the preservation of the body, the soul-carrier, after death, in order to ensure the speedy release of the spirit and its ultimate union with the source of light and goodness. For a specific period the soul was still bound to the body in a certain measure.

Philæ contains the great Temple dedicated to Isis, the principal goddess of the Egyptians, an avenue of Isis-headed columns, a small isolated temple called "Pharaoh's Bed," and other remarkable monuments testifying to the opulence of the olden times. The sculptures in one chamber leading from

the Temple of Isis represent scenes relative to the death and resurrection of Osiris, which are peculiar and impressive.

It is said that Osiris, Isis, and Horus were worshipped under the form of a triangle, since everything perfect was believed in Egypt to have three parts, and hence their good divinity made himself threefold.

Silence reigns supreme where once the mysteries of Isis were practised, where the air resounded with many voices raised in praise of the great enchantress, and where once the chant of the religious who kept high festival rang through its now deserted halls and courts.

There is something strangely pathetic about the remains of these doomed structures, these roofless temples of Philæ! Vague fancies haunt the ruins, and magic influences seem evoked by every wandering wind and serve as a silent epitaph of her departed greatness.

Philæ was the closing scene of my voyaging up the Nile—a vision that leaves behind a feeling of enchantment! It is Philæ's great farewell!

#### THE ASSOUAN DAM.

Leaving the Island, we took the boat about a mile north to the great Assouan Dam. It is built on a huge and unparalleled scale, a solid bank of masonry stretching across the river a mile and a quarter in length. Along the top runs a tram line with trolleys for the use of visitors. On one side there is a vast expanse of water, the reservoir. On the other side there is a foaming cascade. Some of the sluices were open to let the ordinary flow of the water through. The water huris itself down the rapids or cataract and swirls about the rocks with a roar. This Dam, as a magnificent feat of engineering, is one of the wonders of the world.

Nubar Pasha said: "The Egyptian question is a question of irrigation."—If this is so, it will certainly bring prosperity to the Fella-

heen, a result that is devoutly to be wished for, and will tend to a large extension of cultivation. One learns the immeasurable value of a river in noting how the Nile causes plenty to spring from desolation, and the desert to blossom as the rose.

After leaving the Dam we mounted the donkeys which were in waiting to take us back across the desert to Assouan. Very comfortable looked a colony of shady bungalows set in an oasis of bright green that we passed on the way. They were the houses of the men engaged upon the Dam.

The hot rays of the sun poured down; the air was filled with a shimmering haze of heat, and the sleepy earth drowsed in peaceful stillness. The traffic was little in the middle of the day, but every now and again strange wayfarers moved along the road, whose bare feet passed noiselessly over the ground. Near a well, under a clump of trees, a group of camels crouched in their cool resting-place, and beside them stood a lad singing to himself the song of the camel-driver. Listening to the low voice of the singer, my dragoman repeated the words to me, of which I afterwards found a translation, which I append here.

#### *The Song of the Camel-driver.*

"Fleet is thy foot; thou shalt rest by the Etl tree;  
Water shalt thou drink from the blue deep well;  
Allah sends His gard'ner with the green bursin,  
( clover )  
For thy comfort, fleet one, by the Etl tree;  
As the stars fly, have thy footsteps flown.  
Deep is the well, drink and be still once more.  
Here the pursuing winds, panting have found thee,  
But defeated, sink still beside thee—  
Near the well and the Etl tree."

Proceeding to the railway station at Assouan, once more the scene shifted, and I was carried back by train to Cairo, with a break of two hours at Luxor.

(To be continued.)

C. E. S.



## ON STUDYING THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

**I**T is not always that we remember that a careful and wise selection of books is almost as important as a careful and wise selection of friends. What pleasure do we not derive from a noble companionship, what stimulus to right action, what inspiration to higher ambitions, what encouragement, what hope in the pursuit of our daily and supreme duties! Our whole mental atmosphere may be brightened and expanded by the association with a true, congenial friend.

And so in our lonely hours, when we are thrown back on our own resources, a similar stimulus may come to us through judiciously selected reading. For we must remember that our thought-world is peopled with images of diverse kind, and unreal as these may seem, our happiness is greatly influenced by them. It is then of great importance to control these images and to conjure up and keep in our minds such as may bring us moments of peace and happiness—to create a mental atmosphere in which it is a blessing to dwell instead of being tortured by crippled and unwholesome fancies which so often haunt the mind. And in this we are greatly assisted by the reading of good books. Especially is this the case when our choice falls on those books which deal with the lives of great and holy men.

A study of the lives of others, even though they have gone before us, of their struggles, their perseverance, their strength, their victory, nay, even their moments of weakness and defeat, may turn into a blessing many an hour which would have slipped by unprofitably otherwise.

And in moments of sorrow or weakness, when we are depressed or despondent, the narrative of a life nobly lived may be a great encouragement to us and may help us safely across these dark hours, filling us with renewed ambition, determination and confidence. And not only at such moments but at all times the recollection of a great personality may become a vital factor and potent influence in the conduct of our life and the building of our character.

We should therefore select for our reading the lives of the saints as the most instructive and edifying in these directions. For do we not remember, almost every one, hours in our own lives, critical moments, filled perhaps with temptations or doubts, when the mind wavered and we stood, as it were, on the brink of a precipice? Do we not remember how, almost ready to take the fatal step, there suddenly appeared before our mental vision the

picture of a saintly man who, under the very same conditions, had braved the mental storm, emerging from the terrible billows safe and strong and victorious? And how perhaps in times less strenuous, in calm moments of contemplation there rose up from the deep recesses of our mind, in all its vividness, a picture stored up there; it may be long ago, a figure that had become dear to us, whose life we had studied and whom we had learned to love and admire; and how with a benignant smile it bade us persevere in our lonely struggle, pointing out the path of truth and righteousness? Such remembrances are truly a God-send, friends in need and friends at all times.

It is for this reason then that we feel drawn towards the lives of saints. We cherish the books dealing with such lives, we make them our companions, we extract from them a personality that may be with us and may be unto us a guardian angel.

Such results, however, can be expected only when our study is impelled by the highest motives. A desultory reading can have no lasting effect. If our object be only to gather information or to satisfy a certain curiosity, the impression left is very much like that left on the antiquary studying his curios. Our investigation may give us some pleasure, we may derive some mental benefit, but our life and character will not be affected. This cannot satisfy us. Our main object should be to find some high marks, some lofty traits of character and spiritual attainment, by the study of which we would be benefited morally and spiritually—to assimilate what is great and good, to shape our character, our actions, our mental activity after these ideal men, aspiring to reach the spiritual heights which they attained. We want to embody in ourselves these noble qualities, these highest attainments.

To accomplish this we must approach our study with an open, sympathetic and, before all, an humble mind. We place, as it were, before us the saint whose life we are studying, seating ourselves at his feet with an ardent desire to understand the man, his actions, the motives behind these actions, his aspiration and attainments. We become for the time being his disciples, eager to learn, eager to grasp every meaning of his words and deeds. We want to understand the saint and we are ready to worship; we reach out, we open our hearts, putting aside ourselves with all our prejudices and idiosyncracies, breaking down every barrier that may stand between him and us. The man becomes to us as if alive again, we see him moving before

as, we hear his voice, we follow him step by step, we live by his side. We put ourselves on a footing of friendship, mingled with reverence and admiration, full of sympathy, full of expectation.

The greatness of a deed and of a life becomes intelligible when we understand the underlying motives which actuate the deed and the principles of which that life is the expression. But in every life there are phases which it will be difficult for us to comprehend. The artist uses a model for the purpose of expressing on his canvas certain outstanding characteristics which his model represents, leaving untouched the weaker or defective points in the figure before him. His energies are directed towards the ideal, the perfection. And so, in shaping our lives after the ideal man we dwell on the perfection of that man, passing over lightly what we cannot appreciate or what seems to us not in harmony with the whole, remembering that we labour under limitations inherent in our own nature, which make absolute judgment impossible. To judge the whole man, to penetrate, as it were, into his very being, is not possible until we have ourselves evolved to the plane on which we find the saint, until we ourselves are lifted to that beatific altitude of loftier thought and purer virtues, until we have reached the same perfection.

Remembering this, much energy will be saved. But it requires humility and a charitable disposition to succeed in it. Doubting and suspicious persons are hampered by their own limitations. Their minds will only notice and rest on the little dark spots which become the more conspicuous because of the background being so pure and white. They lose the beauty of the whole by a misdirected attention. Against this we must guard ourselves, as it is the sign of a narrow and untrained mind.

To come then in such close contact with our hero, to understand and appreciate him, to realise him, he must become to us the real figure as it went in and out amongst men. And this will become easier, if with the history of the man we have at least some understanding of the history of his time. A picture will be complete when with the main figures it represents the corresponding background. The background in the life of a man is found in his surroundings, his country, the age in which he was born. Unless we can enter into the consciousness of the people amongst whom he appeared, the picture under study will lose its true perspective. For example, should we try to fit the hero of a great epic of the past into our present surroundings we would create a strange state of affairs. Even the epic as a whole, in its own place a marvel of ingenuity, would, when so misplaced, offer but a strange piece of literature.

We transplant ourselves then, as it were, to the soil from which the saint has sprung, we go back to the age in which he flourished, we mix among his people.

It is thus, that we approach the saints in order to receive through them clearer visions into realms that are still hidden for us in obscurity. The higher ideals that surge in our minds, half formulated, confused, struggling for recognition, find their interpretation in the Saint. He reveals ourselves to ourselves; we stand transformed, reborn. We are introduced into a higher state of perfection, new realms of attainment spread open before us.

Different saints portray different phases of religion and all saints cannot attract us in the same measure. This is a question of temperament. But whatever our temperament may be, in the vast array of godly men who have adorned all ages it will not be difficult to find our ideal realised, to find that our saint whose remembrance, above all others, will lighten our life's journey, upon whom we can look as it were as our guardian genius, our beacon and our witness. And though not all the saints can hold that high place with us, in the life of every one of them we may find sunny patches, beautiful inspiring scenes, which we may well store away in our mental gallery, to turn to in time of need even as we turn to a beautiful passage in a favourite book or to a loved portrait in our album.

It is not however that only the life of noble actions, of poetry and dreams and enthusiasms that inspire us. Our greatest inspiration may be drawn from the struggle, the tears, the hours of woe which like so many blows brought shape and polish to the character, purifying the heart, fortifying the will, supplying the strength required for a life devoted to a great cause. We want to see not only the victory, but the battle in all its fierceness—the battle of the soul, the battle against sloth and egotism and fear and shame and depression, the battle from within and the battle from outside;—how temptations are overcome, how sophistry and the love for a life of ease are fought with, how everything that threatens to frustrate the noble plan is mowed down, and how, bleeding and deserted he may be, the soldier at last mounts the fortress, there to plant the banner of victory over a world that lies subdued beneath him. It is the life in all its completeness that thrills us, that makes the heart vibrate with new hope and with new life.

In awe and admiration we bend low before the Saint as he stands before us, the finished work—the leader, the teacher, the reformer, the prophet, the ideal type of humanity. But there is that picture of equal beauty, the man in his struggle and development, the man in the making.

A tender string in our hearts is set vibrating

when we read of the Christ-like compassion of St. Francis of Assisi for the poor and the suffering. But not less dear and edifying to us is that saint in the different stages of his conversion. Do we not remember how, when he wanted to experience what it is like to be poor, he borrowed the rags of a beggar, lending him his own garment in exchange, and how he stood there in the marketplace fasting, with outstretched hands to receive the charity of the passer-by? And how after that he increased his kindnesses and became a real brother to the poor—shame and pride conquered for ever? And then the touching incident when before an astonished crowd he appeared absolutely naked and placed at the feet of his enraged father the bundle containing his clothing and a small purse—his only possessions—proclaiming God, Whom he desired to serve, as his only father? It was then that he made tryst with his Lady Poverty, from whom he could never be separated again. And so, at an early stage of his conversion, his mind already filled with great resolutions, we see the young cavalier dismounting his horse to embrace a leper from whom a temporary impulse of disgust had made him turn his horse in a different direction. These are the moments when character is formed and established. These acts are as so many corner-stones on which the edifice is raised, on which it firmly rests, braving wind and storm, shaking perhaps, but never destroyed.

And so Madame Guyon, in her love for Christ and a passion for suffering, takes needle and thread and stitches on to her naked skin the paper on which the sacred name of Jesus is written. And then that love, cemented in that act, grows and fills her, so that whenever she hears Jesus Christ spoken of, she is almost transported out of herself.

These are glorious moments in the saints' life, the moments of triumph, and even the vulgar mind is arrested with awe. But let us also lend our ears to the groanings of the spirit, let us observe the silent tears of repentance, the agony of darkness, dryness, desolation, when the soul cries out for the Beloved and seemingly receives no response, the tears shed in remembrance of the Master's suffering, tears for the sorrows of man, intolerable pangs in those sensitive hearts, pains known only to exalted souls. Long and weary was the journey through the desert, dark and horrible every step on that staircase that led St. John of the Cross into "The Night Obscure." But at last the haven of peace was reached and the world became to him ever after but a mirage, a dream.

Or again, we may observe the hermit in his cell haunted by self-reproach for retiring from a world that cries for help and love and sympathy and, on the other hand, a curé of Ars spending himself in

the labour for others, haunted by visions of his own unworthiness, thinking himself useless, fleeing from an admiring multitude, driven by an unconquerable desire for solitude.

And so we follow the saint in all his moods, in all his agonies, in all his exaltations. And then we ask ourselves the question, what then is that mysterious power which makes that life possible, what is the support, the secret behind that life? And we find but one answer—sincerity of purpose, born of love. It is a sublime love that like a melody plays through the life of the saint. He has found his Beloved, and in Him henceforth his life is anchored. To love, to serve, to be true to his Master—on these all his efforts are concentrated, and when he strips himself of all that the world holds so dear, it is only to put on a finer garment, the garment of purity and holiness. What attraction is there in the world for him whose eyes are fastened on the eternal sun of beauty? The gates of a fairer city are thrown open where there shines a brighter light, a light that is clouded only by what the senses can offer. He will have none of these so-called pleasures which can only draw him away from his great quest. And peace and calm and a wondrous bliss envelop him.

And so we meet the same St. Francis, filled with that love, wandering amongst the Umbrian hills, full of cheerfulness, the sunniest merriment, singing joyous songs, preaching to men and sometimes to dumb creatures, praising his Master and loving and serving Him with his whole heart and soul. There is something marvellously attractive in such lives.

And thus studying the saints, in both the light and the shade of their lives, our study becomes an act of piety. And no study is more worthy of our pursuit; for among all men the great saints of God, first of all, demand our love and admiration and imitation.

In his greatest need, in his profoundest quest, in his deepest heart-ache man stands alone. He cries out for one conversant with his grief. Once and again through the ages this cry is answered, and one appears luminous with sympathy and love. The burden is lifted and the lonely heart finds rest and peace.

Gurudas.

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**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.

## THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FLOOD RELIEF WORKS A SUMMARY.

(Up to 19th August, 1913.)

### I. Contai Relief Work :—

The Ramakrishna Mission sent a party of three workers to try to reach Contai by way of Geonkhali and the canal on 12th August last. They reached Contai with much difficulty on the night of the 14th August and at once proceeded to the interior where the distress was reported to be the heaviest, such as, in villages under Pataspur, Bhagavanpur and Hadia thanas to inspect. They then opened a relief centre at Bhagavanpur.

The Mission sent another party to Contai on August 18th with the following provisions—Rice 33½ mds., 'dal' 6½ mds., 'cheera' 4 mds., 'moorkee' 4 mds., salt 4 mds., condensed milk 12 tins, 140 pieces of clothing.

### II. Relief centre at Antpur near Tarakeswar :—

The workers here have made a tour and report to have rendered relief to the following villages :—

12th Aug. :—Reaching Baddipur at 1-30 a. m., relieved 100 persons by giving food to each for 2 days. Found some of these towing on bamboo platforms, their huts being washed away.

13th Aug. :—At Badulhati and Buddbul : Relieved 180 persons by giving provisions for 2 days each. A few cows and goats also have been saved from the current and taken care of. Relieved also 15 persons at Govindpur and 45 more at Dilkash.

14th Aug. :—A Marwari gentleman supplied us with a stock of provisions which had run down and with that, we relieved 60 persons at Anurbati and Aravindapur. These men were found to be sheltering on tops of trees, by us. Relieved 150 persons at Iswaripur on the same day. This place became perfectly isolated by the washing away of the embankment, and many people saved themselves here by getting on to the top of bamboo trees. The children were supplied here with milk by the workers. Besides the above, the following number of persons were relieved on the same day—in Kurokhat—6, Ghughani—18, Ranibazar—60 and Howakhava—10.

### III. Khanakul Relief Work :—

A party of five workers have been sent by the Mission to offer relief to the affected villages under Khanakul Sub-division on August 18th.

Two other Relief centres have also been opened.

The kind contributions of the generous public towards the work since the issue of our appeal in the papers, have come up to Rs. 8431-1-6 up to 23rd August, besides a quantity of rice, dal,

cheera, and some old and new pieces of clothing apparel, a detailed list of which is published in the A. B. Patrika and the Udbodhan of Calcutta. Let us here again remind the generous public that a great deal more money is necessary to carry on the work suitably up to the end, which may be for at least 3 or 4 months yet, and we hope that it will soon be forthcoming. Contributions towards the relief works should be sent direct to the Swami Brahmananda, President, The Ramakrishna Mission, The Math, Belur P. O. Howrah Dt., and will be duly acknowledged in the Udbodhan.

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## NEWS AND MISCELLANIES

(CULLED AND CONDENSED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

IN Liege, Belgium, an elderly widow, Mme. Ottivans, has just commenced to go to school at the age of seventy-one.

THE birthday anniversary of Nag Mahasaya was celebrated by his disciples and admirers at his village-house of Deo-bhog on September 1st.

DR. Rashbehari Ghosh has lately paid his promised donation of Rupees one thousand to the Sister Nivedita Memorial fund.

MR Yusuf Haji Ismail Aghotwalla, son of Haji Ismail, ship-owner of Bombay, has given away Rs. 7,00,000 for the establishment of a Mahomedan Orphanage School at Poona.

*The Andhra* observes: "Coming as it is from the abode of the ancient Rishis, the snow-clad Himalayas, 'Prabuddha Bharata' has really a cooling and refreshing effect. The whole journal contains matter which illumines the path of the seeker after truth."

THE Ramakrishna Utsab was celebrated with great enthusiasm at the Yogodyan Temple-garden near Calcutta on the 25th of August, the Day of the Janmashtami festival. Many Sankirtan parties enlivened the occasion with devotional songs and hundreds of Bhaktas and poor people were entertained with sumptuous Prasad.

KUMARI Pandita Satyawati, a student of the Kanya Maha Vidyalaya, Jullunder, has come out successful at the last Shastri Examination of the Punjab University. There were as many as 110 candidates and only 18 have come out successful. She is, we understand, the first Indian girl to pass this examination. Kumari Satyawati is at present work-

ing as an honorary teacher in her "Alma Mater."

The Indian Social Reformer of Bombay says:—

"The 'Prabuddha Bharata,' published at Mayavati, Almora, is printing translations into English verse of the Psalms of the great Tamil poet-sage, Tayumana Swami. The translator, A. K., has been remarkably successful in finding the proper form of English stanza, and the translation is permeated by the spirit of the original to an extent uncommon in translations. We give below a specimen from the last batch: (Here follow the verses beginning with)

'Our greed doth know no bounds; though  
lord of earth:—'

ON 27th July, the 2nd Anniversary of the Ramakrishna Society, Rangoon, was celebrated in the premises of the Hindu Society Club, Mr. K. P. De, M. A., presiding. The day's programme commenced at 4 p. m. with the singing of Tamil and Bengalee devotional songs to the accompaniment of an harmonium. The Secretary then read the Annual Report. Mr. M. A. Sundara Aiyar delivered a lecture on the Work of the Ramakrishna Mission. The Chairman laid much stress on the co-operation of all in spreading the work of the Mission in Burma. The meeting was well attended and terminated with Arathi and songs in praise of the Lord.

AFTER a short stay at Gryon, in Switzerland, Swami Paramananda was urged to go to Geneva, where he stayed ten days, giving daily talks on Vedanta to an earnest seeking audience.

After delivering courses of lectures in Paris he returned from Europe and resumed his work at the Vedanta Centre at Boston. During the month of June he conducted the greater part of the meetings, and through July continued to hold two meetings a week. On Tuesday evening at eight o'clock there were Talks on the Upanishads, open to all; and on Sunday morning at eleven the usual Service. At this, the subjects for the lectures were: July 6th, "Who is our Saviour?"; 13th, "Reincarnation and Heredity"; 20th, "What is Meditation?"; 27th, "Final Emancipation."

LADY Hardinge's scheme for the establishment of a medical college for women and a nursing institution at Delhi has been very generously supported by the ruling Chiefs of India. Her Excellency has received over Rs. 15,00,000 towards the scheme. The contributors include the Maharaja of Jaipur, Rs. 3,00,000; the Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior, Rs. 2,00,000; the Maharaja of Patiala, Rs. 1,25,000; the Nizam of Hyderabad, Maharaja of Kotah, Maharaja of Durbhanga, the Gaekwar of Baroda, the Maharaja of Udaipur, the Maharani of Hutwa,

the Maharaja of Jodhpur, each Rs. 1,00,000. The Maharaja of Kashmir gives annually Rs. 3,500 or the equivalent of a lakh. The Maharaja Holkar of Indore has given Rs. 50,000, the Begum of Bhopal Rs. 30,000, and miscellaneous donations amount to about a lakh.

DR. Kashbehari Ghosh of Calcutta has made a handsome donation of ten lakhs of rupees to the Calcutta University for Scholarships and Studentships in connection with the University College of Science. Dr. Ghose in his letter to the Vice-Chancellor says that the offer is made for the promotion of scientific and technical education and for the cultivation and advancement of science amongst Indians through indigenous agency. The gift is made on thirteen conditions which have been accepted by the University. They are as follows: (1) That the sum of ten lakhs be invested in securities producing income at four per cent. (2) That four University chairs be established. (3) That the chairs be always filled by Indians. (4) That the salary of each professor be six thousand rupees annually. (5) That every professor before appointment should receive special training in Europe, America or Japan and allowance be paid to them. (6) That eight studentships be founded, each of the annual value of Rs. 900. Other conditions relate to the duties of professors, their selection and work, &c. Dr. Ghosh intends to double his gift later on.

RAI Sahib N. Sadasiva Pillai, Senior Sub-assistant Surgeon, Port Blair, with a view to collecting funds for the Ramakrishna Home of Service, Benares, convened a mass meeting at the above place on the 30th of July in the Temple Club Hall. A pretty good number of various classes, Hindus, Mahomedans, Christians, and officials and traders attended. Mr. Ibadullah Akhtar, B. A., Local Treasury Officer, presided on the occasion. Rai Sahib N. Sadasiva Pillai after opening the meeting explained in a splendid speech the aim and object of the Ramakrishna Home of Service and gave an idea of its work by reading extracts from its last annual report and made an appeal for funds. Lala Shiva Lal Mull delivered an excellent speech in Urdu explaining the work of the Home for the understanding of those who did not know English. The subscription list was then taken round personally by Rai Sahib N. Sadasiva Pillai. The amount subscribed by the assembly came to nearly Rs. 300. Besides, a number of gentlemen promised to be annual subscribers to the Home. Great credit is due to Rai Sahib N. Sadasiva Pillai for his energy, benevolence and persistence for having undertaken this noble task. Sumptuous refreshment was provided for all present.