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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

DISCOURSES ON JNANA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Expression is necessarily degeneration, because spirit can only be expressed by the “letter”, and as St. Paul said, “the letter killeth”. Life cannot be in the “letter” which is only a reflection. Yet, principle must be clothed in matter to be “known”. We lose sight of the real in the covering and come to consider that as the Real, instead of as the symbol. This is an almost universal mistake. Every great Teacher knows this and tries to guard against it, but humanity in general is prone to worship the *seen* rather than the unseen. This is why a succession of prophets have come to the world, to point again to the principle behind the personality and to give it a new covering suited to the times. Truth remains ever unchanged, but it can only be presented in a “form”, so from time to time a new “form”, or expression is given to Truth, as the progress of mankind makes them ready to receive it. When we free ourselves from name and form, especially when we no longer need a body of any kind, good or bad, coarse or fine, then only do we escape from

bondage. “Eternal progression” would be eternal bondage. We must get beyond all differentiation and reach eternal “sameness” or homogeneity or Brahman. The Atman is the unity of all personalities and is unchangeable, is the “One without a second”. It is not life but it is coined into life. It is beyond life and death and good and bad. It is the Absolute Unity. Dare to seek Truth even through hell. Freedom can never be true of name and form, of the related. No form can say : “I am free as a form.” Not until all idea of form is lost, does freedom come. If our freedom hurts others, we are not free there. We *must not* hurt others. While *real* perception is only one, *relative* perceptions must be many. The fountain of all knowledge is in every one of us, in the ant as in the highest angel. Real religion is one, all quarrel is with the forms, the symbols, the “illustrations.” The millennium exists already, for those who find it. The truth is, we have lost *ourselves* and think the *world* to be lost. “Fool ! Hearst not thou ? In thine own heart, day and night, is singing

that Eternal Music—Satchidânandam, Sohham, Sohham (Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, I am He, I am He)!”

To try to think without a phantasm is to try to make the impossible possible. Each thought has two parts—the thinking and the word, and we must have both. Neither idealists nor materialists are able to explain the world; to do that, we must take both idea and expression. All knowledge is of the reflected as we can only see our own faces reflected in a mirror. So, no one can know his Self or Brahman; but each is that Self and must see it reflected in order to make it an object of knowledge. This seeing the illustrations of the unseen Principle is what leads to idolatry—so-called. The range of idols is wider than is usually supposed. They range from wood and stone to great personalities as Jesus or Buddha. The introduction of idols into India was the result of Buddha's constantly inveighing against Personal God. The Vedas knew them not, but the reaction against the loss of God as Creator and Friend led to making idols of the great teachers, and Buddha himself became an idol and is worshipped as such by millions of people. Violent attempts at reform always end in retarding true reform. To worship is inherent in every man's nature; only the highest philosophy can rise to pure abstraction. So man will ever personify his God, in order to worship Him. This is very good, as long as the symbol, be it what it may, is worshipped as a symbol of the Divinity behind and not in and for itself. Above all, we need to free ourselves from the superstition of believing because “it is in the books.” To try to make everything, science, religion, philosophy, all conform to what *any* book says, is a most horrible tyranny. Book-worship is the worst form of idolatry. There was once a stag, proud and free, and he talked in a lordly fashion to his son: “Look at me, see my powerful horns! With one blow I can kill a man; it is a fine thing to be a stag!” Just then

the sound of the huntsman's bugle was heard in the distance and the stag precipitately fled, followed by his wondering child. When they had reached a place of safety, he enquired: “Why do you fly before man, O my father, when you are so strong and brave?” The stag answered: “My child, I know I am strong and powerful, but when I hear that sound, something seizes me and makes me flee whether I will or no.” So with us. We hear the “bugle sound” of the laws laid down in the books, habit and old superstitions lay hold of us, and before we know it we are fast bound and forget our real nature which is freedom.

Knowledge exists eternally. The man who discovers a spiritual truth is what we call “inspired”, and what he brings to the world is revelation. But revelation too is eternal and is not to be crystallised as final and then blindly followed. Revelation may come to any man who has fitted himself to receive it. Perfect purity is the most essential thing, for only the “pure in heart shall see God.” Man is the highest being that exists and this is the greatest world, for here can man realize freedom. The highest concept we can have of God is man. Every attribute we give Him belongs also to man, only in a less degree. When we rise higher and want to get out of this concept of God, we have to get out of the body, out of mind and imagination, and leave this world out of sight. When we rise to be the Absolute, we are no longer in the world; all is Subject, without object. Man is the apex of the only “world” we can ever know. Those who have attained “sameness,” or perfection, are said to be “living in God”. All hatred is “killing the self by the self”; therefore, love is the law of life. To rise to this is to be perfect, but the more “perfect” we are, the less work can we do. The Sâttvika see and know that all this world is mere child's play and do not trouble themselves for that. We are not much disturbed when we see two puppies fighting and biting each other

We know it is not a serious matter. The perfect one knows that this world is Mâyâ. Life is called Samsâra—it is the result of the conflicting forces acting upon us. Materialism says: “The voice of freedom is a delusion.” Idealism says: “The voice that tells of bondage is but a dream.” Vedânta

says: “We are *free* and *not free* at the same time.” That means that we are never free on the earthly plane, but ever free on the spiritual side. The Self is beyond freedom and bondage both. We *are* Brahman, we *are* immortal knowledge beyond the senses, we *are* bliss absolute.

(Concluded)

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

FLORENCE, ITALY,

20th December, 1896.

As you see by this I am on my way. Before leaving London I got your letter and the pamphlet. Take no notice of M.'s madness. He surely has gone crazy with jealousy. Such foul language as he has used, would only make people laugh at him in any civilized country. He has defeated his purpose by the use of such vulgar words.

At the same time we ought not to allow H. or anyone else to go and fight X's and others in our name. . . . We have no quarrel with any sect, and if anybody provokes quarrel, he is doing it on his own responsibility. Quarrelling with and abusing each other are our national traits. Lazy, useless, vulgar, jealous, cowardly and quarrelsome, this is what we Bengalees are. Anyone who wants to be my friend, must give up *these*. . . .

M. writes that the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, published in *The Brahma-vadin*, are not genuine, does he? In that case ask Suresh Dutt and Ram Babu to give him the lie in *The Indian Mirror*. As I did not know anything about the collection of the sayings, I cannot say anything. . . .

SISTER CHRISTINE

By BOSHI SEN

Sister Christine, best beloved of Swami Vivekananda's Western disciples, almost the very first to understand and live the message preached in America, gave up her body in the early morning of March 27, 1930, at the home of her friend, Mrs. Alice Fuller LeRoy in New York City. The best that New York could offer in the way of medical help and care Mrs. LeRoy's loving concern provided. Her final illness lasted only seven days. For the last twenty-four

hours she did not speak, but was conscious; she would open her eyes and look steadily beyond whenever her favourite Sanskrit *slokas* were chanted. Though years of previous illness had written their marks on her thin, chiselled face, when the final release came, her expression changed instantly. Her face was aglow, she looked years younger, and ineffable peace radiated from her; the anguish and sorrow of those surrounding her, she tried to

appease with her blissful parting smile. It must have been the final realisation of what she had experienced earlier, at a time when she wrote :

“There are no words in any language to describe its quality. For it has no human correspondence. It has no relation to anything in *Mâyâ*. There was stillness, utter stillness. Is this peace? The whirl and turmoil of life was stilled for the first time. There was no emotion, no hope, no fear, no joy, no sorrow, no, no, *neti, neti*. Never have I felt so soothed. I fell asleep peacefully.”

Sister Christine was born of German parentage, in Nuremberg, August 17, 1866. Her father, Frederick Greenstidel, moved to the United States when she was only three years old, and the family settled in Detroit. She had a very happy childhood. Her father, a noble, free-thinking German scholar, was the hero of her worship and the object of her adoration. But he lacked business acumen and as a result lost all his savings and inheritance. At the age of seventeen, Sister Christine, faced with the responsibility of being the sole provider for her mother and five younger sisters, accepted the position of teacher in the Detroit Public Schools. From this time on to the very end, life demanded of her heroic struggles and noble self-effacement.

In early youth she outgrew her passionate devotion to the church doctrines and became one of the first Christian Scientists of Detroit. But nothing satisfied the yearning of her soul, till one day, as she writes in her unpublished memoirs, “It happened. The stupendous thing for which we have been waiting—that which dispels the deadly monotony, which turns the whole of life into a new channel, which eventually takes one to a far-away country, which sets one among strange people, to whom, from the very first, we feel a strange kinship. Wonderful people who know what they are waiting for, who know the purpose of life.”

On February 24, 1894, she, with her friend, Mrs. Mary C. Funke, went rather unwillingly to a lecture of one “Vive Kananda, a monk from India.” “Surely never in our countless incarnations had we taken a step so momentous! For before we had listened five minutes we knew that we had found the touchstone for which we have been searching. In one breath, we exclaimed, ‘If we had missed this—!’ It was the mind that made the first great appeal, that amazing mind! What can one say that will give even a faint idea of its majesty, its glory, its splendour! Yet marvellous as the ideas were, and wonderful as that intangible something that emanated from the mind, it was all strangely familiar. I found myself saying, ‘I have known that *mind* before.’ For six weeks he remained in Detroit. We missed no occasion of hearing him. We knew we had found our Teacher. The word *Guru* we did not know then. Nor did we meet him personally, but what matter? It would take years to assimilate what we had already learned. And then the Master would somehow, somewhere, teach us again!”

But it happened earlier than they expected. It was on July 6, 1895, hearing that Swami Vivekananda was spending the summer at Thousand Island Park, that Sister Christine, with her friend, Mrs. Funke, started out uninvited to seek him and to learn more of his wonderful teachings. About these two, Swamiji used to say: “The disciples who travelled hundreds of miles to find me—they came in the night and in the rain!” When they met, Sister Christine greeted him with the simple declaration: “We have come, just as we would go to Jesus if he were still on earth and ask him to teach us.” Swamiji’s gentle reply was: “If only I possessed the power of the Christ to set you free now!”

The day after the arrival, Swamiji, with Sister Christine’s permission, read her life. When he asked: “May I read all?”, she replied: “Yes, of course.” “Brave girl!” he exclaimed. He told

her then that she had only three veils left and that her third eye would open in this life. The next day Swamiji initiated her. Referring to those days she once said: "I was a fool not to have asked him any questions. Every one did that and tried to *get* something from him. I used to feel so sorry for him. Now I would like to ask him a few questions." To my protest, "No, mother, you wouldn't," she at once replied: "Perhaps you are right. Near that radiance all doubts disappeared. After the first few sentences of his lectures it always used to be more of realising than listening."

It was at Thousand Island Park, and many a time later on, that Swamiji discussed with her in detail his ideas of women's work in India. He used to think aloud his hopes, his doubts and the possible solution. It was not until her mother died and her sisters were ready to care for themselves that she could lay down the duties to her family to take up her work in India. Early in April, 1902, she reached Calcutta. She saw Swamiji only a few times. He would not let her remain in Calcutta during the hot season but sent her to Mayavati. On July 4, Swamiji entered *Mahâsamâdhi*. This was a tremendous blow to Sister Christine. She decided to remain in India, however, to start the work entrusted to her by her *Guru*. She had no funds beyond a very small personal allowance from Mrs. Ole Bull. With the active co-operation of Swami Saradananda, she started her first one-roomed Vivekananda School. "In the autumn of 1903," writes her colleague and fellow-disciple, Sister Nivedita, "the whole work for Indian women was taken up and organised by Sister Christine, and to her and her faithfulness and initiative alone, it owes all its success up to the present (1910)." The institution grew and blossomed and fulfilled its purpose to educate a group of Hindu women to face this transitional period, to make them economically independent, and inspire them to devote themselves to the cause of women's education.

In 17 Bosepara Lane, Calcutta, the Sisters lived the life of the people. They were regarded as one of themselves by even the most orthodox section of the Hindu community. Besides the whole Ramakrishna Order, they had many devoted friends. The "House of the Sisters" in the Lane was a place of pilgrimage to many of India's distinguished sons and daughters: Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Rabindra Nath Tagore, Nilratan Sircar, Jagadis Chunder and Lady Bose, Sarojini Naidu and others. It was Lady Bose's generous hospitality which mitigated some of the austerities of these Sisters.

Twelve years of extreme hardship ruined Sister Christine's health. Recovering from her serious illness, she came to America in 1914 to visit her family and was caught in the upheaval of the World War, which prevented her return to India for nearly ten years. This proved a great blessing to the devoted group of students who gathered round her in Detroit. She lectured on India and the Vedanta Philosophy. Her lectures were always free, and she showed that the life of a *Sannyâsini* is possible even in a city like Detroit, when one has the will and the needed faith. She gave out her best, never diluted the glorious message of Vedanta. Of these lectures Mrs. Elizabeth King writes: "Her faultless diction, her exquisitely modulated voice, her appearance as of a priestess from some ancient temple, made listening an endless joy. Except in her stereoptican lectures in which she taught us to know and to love India, she had only one theme,—best expressed by Sri Krishna in the *Gita*: 'By Me all this world is pervaded in My manifested aspect. Having manifested this entire universe with one fragment of My glory, I remain,'—but given with such wealth of anecdotes and variety of aspects that you found yourself rooted and immovably fixed in that knowledge."

She returned to India in January, 1924, but her old home at 17 Bosepara Lane had literally collapsed and her

School—the present Nivedita Girls' School—had passed under other management. She decided to retire from her educational activity for the time being. Later on, ill health prevented her from taking up any active work. It was at this time that I had the supreme privilege of taking care of her and the little house at 8 Bosepara Lane became her home.

Achsah Barlow Brewster has given an *exquisite pen-picture* of Sister Christine during these last years of her life in India: "The voice that greeted us—so clear and low, so sweet and vibrant, yet so pure and full and true—opened out the reality of the purity and sweetness and fullness of her spiritual being, from the first word she uttered. The upright poise of her slender figure announced this as well, the proud lifting of her exquisite head, the Lord's anointed verily. Each feature manifested it—the arched nose with its aristocratic aquiline and quivering sensitive nostrils—the mouth that kept its bright colour and curved incision, sweet and sad and strong and Oh, so sensitive to the grief of others, the mouth firmly cut into curves, those very ones prescribed for the beloved Sita in the Rajput paintings—the high cheek-bones—the clean sharp line of chin and jaw—the mass of hair that framed the ivory pallor of her face, in which burned her great oriental eyes—eyes of the Eastern saint, heavy-lidded, often veiled from the world without, blue-black with translucent whites through which an inner light was transfused, 'lotus-eyed' indeed!"

Almora in the Himalayas she loved, where she spent her last two summers in India. In 1927, she commenced recording her memoirs, which alas, remain unfinished. We sailed from Calcutta in March, 1928. The two years that have since elapsed, excepting for a few brief visits to her family and friends in Detroit and a few months in the beautiful home of the "dear children," Mr. and Mrs. Glen Overton, on the Miner Lake at Allegan,—once the small shack she lived in in 1923 and named the

"Ashrama",—Mrs. LeRoy assumed particular care of her, providing every possible comfort and medical attention. But she was counting the days till her feet could once more press the soil of her beloved India. Our return passage was booked from Italy for this coming November. The release from the straining cord which held her back from India came unexpectedly.

How she loved India and her people! It has been my privilege to know her and be blessed by her for nineteen years, and never in all this period, even in her innermost thought, did she condemn India. To her India was always the blessed country, the land of her *Guru*, the land which for unnumbered centuries has produced the Great Ones of the ages in unbroken sequence—*Punyabhumi*. Not that she failed to see India's existing needs and problems, for their remedy she offered her life's best with a devotion and faithfulness hardly matched and rarely surpassed. To know her was to feel that to be in India, to serve India, was a great privilege.

One who knew her best was her *Guru*. In 1896 Swamiji dedicated a poem to her. It became one of her *mantrams*:

"What though thy bed be frozen
earth,
 Thy cloak the chilling blast;
 What though no mate to cheer thy
path,
 Thy sky with gloom o'er cast;
 What though if love itself doth fail,
 Thy fragrance strewed in vain;
 What though if bad o'er good prevail,
 And vice o'er virtue reign:—
 Change not thy nature, gentle bloom,
 Thou violet, sweet and pure,
 But ever pour thy sweet perfume
 Unmasked, unstinted, sure!"

To her last breath she embodied this ideal. Life made its hardest demand upon her. She had always to meet the most difficult task, the most desperate conditions. Her life before she came to

India was hard, and so hard were those first years in India! None of the Western disciples who have come to India, has had to face what she did. Yet when one felt sorry for her, she would say: "Would I have had it different? No, a thousand times no. It is seldom that Vivekananda comes to this earth. If I am to be born again, gladly will I endure a thousand times the hardships of this life for the privilege that has been mine." One felt that the strength of all the hardships had entered into her, for hers was the strength radiant, and not explosive. The stress and storm of life made her indomitable. Her outpouring tenderness and sympathy for the deprived and the defeated generally masked that *will* of hers, of which she wrote to me:

"I meditate upon my experiences and a beautiful thing happens. It seems as if a bud which has been tightly closed and hard, opens petal by petal, gracious-

ly turning them to the sun. Oh, the slow, the beautiful, gracious movement! A great serenity and peace comes over me. As the petals unfold, I see layer after layer of the mind unfolding. I see, I see! Life after life! The long endless series. So long, so sorrow-laden. Never having forgotten the innate omnipotence, how I tried to mould my life—life after life—to my will! The mistakes, the suffering, the heart-break through long years! Age after age. Then in this life my will had become an occult will. It had mighty power. Sometimes I felt that I could move the stars out of their courses. I almost felt that I dared to say to Yama: 'Thus far shalt thou go and no further!' I overcame insurmountable obstacles. It was this will that brought me to India. It was this will that kept me in the body when it seemed humanly impossible. And now I surrender it. The Divine Will now. 'Not my will but Thine be done!'"

SOME FUNDAMENTALS OF HINDUISM—I

BY THE EDITOR

I

Hinduism is a peculiar phenomenon among the religions of the world. All other religions have a definiteness about them. If one wants to understand their principles or the peculiarities that demarcate them from one another, one can easily do so. Not so about Hinduism. It is more true to say of it that it includes everything. We can predicate anything about it. Where its limits lie it is very difficult to say. It seems so loose and amorphous. But is it really so? One thing we must note. Though Hinduism never gives its own definition, it has yet a definite entity. Other religions feel that it has a fully pronounced individuality. Aggressors have been often misled to think that they can easily invade its domains and conquer them. Very soon they have been disillusioned. There is a tremendous resistance from somewhere. That

which appears to be exposed and unprotected, is really very well guarded by invisible powers. What are the fundamentals of Hinduism, then, which make it so invulnerable? What is the structure of its being, that gives it such a well-developed and immortal individuality?

It can be correctly said that not till the present age has Hinduism thought of itself as a religion among other religions. Our religion had no name. The name 'Hinduism' is not its own. It is an appellation given to it by foreigners. We know only *Dharma*, Religion, *Sanātana Dharma*, Eternal Religion. But in this age of the comingling of nations and of intense and elaborate organisation, it has become necessary for Hinduism to conceive itself as an individual. More than foreigners, Hindus themselves need to feel the specialities of their religion, to understand its ways and ideals, to

visualise it at least in outline and to conceive its aim and purpose. This is necessary not only to regain self-assurance, but also to fulfil the national and international functions for which Hinduism lives. In the following pages we shall attempt to draw such an outline.

II

It is characteristic of Hindu thought that every stage of its evolution has been marked by a conflict between *Jnâna* and *Karma* and their subsequent reconciliation. The scheme of life formulated by Hinduism is based on a consideration of the *totality* of life and experience, without any aspect being left out. *Jnâna* and *Karma* represent the two hemispheres of life's rounded whole. Whereas *Karma* stands for the manifold experience and efforts at attaining the objects of varied desires, *Jnâna* stands for the complete denial of life, activity and desire. In the one, we view life and reality as through a haze,—they constantly change and elude the firm grasp of our mind. In the other, we stand face to face with the Real shining in its pristine effulgence and divested of all illusive investments, and know ourselves as one with it. *Jnâna* and *Karma* thus stand for the two halves of existence, and neither can be ignored in any scheme for the fulfilment and realisation of life, especially in its collective aspect. The problem in every age of Hindu history has, therefore, been how to reconcile them, how to conceive and guide the life of *Karma* in such a way as to lead to the supreme realisation, so that a most comprehensive and synthetic view of life and experience can be arrived at.

From the ancient *Vedic* age down to the present day, this problem has re-crudesced periodically in new forms, impelled by the changing circumstances of the evolving time. In the *Vedic* age, the conflict was between sacrificial rites and spiritual wisdom, the *Atma-vidyâ* of the *Upanishads*. The problem of the *Rishis* was how to reconcile them. The

traces of the conflict and its solution are found scattered all over the *Upanishads*. We see therein how the *Vedic* gods are being idealised into the supreme *Brahman* and the *Vedic* ceremonies into meditations preliminary to the realisation of *Brahman*. In the age of Krishna, of the *Mahâbhârata*, we find the conflict reappearing in a slightly modified form. Here the attempt is to reconcile not merely *Vedic* rituals, but all work, ritualistic and secular, with the highest spiritual knowledge through the doctrine of *Karma Yoga*. We have also the famous story of Dharmavyâdha, the pious butcher, who, possessed of the highest spirituality, had for the apparent means of its acquisition nothing but the faithful performance of his domestic and social duties. The Gautama Buddha faced the same conflict between ritualism and knowledge, but cut the Gordian knot by a total rejection of *Karma*. He did not try to harmonise them, but gave extreme predominance to *Jnâna*. This is perhaps one of the reasons why his religion was finally banished from the land of its birth. Sankara also had to fight hard against the predominance of ritualism, as is remarkably evidenced by the rise of Kumârila, Mandana Misra and other advocates of ritualistic *Karma*, some of whom later on acknowledged the supremacy of Sankara's philosophy. Sankara's commentaries are loud with the din of the sturdy fight between the contending parties.

The fight till the time of Sankara was mostly between ritualism and Self-knowledge. By then the superiority of *Jnâna* or *Bhakti* was generally accepted and ritualism was accorded a subordinate position. But we have seen that along with this, there was the further problem, as in the *Gîtâ*, whether the performance of secular duties and works prompted by healthy desires leads to the realisation of life's highest ideal. But it is true it did not then assume the importance it has done in the present age. The true worth of ritualism, however, has been determined once for all.

But the question of the value of secular work has been brought to the fore-front by the tremendous organisational activity and multifarious calls on individual attention and service, domestic, social, national, international, political; economical, etc., of the present day, none of which can be avoided with ease or without serious detriment to oneself. How should these be performed in order to be pathways to the realisation of God,—this is the all-important question. This question Swami Vivekananda has answered by his famous doctrine of the worship of the Divine in man.

The aim and purpose of Hinduism will be totally missed if the significance of the relative values of *Jnâna* and *Karma* and their conflict is forgotten. This conflict is no misfortune, on the other hand it supplies the very motive power of progress. It saves Hinduism from stagnation. Hinduism views the phenomenal world as evanescent. It looks askance at the reality of the world and its attractions and at the value of human desires and impulses. Life should be so conducted as to lead ultimately to the negation of its manifold aspect. It must not be inferred that this negation results in a dead vacuity. The Hindu posits a reality above all phenomena, which is unattainable by the changing mind, and it is towards the perception of that that the entire life-activity is made to move. This antagonistic attitude towards what are generally conceived as life and reality, finds its complete expression in the *Advaita* philosophy or what is known as *Mâyâ-vâda*.

This view of life and reality is at the basis of all Hindu religious and spiritual efforts. It provides the motive power to transcend lower visions and rise to the highest. Nothing satisfies. "There is no happiness in the finite. The Infinite alone is joy." Those who do not aim at the transcendental, can never get beyond the relative, nor can they properly appreciate it. This motive power is urgently needed by Hinduism which rejects no view of life and reality but accepts all. This all-inclusiveness,

if it has its strong points, has also its weakness. The exclusive and fixed creeds compel their votaries to live up to their defined ideals. The fixity of the credal ideal, therefore, impels one to strive constantly to reach the required heights. In Hinduism there are innumerable credal ideals to suit different tastes and capacities, not all of which are necessarily high. There may, therefore, be a tendency to be satisfied with the level of life already reached and with lower ideals. This danger is accentuated by the Hindu insistence on the votaries strictly adhering to their credal ideals. But as we have said before, this danger is completely obviated by looking upon life as a self-contradictory principle, veiling Truth and Reality. This spirit pervades every stratum of Hindu society, though its expression varies according to the education and capacity of the persons concerned. This spirit is called *Vairâgya*. No Hindu, whatever station of life he may occupy, will ever recognise that life and reality as he finds them now, anyway conform to the real life and reality. He is vaguely or clearly conscious of the conflict, and constantly tries to free himself from the bondages of desire and purify his spiritual vision. And with the clearing of vision, his credal ideal undergoes a transformation and reveals greater depths and finer contents. Thus he progresses along the path of religion till the highest is achieved.

Some misconceptions are prevalent about the relative values of the credal ideals. Some think that the purpose of Hinduism is to promote its adherents from one credal view to another according to their spiritual development. It is argued that the adherence of people to the same form of religion for generations shows a slackness and dullness of spirit. According to them, though a man may begin with image-worship or forms of dualistic worship, he must change the form as he progresses onwards. The true Hindu view, however, is not wholly this. The Hindu idea is

rather to discover, wherever possible, finer and finer contents in the same credal ideal. We do not deny one creed or worship and take to another. We find higher and higher meanings in the same ideal and form. That is how the same god assumes different significances with the passing of centuries till he represents the very highest. The understanding of this fact is specially necessary in order to go deep into Hindu catholicity. It is well-known that Hinduism never compels anyone to change his object or mode of worship. It allows every one absolute freedom. Thus various races with their various gods and goddesses and forms and ceremonies have found admission into Hindu society and lived undisturbed within its fold, evolving in their own ways. If it were the purpose of Hinduism to lead people from one mode of worship to another according to their mental development, there would have been a constant reshuffling of the members of the different races, groups and castes. That would have created social anarchy. And this process, on the whole, would not have been sufficiently beneficial. The idea is to uplift group by group. The same group must evolve and change its spiritual ideas and ideals according to its mental development. The crude aboriginal gods and goddesses would thus be refined more and more, till they would represent the highest ideals fit for cultured minds. If we search into the history of the development of Hindu gods and goddesses, we shall find this principle exemplified in many cases.

But it is true that this is not the only process. Sometimes progress is made the other way also. A whole group may accept a new spiritual ideal and mode of worship. Their effort then would be not to reject their old worship, but to reconcile it with the new. In all cases there is a general attempt not to deny anything, but to develop it into the ideal form. We have said that Hinduism never imposes any creed on any people or community but allows it full freedom to grow in its own way.

This does not mean that it allows it to drift. In certain respects Hinduism holds strong views. We have already mentioned the fundamental motive power of the Hindu life,—*Vairâgya*, the denial of the present vision of life as unreal. This view Hinduism slowly imposes on all who would call themselves Hindu. But this imposition is never drastic. It is a slow, unperceived process. The incorporated groups are slowly infiltrated with this outlook. It may take time to penetrate the new-comers. But that does not matter. Its work continues uninterrupted from day to day. Having been sure of this fundamental, Hinduism allows full freedom to individuals and communities to act and live in any way they choose.

III

Naturally there are innumerable objects of worship, from the crudest to the subtlest, from stocks and stones to the Highest *Brahman*. All these Hinduism calls its own. It denies nothing. None of them are unreal. The savage worships animist gods, trees, stones, etc. This is also real. To the Semitics, this seems an impossible proposition, because they fail to catch the inwardness of it. In all worship there are two elements. First, the objects of worship must be real. That is to say, they must really exist. Secondly, the worshippers must feel uplifted. That is, worship must lift them above the normal conditions of life and consciousness. The existence of the second element even in a savage's worship does not require to be proved. Even a savage by his crude worship feels himself improved (may be according to his own standard, but that is only what counts), otherwise he would not have continued with it. As regards the first element, doubts may well be entertained. Do trees, stocks or stones have an individuality superior to their savage worshippers? It is not easy to prove that they have. On the other hand, to our common experience, they are much inferior to them. But we may note a few points in this connection. There are

various spirits half-way between men and gods, and they have much to do with human affairs. Even savages are masters of many mysteries. Then, again, when trees or stones are worshipped, it is not these ostensible objects that are really worshipped. For they do not worship all stones and trees. Evidently the particular trees or stones worshipped are considered to possess beings which are different from the ordinary conceptions of stones or trees. In fact it is not the trees and stones that are worshipped, but other beings in and through them.

We have discussed the religion of the savage, because that touches the lowest point of the Hindu pantheon. From this we come to the well-known minor gods and goddesses. Hindus believe that these gods and goddesses have objective realities. They are not merely nature's forces or phenomena arbitrarily personified by men. They do exist, even as the visible objects exist. Human genius is protean, it is as wide as the cosmos itself. And this visible world is not the only world that exists. There are other worlds, finer and superior, inhabited by other beings. A conception of reality which excludes those other worlds, is defective and partial. It is not true to the whole. Hinduism, therefore, has scope for all experience. All experiences must have place in the scheme of knowledge. What is worship? We have attached to it a conventional meaning,—we mean by it some definite religious practices. Worship is not merely that. It is the realisation of a state of consciousness in and by which the whole of reality is known and possessed. Our so-called normal consciousness is extremely limited. It is hedged round by time and space. It knows and thereby possesses only a fraction of reality. We have to enlarge it. We have to transcend the present limits and thereby make our consciousness co-pervasive with the entire cosmos. What is the way? The way is to elude the limitations by forgetting them, by withdrawing the mind from them by means

of concentration. This concentration may be had by many different means, by identifying oneself, through thought, with a being representing a higher consciousness, by repeating a potent word, by reasoning, by killing out all desires, etc., etc. Thus do we transcend our present limits and become aware of the wider expanses of reality. A system with such a conception of worship naturally has to provide room for all spirits, demigods and gods in its pantheon.

Next come the great gods, the different conceptions of *Ishvara*, God,—*Shiva*, *Kâli*, *Vishnu*, etc., the Divine Incarnations such as Rama, Krishna, Buddha, etc., and also the personal formless God—*Saguna Brahman*. And last of all, *Brahman*, the Absolute. These different grades really comprise all the objects of worship that men in different stages of spiritual development may conceive or have. New gods and goddesses may be discovered. They will also fall in either of these grades.

The question is often asked : Has God any form? Such a question would be pertinent only to the forms of *Ishvara*. As regards the minor gods and demigods, it may be said that if there are visible beings, there may be finer, invisible beings also. Gods and goddesses are real, so also the forms of God. Many have seen them. It is not self-delusion or deception, as many moderns seem to think. There are some, however, who, though they believe that god-forms have been seen by devotees, would yet grant them only a subjective validity. They hold that by constant thinking of the forms, we make them appear as real,—they do not possess any objective existence. Those who argue thus, miss a crucial fact. The proof of the objective reality of the Divine visions is not that certain forms are *seen*, but that the visions are accompanied by an exaltation of feeling and an uplifting and widening of consciousness, which would not be if they were self-created illusions. We feel that we have suddenly reached a higher plane of conscious-

ness. We feel that the beings we are seeing are infinitely superior to us, and what is more, we perceive the presence of a deeper and higher reality. This last point is important. The sense of reality is an inner feeling. It is purely subjective. It is a state of consciousness. The higher the reality, the deeper is our sense of it. In fact, every grade of reality has a corresponding state of consciousness. When we have the highest state of consciousness, we know that we are experiencing the Divine Existence. It is not the *forms* that ensure the Divinity of our visions, but the *consciousness* accompanying them. Those who have the visions, can alone know whether they are real or illusory. How can others by mere ratiocination? There are other signs also. A genuine vision fills us with a joy the like of which we have never felt before. It is a joy of unusual kind and intensity. A genuine vision, again, leaves an indelible impress on our mind and life. Our whole life undergoes a change. Our outlook is transformed. We feel a new power surging within us. Our sense of unity grows more and more. We become unselfish. We feel a universal love. Fear of death disappears. We feel ourselves as above the zone of mortality. We become altogether better men. How can a mere subjective creation achieve all these? If they are still to be called subjective, they must be so in a peculiar sense. Yes, there is a subjective element in the visions also. But then, is there not the same subjectivity in our experience of the so-called objects of the world? Just as the ordinary objects of our experience are both subjective and objective, in the same sense the Divine visions and the gods and goddesses also, are subjective and objective.

It may be asked : How is it that we realise God only in the forms in which *we* want to realise Him? Does it not show that the forms are *our* imposition? It is wrong to say that we realise God only in the forms in which we want to see Him. Cases are not rare, in which God has revealed Himself to *Sādhanas*

in unexpected and un contemplated forms. But it is true that devotees often realise God in the forms in which they meditate on Him. This, however, does not warrant the conclusion formed by the questioner. It only shows that human mind has a way of aspiring after God in the forms in which He actually exists. One psychological fact has to be remembered in this connection. We must admit that the idea and the form must conform to each other. We cannot fit any idea into any form. Necessarily the Divine Idea must have corresponding Divine forms. This significance of form must be carefully noted. Suppose I begin to meditate on a form of my choice and seek to realise it as Divine. If the form does not happen to be adequate for the Divine content, I shall fail to realise it as Divine, however hard I may try. In fact, I shall fail to concentrate my mind on it in the Divine spirit. This subtle law of mind is often ignored by those who believe that any form can be realised as Divine. We in our present degraded state cannot know which forms really correspond to the Divine Idea. Only one who has realised God, can know. The ordinary aspirant, therefore, has to depend on the experience of the sages. Certain forms have been known to belong to God. Only on those forms may we meditate to successfully realise Him, on none else.

Hence partly the prevalence of image-worship representing God in His actual forms. What is image-worship? It is now generally recognised that we do not worship the images themselves, but God Himself in and through the images. Image-worship helps the concentration of mind on God. It is often said that image-worship represents the lowest form of worship. In a sense it does. But in another, it is as high as any other. We have already noted the peculiarity of Hinduism that it does not ask us to relinquish one form in favour of another to realise a higher spiritual state. It wants us to see superior contents in the same form by means of inner development. Image-worship is

no exception. Even the highest spiritual realisations are possible through image-worship, only the meaning of image-worship changes as we progress along the spiritual path. The image itself becomes at last spiritualised. It is then not stone or any other earthly material, it is *chinmaya*, spirit itself. We know that in the higher planes of consciousness the universe with all its variegated objects appears as Divine. Both the substance and the forms of things are really spiritual. Why, then, should we not realise the images themselves as really spiritual and not merely as symbols of spirit? In this aspect, image-worship is on the same level with the highest spiritual experiences. In fact, in the whole of Hinduism we note a dual movement: one is the promotion of individuals from lower forms to higher forms as regards both objects and modes of worship; and the other is the interpretation of the same forms as higher and higher realities according to the aspirant's own self-development.

Infinite are the aspirations of the human mind, and infinite the facets of Reality. No two minds are same. There is no repetition in the creation of God. Everyone's outlook differs from the others'. And God fulfils all in their own ways. Every man seeks to reach God in his own way. Who can ever prescribe to him? The mind reaches towards all things. Hinduism admits that there are infinite ways of knowing the Truth and Reality and that everyone can have his individual path. This is the doctrine of *Ista-devatâ*. God is as it were trying to unfold Himself in each being in a unique way. Your idea of God is not mine. All are realising the same God. But God is not a fixed and limited being. Infinite are His expressions and aspects, and we choose the aspects that appeal to us most. This freedom of choice is peculiarly Hinduistic. Like other religionists, we do not say that all must think of God in the same way, or that our view of the Truth is the only true view. What infinite horizons does not this doctrine open before us all!

This does not mean, however, that we can indulge in spiritual anarchy. When we have chosen one aspect of the Divine, we must stick to it till we have fully realised it. The choice, it is needless to mention, must be according to our nature, with due recognition of not only our present, but also future, tendencies. For unless the choice is made with an eye to the future, it may happen that we shall find our choice ill fitting with our future tendencies, and then a new choice will have to be made. Only a kind of omniscience can make a permanent choice. Hence the necessity of *Guru*. The *Guru* knows the past and future of the disciple. He has the necessary insight. He can tell us what is our *Ista*, and he can prescribe practices accordingly. Such *Gurus*, however, are not plentiful. But they are available, if we want them earnestly. Those who are not blessed by such *Gurus*, have necessarily to depend on their own insight. In most cases, people follow the ways of their fathers. And that is often useful, because most men do not take religion seriously. Those who are earnest about spiritual practice, have to find out a true *Guru*; and it is said that those who are really eager for God, will be provided by God Himself with an efficient teacher.

IV

It seems, that what we Hindus mean by seeing or realising God is often misunderstood by foreigners. Some time ago a Christian missionary published a book in which he brought together the confessions of many non-Christians, mostly Hindus, in order to show that Hindus have not found the Truth whereas many Christians whom also he quoted, affirmed the perception of the presence of God. It is an irony of the modern age that ignorance itself is nowadays a proof of spiritual superiority. Hindus, when they read such books, smile at the self-complacency of people like the above writer. They do not know what is meant by seeing or realising God. Hindus, even those who are

not spiritual enough, know what God-realisation means, what a rare experience it is, and after what struggle one can get a glimpse of the Eternal. The critics talk glibly of God-realisation, showing that they have not only not realised the truth, but have actually no idea what it means. God-realisation is an absolute transformation of the whole life. The man becomes so changed that there is always an air of super-humanity about him. His ways are no longer normal. His actions are far different from those of an ordinary man. And even his appearance changes. But of course these are but outward signs. And it is very difficult for us ordinary people to judge the men of realisation by these signs only; in fact we shall fail to cognise them all. Only he who has known God himself, can recognise a man of realisation. But when we come in touch with him, if we are pure and sincere, we somehow feel that we are in the presence of a superior reality, an intense life and an infinite consciousness. Our mind, in their presence, becomes calm of itself without any effort on our part, and a new peace and joy dawn on it. This is a sure sign.

What is God-realisation? It is no imagination or poetic sentiment or pious emotion. It is the direct experience of the eternal reality. We have already pointed out that the ultimate truth may be realised differently by different persons. But the psychological basis is the same in all cases: the mind must become absolutely calm. Subjectively considered, the universe is nothing but an aggregate of *vrittis*, mental modifications. Without the mind, the phenomenal universe as well as our finite personality would not be perceivable. It is because there are *vrittis* in the mind, therefore do we perceive the variegated world. When these *vrittis* die away and along with it the mind (for a mind without modifications is no mind), the universe vanishes and the Truth alone shines in its infinite glory. This is the realisation of the Absolute. The realisation of the Personal God is

only just a little short of this. Consider what struggle it requires to reach that blessed state where there is no mental modification. Until one tries, one cannot imagine the difficulty of it. Let us only try a little to calm our mind and we shall see that it is easier to calm a sea in storm than to tranquillise the mind. It is so restless! It runs in a thousand directions. It cannot be held to a point for a few seconds at a time. It runs. It has been compared to a drunken monkey which has been bitten by wasps and then lashed with a cane. Really the mind is still more restless than that. The Hindu knows that the real test of spiritual progress is the steady concentration of the mind on the Divine for all life. The mind must naturally dwell on God, unflinching, undeviating and undisturbed by the happenings of the phenomenal world. It is an effort of many lives to reach such a state. Day after day, year after year, life after life, we must try. Then only we shall reach that state of mental steadiness. God-realisation is no joke. Not only have our conscious desires and thoughts to be eliminated, but our unconscious and subconscious thoughts also have to be destroyed. What that means is known only to *Sâdhakas*. Certain habits and thoughts are so deep-rooted in our mind, certain tendencies are so strong that even a single one of them may take years and lives to eradicate it. We, therefore, do not judge the spirituality of a man by his so-called faith, or his pious actions or charity, or by his professions. We judge a man by his power to eliminate mental modifications. He may adopt any means. But the requisite psychological state must be realised by him. And it must be natural with him. We may for a time realise a state of calmness by strenuous efforts. But it will not be lasting unless it has become spontaneous. And it cannot be so unless all our conscious and unconscious desires and *samskâras* have been eradicated completely.

The state of spiritual perfection is not

one of excellent action. It is a state of consciousness. That is to say, one must realise *Samâdhi*. We are so ignorant and bound up with the life of the world that we think that the spiritual goal is also of a similar nature,—only one is perhaps a pleasanter and finer man in that state, that is all. But it is not so. We Hindus believe that the condition of spiritual consciousness is a condition of the absolute stillness of the life of the senses and mind. The senses then will not function. The mind will not move. It is a condition of apparent death. The relative life must *literally* die before we can attain the life eternal. This death is known to us as *Samâdhi*. And no man, in our opinion, is truly spiritual, unless he has realised *Samâdhi*. The more he is in that state, the more

spiritual he is. *This is the natural state of the soul.* We have already mentioned that a fundamental Hindu tendency is to look upon the relative life as unreal. This idea is fully actualised in *Samâdhi*. But in order that this state may be realised, one has to practise it duly. And that is called meditation. What we try to do during our daily worship is to withdraw our consciousness from external things, from our senses and from our lower mind and focus it on God. This attempt is the essence of the Hindu's daily worship. Indeed this is so well recognised by the Hindus that if anyone feels a greater absorption in his worship so that he has been unconscious of the external disturbances, he considers his worship to have been more real and fruitful.

THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

OCTOBER 15, 1919.

It was 4 p.m. Swami Turiyananda was sitting in his room in the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Benares with a few *Sannyâsins* and *Brahmachârins*. He was not feeling well. The conversation turned on milk.

Swami: "Once Upamanyu had a desire to drink milk. He had just returned from his aunt's place where he had tasted milk. He urged his mother to give him milk. She was a poor widow and could not afford to provide milk for her son. But as he still insisted, she mixed powdered rice with water and gave him that as milk. Upamanyu found that it did not taste like the stuff he had taken at his aunt's house. 'This is milk,' said the mother. But he would not believe. Then she began to cry. 'I am a poor woman,' she said, 'where shall I get milk, my child? Shiva is the giver of wealth. If you can satisfy him by your prayers and austerities, he may grant you the boon of abundant milk.' Upamanyu practised hard *tapasyâ* until Mahâdeva appeared to him and gave him the desired boon.

But that was not the only *tapasyâ* he practised in his life. He is one of the great sages celebrated in the *Mahâbhârata*.

"Of Sri Krishna's wives at Dwaraka, Jambavati had no son. One day she thus expressed her sorrow to Sri Krishna: 'Through your grace all have been favoured with sons except the unfortunate me who have none. Kindly bless me with a son.' Sri Krishna deliberated awhile, and then went away from Dwaraka to become a disciple of Upamanyu. He was initiated by Upamanyu and practised hard *tapasyâ* under his guidance for the gratification of Shiva. Then through Shiva's grace, Jambavati gave birth to a son who came to be known as Shamba. You see, even Sri Krishna had to worship Shiva for a son. In the *Mahâbhârata* there are many references to the cult of Shiva. Therefore Swami Vivekananda used to say: 'Shiva is the God of the *Mahâbhârata* and not Sri Krishna.'

"I do not like buffalo's milk. It increases fat. Cow's milk is the best. Yudhisthira was fond of cow's milk from an early age, and Duryodhana of

buffalo's milk, and you see the difference of their nature.

"It is very wrong to waste a thing, however insignificant. Do you know how the Master rebuked one of us for cutting a lemon too deep? If any rice were left on the plate after meal, Sasi Maharaj used to be much annoyed."

K: "Yes, Maharaj. If anybody said that the rice could be given to dogs, he would be offended and would say: 'What! the food cooked for God should be given to dogs?'"

M. came in and sat down after saluting the Swami.

Swami: "How are you?"

M: "Quite well, Maharaj. There is no place like Benares. I did not know much about its greatness before. But the reading of the *Kashi-Khanda* has taken away all desire to go elsewhere."

Disciple: "The Governing Body of the R. K. Mission asked him (M) to inspect the branch centres. He has so far seen only Kankhal and Brindaban, and now he is settled here! We expected that he would go to Dacca in due course."

M: "Do not speak of Dacca. I am not leaving Benares."

K: "Yes, there is no place like Benares. If anyone lives here, his mind naturally becomes quiet and settles at the feet of Viswanath. Here from 3 o'clock in the morning, people go about crying: 'Lord Viswanath! Lord Viswanath!'"

Swami: "Yes, to live here is itself a spiritual discipline. One has daily to take bath in the Ganges and visit the temple of Viswanath. But I cannot unfortunately go and see Viswanath on account of a pain in the leg. Only once I did."

M: "The daily visit to the temple has created such a tendency in me that I feel very unhappy if I miss it a single day."

Disciple: "But unlucky as I am, I never felt like that. When I go to the temple, I only see a block of stone and nothing else. I never feel any attraction like yours."

Swami: "Ah, what do you say? All feel like M. How is it that you do not?"

Disciple: "It is no use saying that I feel when I really do not. From times immemorial, men and women have been coming to Benares to visit Viswanath. There must be some meaning in that, I know. Yet I do not feel any attraction."

Swami: "If a person cannot weep from devotion, he can do so by applying oil and chilli powder in his eyes. One actually did so at the time of Sri Chaitanya. When Sri Chaitanya held *Kirtana* in the house of Srivasa, everyone shed tears through devotion. But there was one who could not. This made him very sad. So one day he applied chilli powder in his eyes at the time of *Kirtana* and thus shed tears. When Sri Chaitanya came to know of it, he ran up to him and embraced him. He thought that the man must have great devotion, otherwise he would not have been so grieved for not being able to weep."

K: "He (disciple) speaks sincerely. I am sure he also is miserable for not feeling any attraction for Viswanath."

Swami: "You will feel it, you will feel it. Through His grace, the feeling will come of itself."

OCTOBER 16, 1919.

It was 4 p.m. Swami Turiyananda was reading a letter in his room at the R. K. Mission Sevashrama at Benares. It was written to him from Rangoon by Brahmachari K. It said that relief centres had been opened for the flood and famine-stricken people there and nearly a thousand rupees were spent every month. Besides, 400 maunds of rice were being distributed being given by a kind-hearted gentleman. K. had to direct the whole work with the help of a worker. The relief extended over an area of 100 square miles, and people living even 16 or 17 miles away received help.

Swami: "K. regrets that he whose grace has made it possible for him to

do all this, is not seeing this in the material body. He speaks of Baburam Maharaj. It is he who attracted him to this life. It is well written by K.—‘is not seeing this in the material body,’ that is, he is seeing, but not in the material body. Do you know anything of K’s former life? He is a great worker. He is conducting such a big work alone.”

Disciple: “He can work very hard. I have noted that whenever any work is started, there is no lack of money through His grace. We have only to collect it. Unfortunately there are few to do even this. Wherever I have gone, I have found that it is not money that is wanting, but men.”

Swami: “Yes. The Kankhal R. K. Mission Sevashrama was started in a rented house only with Rs. 150 in hand. The permanent site was afterwards secured. The workers were known to a *Sādhu* who was much respected by a rich merchant. Once when the merchant visited the *Sādhu*, he let fall some hints to the merchant to help the Sevashrama. Accordingly he went there one day and came to know that a pucca house was required to prevent the mischief of the monkeys who entered the huts in which the Sevashrama was then housed, and destroyed the medicines. He asked for an estimate and went away. This was however delayed. So he came another day and asked them to hurry it. He said: ‘I am a householder. I am now disposed to do charity. But when I return home, my mind may change. Then it would be difficult for me to give anything.’ Thus the dispensary building and the residence of

the workers were built at a cost of Rs. 6,000.

“A Judge used to supply raw food-stuff worth Rs. 15 every month to the Kankhal Sevashrama. Some one spoke to him against the Sevashrama. One day he paid a surprise visit and was much impressed with the care and attention with which the patients were treated and nursed by the workers: he found one of the workers cleaning a deadly ulcer of a patient. He then gave out the purpose of his visit and said: ‘I am convinced by what I have seen that you are indeed blessed and my gift is also blessed!’

“The Sevashrama is situated in a nice place. Opposite to it, on the other side of the canal, is Rishikesh. Here at Benares, K. and others started the Sevashrama with only a four-anna bit.

“A gentleman of Khetri donated Rs. 300 towards the establishment of the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama here. With this sum, Swami Shivananda started the institution and worked at it continuously for five years. During this period he left Benares only twice and that for collecting funds at Almora and another place. Once when I was at Almora, he made a door-to-door collection of several hundred rupees from shop-keepers for the flood-relief in East Bengal.”

K: “I also lived in the Advaita Ashrama in the beginning. Only five *châpâtis* were offered to *Sri Guru Maharaj* (Sri Ramakrishna) in the evening. So each of us received only two and half pieces for night meal. Even that we could not continue long for want of money.”

(Concluded)

CIVITAS DEI—THE CITY OF MANKIND*

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

Equilibrium and synthesis: in these two words Vivekananda’s constructive

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genius may be summed up. He embraced all the paths of the spirit: the

in India or abroad, without the special permission of the author.—*Ed.*

four Yogas in their entirety, renunciation and service, art and science, religion and action from the most spiritual to the most practical. Each of the ways that he taught had its own limits, but he himself had been through them all, and embraced them all. As in a quadriga he held the reins of all four ways of truth, and he travelled along them all simultaneously towards Unity. He was the personification of the harmony of all human Energy.

But the formula could not have been discovered by the brilliant intellect of the "Discriminator," if his own eyes had not seen its realisation in the harmonious personality of Ramakrishna. The angelic Master had instinctively resolved all the dissonances of life into a Mozartian harmony, as rich and sweet as the Music of the Spheres. And hence the work and the thought of the great disciple was all carried out under the Sign of Ramakrishna.

"The time was ripe for one to be born, who in one body would have the brilliant intellect of Sankara and the wonderfully expansive infinite heart of Chaitanya; one who would see in every sect the same spirit working, the same God; one who would see God in every being, one whose heart would weep for the poor, for the weak, for the down-trodden, for every one in this world, inside India or outside India; and at the same time whose grand brilliant intellect would conceive of such noble thoughts as would harmonise all conflicting sects not only in India but outside of India, and bring a marvellous harmony. . . . The time was ripe, it was necessary that such a man should be born . . . and I had the good fortune to sit at his feet. . . . He came, the living spirit of the Upanishads, the accomplishment of Indian sages, the sage for the present day . . . the harmony. . . ."

Vivekananda wished this harmony that had come to fruition in one privileged being and had been enjoyed by a few select souls, to be extended to the

whole of India and the world. Therein lies his courage and originality. He may not have produced one single fresh idea: he was essentially the offspring of the womb of India, one of many eggs laid by that indefatigable queen ant throughout the course of ages. . . . But all her different ants never combined into an ant-hill. Their separate thoughts seemed to be incompatible, until they appeared in Ramakrishna as a symphony. The secret of their divine order was thus revealed to Vivekananda, and he set out to build the City—*Civitas Dei*—the City of Mankind on the foundation of this golden concrete.

But he had not only to build the city but the souls of its inhabitants as well.

The Indian representatives, who are the authorities for his thought, have acknowledged that he was inspired in its construction by the modern discipline and organised effort of the West as well as by the Buddhist organisation of ancient India.¹

He conceived the plan of an Order whose central Math, the mother house, was to "represent" for centuries to come "the physical body of Ramakrishna."

This Math was to serve the double purpose of providing men with the means "to attain their own liberation, so that they might prepare themselves for the progress of the world and the betterment of its conditions." A second Math was to realise the same object for women. These two were to be disseminated throughout the world; for the Swami's journeys and his cosmopolitan education had convinced him that the aspirations and needs of humanity at the present time are universally one. The day seemed to have dawned for the "great India" of old to resume its ancient mission: that of evangelising the earth. But unlike "God's chosen peoples" in the past, who have interpreted their duty in the narrow sense of

¹ It was also the ideal of the Vedas: "Truth is one but it is called by different names."

spiritual imperialism, implying the right to inflict their own uniform and tight-fitting casque, the Vedântist missionary, according to his own law, respects the natural faith of each individual. He desires only to reawaken the Spirit in man, "to guide individuals and nations to the conquest of their inner kingdom, by their own ways which are best suited to them, by the means corresponding best to the needs from which they suffer most." There is nothing in this to which the proudest nationalism can take exception. No nation is asked to forsake its own ways. It is asked rather to develop to the fullest, highest degree the God that is in them.

But, like Tolstoy whose thought, the offspring of his good sense and kind heart, was unknown to him, Vivekananda saw that his first duty was towards his nearest neighbour, his own people. Throughout the pages of this book the trembling of India incarnate in him has appeared again and again. His universal soul was rooted in its human soil; and the smallest pang suffered by its inarticulate flesh sent a repercussion through the whole tree.

He himself was the embodied unity of a nation containing a hundred different nations, wherein each nation, divided and subdivided into castes and sub-castes, seems like one of those diseased persons whose blood is too liquid to congeal, and his ideal was unity, both of thought and of action. His claim to greatness lies in the fact that he not only *proved* its unity by reason, but *stamped* it upon the heart of India in flashes of illumination. He had a genius for arresting words, and burning phrases hammered out white-hot in the forge of his soul so that they transpierced thousands. The one that made the deepest impression was the famous phrase: "Daridra-Nârâyana" (the beggar God) The only God that exists, the only God in whom I believe . . . my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races." It may justly be said that India's destiny was

changed by him, and that his teaching re-echoed throughout Humanity.

Its mark is to be found, a burning scar, like the spear-thrust that pierced the heart of the *Son of Man* on the Cross—in the most significant happenings in India during the last twenty years. When the Swarajist party of the National Congress of India (a purely political body) triumphed in the Calcutta Municipal Council, they drew up a programme of communal work called the "Daridra Nârâyana" Programme. And the striking words have been taken up again by Gandhi and are constantly used by him. At one and the same time the knot was tied between religious contemplation and service of the lower orders. "He surrounded service with a divine aureole and raised it to the dignity of a religion." The idea seized upon the imagination of India; and relief works for famine, flood, fire, epidemic, such as were practically unknown thirty years before, Sevâ-âshramas and Sevasamitis (retreats and societies for social service) have multiplied throughout the country. A rude blow had been struck at the selfishness of a purely contemplative faith. The rough words, which I have already quoted, uttered by the kindly Ramakrishna: "Religion is not for empty bellies" embody the teaching that the desire to awaken spirituality in the heart of the people must be deferred until they have first been fed. Moreover to bring them food is not enough; they must be taught how to procure it and work for it themselves. It is necessary to provide the wherewithal and the education. Thus it embraced a complete programme of social reform, although it held strictly aloof, in accordance with the wishes of Vivekananda, from all political parties. On the other hand it was the solution of the age-long conflict in India between spiritual life and active life. The service of the poor did not only help the poor, but it helped their helpers even more effectively. According to the old saying, "He who gives, re-

ceives." If Service is done in the true spirit of worship, it is the most efficacious means to spiritual progress. For, "without doubt man is the highest symbol of God and his worship is the highest form of worship on earth."

"Begin by giving your life to save the life of the dying, that is the essence of religion."

So India was hauled out of the shifting sands of barren speculation wherein she had been engulfed for centuries, by the hand of one of her own Sannyâsins; and the result was that the whole reservoir of mysticism, sleeping beneath, broke its bounds, and spread by a series of great ripples into action. The West ought to be aware of the tremendous energies liberated by these means.

The world finds itself face to face with an awakening India. Its huge prostrate body lying along the whole length of the immense peninsula, is stretching its limbs and collecting its scattered forces. Whatever the part played in this reawakening by the three generations of trumpeters during the previous century—the greatest of whom we salute, the genial Precursor: Ram Mohun Roy), the decisive call was the trumpet blast of the lectures delivered at Colombo and Madras.

And the magic watchword was Unity. Unity of every Indian man and woman (and world-unity as well); of all the powers of the spirit: dream and action, reason, love and work. Unity of the hundred races of India with their hundred different tongues and hundred thousand gods springing from the same religious centre, the core of present and future reconstruction. Unity of the thousand sects of Hinduism. Unity within the vast Ocean of all religious thought and all rivers past and present, Western and Eastern. For—and herein lies the difference between the Awakening of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and that of Ram Mohun Roy and the Brâhmo Samâj—in these days India refuses allegiance to the imperious civilisation of the West, she defends her own ideas, she has steeped into her age-

long heritage with the firm intention not to sacrifice any part of it but to allow the rest of the world to profit by it, and to receive in return the intellectual conquests of the West. The time is past for the pre-eminence of one incomplete and partial civilization. Asia and Europe, the two giants are standing face to face as equals for the first time. If they are wise they will work together, and the fruit of their labours will be for all.

This "greater India," this new India—whose growth politicians and learned men have, ostrich fashion, hidden from us and whose striking effects are now apparent—is impregnated with the soul of Ramakrishna. The twin star of the Paramahansa and the hero who translated his thought into action, dominates and guides her present destinies. Its warm radiance is the leaven working within the soil of India and fertilising it. The present leaders of India: the king of thinkers, the king of poets and the Mahâtma—Aurobindo Ghose, Tagore and Gandhi—have grown, flowered and borne fruit under the double constellation of the Swan and the Eagle—a fact publicly acknowledged by Aurobindo and Gandhi.²

² Gandhi has affirmed in public that the study of the Swami's books has been a great help to him, and that they increased his love and understanding of India. He wrote an Introduction to the English edition of the *Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, and has attended some anniversary festivals of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda celebrated by the Ramakrishna Mission.

"The spiritual and intellectual life of Aurobindo Ghose," Swami Ashokananda wrote to me, "has been strongly influenced by the life and teaching of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. He is never tired of showing the importance of Vivekananda's ideas."

As for Tagore, whose Goethe-like genius stands at the junction of all the rivers of India, it is permissible to presume that in him are united and harmonised the two currents of the Brahmo Samaj (transmitted to him by his father, the Maharshi) and of the new Vedântism of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Rich in both, free in both, he has serenely wedded the West and the East in his own spirit. From the social and national point of view his only public *announcement* of his

The time seems to me to have come for the rest of the world, ignorant as yet, except for isolated groups of Anglo-Saxons, of this marvellous movement, to profit by it. Those who have followed me in this work must certainly have noticed how closely the views of the Indian Swami and his Master are in accord with many of our secret thoughts. I can bear witness to it, not only on my own account, but as a result of the intellectual avowal that has been made to me for the last twenty years by the hundreds of souls of Europe and America, who have made me their uninvited confidant and confessor. It is not because they and I have unwittingly been subject to infiltrations of the Indian spirit which predisposed us to the contagion—as certain representatives of the Ramakrishna Mission appear to believe. On this subject I have had courteous discussion with Swami Ashokananda, who starting from the assumption of fact that Vedântic ideas are disseminated throughout the world, concluded that this was, partly at least, the work of Vivekananda and his Mission. I am quite convinced of the contrary. The work, thought and even the name of Vivekananda are practically unknown to the world in general (a fault that I am trying to rectify); and if among the deluge of ideas that come to water with their substance the burning soil of Europe and America in these days, one of the most life-giving and fertilising streams may be called "Vedântic," that is so in the same way that the natural speech of Monsieur Jourdain was "prose" without his knowing it—because it is a natural medium of thought for mankind.³

ideas was, if I am not mistaken, about 1906 at the beginning of the Swadeshi movement, four years after Vivekananda's death. There is no doubt that the breath of such a forerunner must have played some part in his evolution.

³ We hope to give our remarks on this interesting subject under discussion in a future issue.—Ed.

What are the so-called essentially Vedântic ideas? According to the definition of one of the most authoritative spokesmen of modern Ramakrishnite Vedântism, they can be reduced to two principles :

1. *The Divinity of man,*
 2. *The essential spirituality of Life,*
- while the immediate consequences deduced from them are :

1. That every society, every state, every religion ought to be based on the recognition of this All-Powerful presence latent in man;

2. that in order to be fruitful all human interests ought to be guided and controlled according to the ultimate idea of the spirituality of life.

These ideas and aspirations are none of them alien to the West. Our Asiatic friends, who judge Europe by our bankrupts—our politicians, our traders, our narrow-minded officials, our "ravaging wolves whose gospel is their maw," the whole of our colonial personal (both the men and their ideas)—have good reason to doubt our spirituality. Nevertheless it is deep and real, and has never ceased to water the subsoil and roots of our great Western nations. The oak of Europe would long ago have been hurled to the ground by the tempests that have raged round it, if it had not been for the mighty spiritual sap rising ceaselessly from its silent reservoir. They accord us a genius for action. But the unflagging feverishness of this age-long action would be impossible without inner fires—not the lamp of the Vestal Virgins, but a Cyclopien crater where the igneous substance is tirelessly amassed and fed. The writer of this work has denounced and disavowed the "Market Place" of Europe, the smoke and cinders of the volcano, with sufficient sternness to be able to vindicate the burning sources of our inexhaustible spirituality. He has never ceased to recall their existence and the persistence of "better Europe," both to outsiders who misunderstand her and to herself as she sits wrapped in silence. "*Silet sed loquitur.*" But her silence

speaks more loudly than the babel of charlatans. Beneath the frenzy of enjoyment and power consuming themselves in surface eddies of a day or of an hour, there is a persistent and immovable treasure made up of abnegation, sacrifice and faith in the Spirit.

As for the divinity of man, such a conception is possibly not one of the fruits of Christianity or of Greco-Roman culture, if they are considered separately. But it is the fruit of the engrafted tree of Greco-Roman heroism superimposed upon the vine, whose golden juice is the blood of the Son of God. And whether it has forgotten the Christian wine stalk and wine press or no, the heroic idealism of our democracies in their great moments and their great leaders have retained its taste and scent. A religion whose God has been familiar for nineteen hundred years to the people of Europe by the name of the "Son of Man," cannot wonder that man should have taken it at its word and claimed Divinity for himself. The new consciousness of his power and the intoxication of his young liberty, were still more exalted by the fabulous conquests of science, which in half a century have transformed the face of the earth. Man came to believe himself God without the help of India. He was only too ready to bow down and worship himself. This state of over-valuation of his power lasted up to the very eve of the catastrophe of 1914, which shattered all his foundations. And it is from that very moment that the attraction and domination of Indian thought over him can be traced. How is this to be explained?

Very simply. His own paths had led the Westerner by his reason, his science and his giant will to the cross-roads where he met the Vedântic thought, that was the issue of our great common ancestors, the Aryan demi-Gods, who in the flower of their heroic youth saw from their high Himalayan plateaus, like Bonaparte when he had completed the conquest of Italy, the whole world

at their feet. But at that critical moment when the test of the strong awaited them (as it appears under various names in the myths of all countries, and which our Gospel relates as the Temptation of Jesus on the mountain), the Westerner made the wrong choice. He listened to the tempter, who offered him the empire of the world spread out beneath him. From the divinity that he attributed to himself he saw and sought for nothing but that material power represented by the wisdom of India as the secondary and dangerous attribute of the inner force that alone can lead man to the Goal. The result is that to-day the European—the "Apprentice Sorcerer"—sees himself overwhelmed by the elemental powers he has blindly unloosed. For he has nothing but the letter of the formula to control them. He has not been concerned with the spirit. Our civilisation in its dire peril has vainly invoked the spell of great words: Right, Liberty, Co-operation, the Peace of Geneva or Washington—but such words are void or filled with poisonous gas. Nobody believes in them. People mistrust explosives. Words bring evils in their train, and have made confusion worse confounded. At the present time it is only a profound misunderstanding of the mortal illness from which a whole generation in the West has been suffering, that makes it possible for the dregs and the scum who have known how to profit from the situation to murmur: "After us, the Deluge!" But millions of unsatisfied beings find themselves fatally driven to the cross-roads where they must choose between the abdication of what remains of their freedom,—implied by the return of the discouraged soul to the park of the dead order of things wherein, though imprisoned, it is warmed and protected by the grease of the flock—and the great void in the night leading to the heart of the stronghold of the besieged Soul, where it may rejoin its still intact reserves and establish itself firmly in the *Feste Burg* of the Spirit.

And that is where we find the hand of our allies, the thinkers of India stretched out to meet us: for they have known for centuries past how to entrench themselves in this *Feste Burg* and how to defend it, while we, their brethren of the Great Invasions, have spent our strength in conquering the rest of the world. Let us stop and recover our breath! Let us lick our wounds! Let us return to our eagle's nest in the Himalayas. It is waiting for us, for it is ours. Eaglets of Europe, we need not renounce any part of our real nature. Our real nature is in the nest, whence we formerly took our flight; it dwells within those who have known how to keep the keys of our keep—the Sovereign Self. We have

only to rest our tired limbs in the great inner lake. Afterwards, my companions, with fever abated and new power flowing through your muscles, you will again resume your Invasions, if you wish to do so. Let a new cycle begin, if it is the Law. But this is the moment to touch Earth again, like Anteus, before beginning a new flight! Embrace it! Let your thoughts return to the Mother! Drink her milk! Her breasts can still nourish all the races of the world.

Among the spiritual ruins strewn all over Europe, our "Mother India" will teach you to excavate the unshakable foundations of your Capitole. She possesses the calculations and the plans of the "Master Craftsman". Let us rebuild our house with our own materials.

THE FRUITS OF TENSION

A point of View respecting Occidental-Oriental Relations

BY GLENN FRANK

I

I am suspicious of all professional uplifters, and I suspect that half or more of the propagandist societies in which banal men and bored wives seek escape from their otherwise vapid and vacuous lives, hinder rather than help the elaboration of a rational and humanistic social order. I am happy to share in this dinner-conference tonight because I think this cause and this company exempt from this indictment.

The New Orient Society commands my intense interest as one of the instruments of a significant adventure in mutual understanding between the Occidental and the Oriental mind, as a symbol of that spiritual cross-fertilization between the civilizations of the West and the civilization of the East, upon the success or failure of which may well depend whether the new scientific knowledge, the technological powers, the economic might, and the political ideologies and instruments of modern man shall ultimately prove sovereign or servant.

The throw of the dice has made us, quite without our choosing, citizens of an era in which the ideals of the West and the ideals of the East are at tension. The fact of tension is not in itself regrettable. The ages of triumphant genius have invariably been ages of tension. The ages of smugness and security have been ages of sterility. I hope that a creative tension between the soul of the West and the soul of the East will never disappear. Nothing more tragic for the future of mankind could happen than that West and East should, by a kind of huckster bargaining, iron the Occident and the Orient out into a drab sameness of aim and action. I hope that India will never trade her faith for a Ford. I hope that the West will never trade its dynamos for the futile day-dreaming which is the bastard offspring of the fruitful intuition of the Eastern spirit. I should not care to live in a world that had been transformed into a vast Shaker Village of sterile uniformity. The fact of this West-East tension is probably beyond our control—

happily beyond our control. But the *fruits* of this tension are, I think, within our power to determine.

Let me deliberately over-simplify the issue by saying that Occidentals and Orientals, as they face the common problem of determining the fruits that shall ripen from the existing tension between the West and the East, may choose either of two methods—the method of conflict or the method of comprehension. It behoves us to subject these two methods to sustained analysis if we are to come wisely to this sacrament of choice. Let me, first, suggest something of the nature of the tension that now exists between the civilizations of the West and the civilizations of the East, and then speak, with the utmost brevity, of the relative significance of the method of conflict and the method of comprehension in determining the fruits of this tension.

II

We are, as I suggested earlier, citizens of an era in which the ideals of the West and the ideals of the East are at tension. This fact of tension promises to dominate the world politics of the next half century. Following the lead of party bosses or personal beliefs, we may be either isolationist or internationalist, but, regardless of our attitude in matters of American foreign policy, our lives will be definitely affected by this tension between Occident and Orient. I am not so much concerned tonight with the studied amiabilities or the blundering ineptitudes of state papers on foreign policy as with the tone and temper of the peoples alike of the Occident and of the Orient. It is of the effect this East-West tension registers in the popular mind of the Occident and in the popular mind of the Orient that I want to speak; for, after all, the popular mind is the soil out of which foreign policies spring, save in those rare instances when God lends one of his prophets to politics to prove to an opportunistic age that, now and then,

leaders may best serve their followers by differing from them.

A lot has lately been written about the rising tide of color against white-world supremacy. The colored races of the East are pictured as poised to spring at the throats of the white races of the West. But the current revolt of the East against the West is deeper and more complex than the simple threat of military retaliation, inspired by hunger for economic advantage and the humiliation of exclusion acts, with which our professional patriots and racial fundamentalists seek to terrorize the unstable Babbitt. The revolt of the East against the West is inspired not so much by hatred of the white-man's power, political or economic, as by a profound disbelief in the white-man's philosophy of life. This revolt is no less real because only here and there has it expressed itself in overt military action. It is, in fact, a triple revolt, expressing itself in a political revolt, a cultural revolt, and a social revolt.

Let me speak particularly of the cultural aspect of this triple revolt of the East against the West, for this cultural chasm between the ideals of the East and the ideals of the West is the major factor in the West-East tension we are met to consider tonight. The political revolt is too obvious to require analysis here. Rarely does the morning paper lack evidence of a growing hunger for national unity among the peoples of the Orient, and the wires quiver with reports of the uprising of whole peoples against foreign domination, and stories of sustained crusades for a new home-ruled nationalism. China-for-the-Chinese is a familiar slogan. And some of the rarest spirits of India are today bruising themselves against the bars of British control. The political revolt is, I repeat, too obvious to require analysis here. The social and cultural aspects of the revolt of Easternism against Westernism are more subtle, and will, in the long run, prove more significant. This socio-cultural revolt

is being stimulated and stage-managed by three fairly distinct types of Oriental leadership.

There are, first, those Orientals who resent, reject, and rebel against the whole philosophy of the machine civilization of the West. These leaders are not the ward politicians of the Orient, scheming for personal prestige and power, but the convinced philosophic enemies of Westernism. Mahatma Gandhi is, perhaps, the exemplar extraordinary of this type of Oriental leadership. Since the basic scepticism of the validity of Western ideals that animates this first type of leadership runs with varying degrees of intensity through the whole of the cultural revolt of the East, it is worth while to sample its spirit.

"Westernism is a more dreaded tyrant than Westerners," Gandhi once said to a friend of mine. "You (Westerners) are headed for terrific catastrophe and misery. You are a wonderful people, too. You do not lack the spirit of sacrifice, the ability to forego the things of the body. Look at your North Pole adventurers, your Mount Everest climbers. Why can you not be as willing to give up bodily luxury for the sake of spiritual adventures? There is a wistfulness, a longing, a spiritual hunger among you American people in particular today. But no practice. You glory in speed, thinking not of the goal. You think your souls are saved because you can invent radio. But of what elevation to man is a method of broadcasting when you have only drivel to send out? What mark of civilization is it to be able to produce a one hundred and twenty page newspaper in one night, when most of it is either banal or actually vicious and not two columns of it are worth preserving? What contribution to man has aeronautics made, which can balance its use in his self-destruction? You are children playing with razors. You have cut yourselves badly already. Europe's frenzy for reading prophecies of its own destruction shows how badly you have been hurt. I have read your German professor's

Decline of the West, your French debater's *Twilight of the White Races* with great sadness and warning. America still seems self-confident. Next time it will be America that will suffer, and when she cuts herself as badly as Europe she will be in the same state of mind. Such of you as survive will come back to Asia for another way of life. You are already coming: Count Keyserling from Germany, Romain Rolland from France, many less eloquent from England and America. If I should now allow the West, in its boyishly confident rowdyism, utterly to crush out our opposing system of life and ideals through political power and material influence, would I not be playing traitor, not only to my own people, but to you very Westerners as well?"

Thus speak the confirmed philosophic enemies of Westernism. This first type of Oriental leadership feels a God-given responsibility for preserving unbroken the chalice of the spirit so that when we Westerners return repentant from our sinful orgies of inhuman industrialism, we may find it there to drink from.

There are, second, those Orientals who think there is much in Western civilization that the East would do well to admire and to adopt, but who resent having all of Western civilization shoved down their throats by outsiders, whether the outsiders be missionaries or militarists. These leaders of the cultural revolt of the Orient want to select the parts of Western civilization they are to adopt and to adopt them in their own way and in their own time.

And then there are, third, occasional Orientals who are whole-hearted converts to the civilization of the West that has been born of the marriage of physical science and technological industry. These Easterners would completely Westernize the Orient. But even these Orientals want to do the Westernizing themselves. They refuse to be Westernized by the Westerners. They like the culture of the West, but they loathe the culturizers of the West.

I am not unaware of the role that

raw materials and the race for power and position in a possible next world war play in the tension between West and East, but back of all these factors stands the fundamental fact of the philosophical divergence of the mind of the West and the mind of the East, a divergence that has bred this cultural revolt of Orientalism against Occidentalism. Here is the *fact* of tension between West and East, a fact so obvious that he who runs may read. What shall be the *fruits* of this tension? We cannot hazard even a speculative answer to this question until we know something of the method of approach that is to be employed by Occidentals and by Orientals as they face this issue of divergent conceptions of civilization. I said a moment ago that Occidentals and Orientals, as they face the common problem of determining the fruits that shall ripen from this existing tension between West and East, may choose either of two methods—the method of conflict or the method of comprehension. Let me speak briefly of some of the implications of these two methods of approach.

III

The implications of the method of conflict are obvious but all too often overlooked. It is worth while, therefore, to restate them, even if they smack of stale platitude. It is by no means certain that West and East alike will not choose or at least drift into the method of conflict. I hesitate to speak of the possibility of conflict between West and East lest someone may think I am putting on parade those two favorite fairy tales of the fanatic chauvinists—the rising tide of color against white-world supremacy and the menace of a militarized Japan. I hasten to say that I do not myself belong to the peril school of foreign affairs.

The theory of a rising tide of color against white-world supremacy does credit to the creative powers of the romanticist, but it gets short shrift at

the hands of the realist. The most dependable research to which I have access indicates that, while there is at the moment a higher tide of color, there is not a *rising* tide of color. There are more colored than white folk in the world at the moment: 1,040,000,000 colored; 710,000,000 white. The white races are a racial plurality, but they are not a racial majority. There is a higher tide of color. Whether there is a rising tide of color depends upon the relative rapidity with which the colored races and the white races are reproducing. The peddlers of the peril of color contend that the colored races are increasing faster than the white races. A time-consuming detailed study by E. M. East, distinguished Harvard scientist, establishes to my satisfaction the following facts:

There are 650,000,000 whites of European origin. Their annual increase per thousand is 12. They will, at this rate, double in 58 years.

There are 60,000,000 whites of non-European origin. Their annual increase per thousand is 8. They will, at this rate, double in 87 years.

There are 420,000,000 browns. Their annual increase per thousand is 2.5. They will, at this rate, double in 278 years.

There are 510,000,000 yellows. Their annual increase per thousand is 3. They will, at this rate, double in 232 years.

There are 110,000,000 blacks. Their annual increase per thousand is 5. They will, at this rate, double in 139 years.

The white race is today numerically larger than any other single racial group, although it is by no means in the majority; but over two-thirds of the annual increase in the world's population is white. This means that before 1950 the white race will constitute a clear majority of the world's population, unless there occurs "some radical and relatively permanent overturn of world affairs." My dreams are not disturbed by any rising tide of color breaking in sinister spray over the footboard of my bed.

In like manner, the researches of the realists explode the notion of an invincible militarized East. The materials of war simply are not at hand in the East. The mineral resources of the Orient, upon which modern war is so fully dependent, are scattered. Iron in this country. Coal in that country. Oil in still another country. Added to this natural dispersion of the resources upon which a fighting East would have to depend, is the political chaos that here, there, and yonder throughout the Orient will prevent, for generations to come, any unified control and use of even the resources that there are.

But in the absence of any effort towards creative comprehension between West and East, we may fall into conflict even if it be ill-advised and suicidal from the point of view of the ultimate interests of the Orient. I want, therefore, to underscore the fact that, regardless of its outcome, neither West nor East stands to realize any permanent gain from conflict.

It is doubtful, I think, that any people has ever profited, in the deeper sense of the word, by winning a war. The paradox of war is that the victor is never victorious. In war, both sides lose. Victory and defeat are but figures of speech. For this seems to be an immutable law of conflict, even when the conflict is inspired by mutual hatred, that in the end the enemies trade souls. We become like the thing we fight. And whether we win or lose, in the common sense of these words, does not alter the fact. I pick at random two illustrations of the way in which, in conflicts, the loser becomes like the winner and the winner like the loser.

For a long stretch of years there has been the accumulating tension between Occident and Orient which we are discussing tonight. It has not been an open conflict. And yet the element of the decisive begins to appear. Westernism is marching with seven league boots across the world. For good or ill, the civilization born of physical

science and technological industry moves in the ascendant. The West seems destined to go American. And the world seems destined to go Western. But despite the unwarlike character of this subtle transformation of the world, the law of conflict to which I have referred is beginning to register its effects in both West and East. Western civilization, despite the gap between its professions and its performance, has long symbolized and preached democracy, equality, and the objectivity of science. Eastern civilization, despite the gap between its professions and its performance, has long symbolized and preached aristocracy, the inequality of caste, and the mystic's concern with the inner meanings of objective facts. But today, as even this suppressed conflict between West and East continues, West and East begin to trade souls.

The East is beginning to take seriously the concepts of democracy and equality just when the West is beginning to drop them or at least to subject them to sceptical reassessment. At the same time the West is beginning to breed its Romain Rollands, its Count Keyserlings, and, as Gandhi suggests, a host of less picturesque prophets who are exhorting the West to seek the inner meanings of its outer life of power and prosperity. Although its tones are as yet timid and half-afraid, the voice of the mystic begins to be heard above the roar of our machines.

Or, again, in the world war, Allied democracies fought a German autocracy. The Allied democracies seemed to win the war against the German autocracy. And yet today the erstwhile German autocracy moves in the direction of a social democracy, while here and there Allied democracies surrender their souls to swaggering dictatorships. And those who have not are looking wistfully over their shoulders at the swift efficiencies of the cinema Napoleons who have arisen in neighboring states.

The social history of mankind would seem to say that the only victories that

are clear and clean are moral victories that woo their way to power by the convincing value of a deeper insight and a more creative comprehension of the common interest of both parties that are at tension. Experience may yet convince us that *Nachtpolitik* is not *Realpolitik*, that the politics of power is not the politics of reality. The method of conflict stands indicted at the judgment bar of historic experience.

If we are fortunate enough to avoid the method of conflict in dealing with the existing tension between West and East, we shall free our energies for the active employment of the method of comprehension as a way-station on the road to cultural co-operation.

IV

West and East alike stand to gain from a cultural audit of Occidental and Oriental civilizations. Concern with the civilizations of the East is more than an academic question for Americans. For aside from the world-economics and world-politics aspects of the existing West-East tension, we are forced to face this question: Shall the future of America be dominated by the spiritualism of Eastern civilization or by the materialism of Western civilization? Or shall we seek to effect a merger of the two, achieving spiritual power in the midst of material prosperity? It is, I think, along the latter line that mankind stands to gain most. And this means that Occidentals and Orientals must turn their attention to a cultural audit of their divergent civilizations, and undertake mutually to enrich their selective sense as they attempt a synthesis of the best of both. Only so can we break down the Occident's scepticism of Oriental values and the Orient's scepticism of Occidental values. In the absence of a vital and vibrant adventure in comprehension, the man of the dreamy and sometimes dirty East will remain unconvinced that the clean and commercial West has found the key to the complete life. Difficult as it

may be for us to realize, the Oriental sees in his dreams and in his dirt a bit of divinity he cannot see in our busy and bustling habits, our swift and sanitary civilization.

Western civilization has long been identified, in the popular mind, with the motor type of man, the man who runs oftener than he reads and acts oftener than he thinks, the man who must go outside the frontiers of his own mind and spirit to find either the world of reason or the world of recreation, the man who is externally rich but internally poor.

Eastern civilization has long been identified, in the popular mind, with the meditative type of man, the man who sits and thinks more than he either runs or reads, the man who has brought both the world of reason and the world of recreation within the frontiers of his own mind and spirit, the man who is externally poor but internally rich.

In the evolution of our American social order these two men are competing for our allegiance. We cannot afford to sell out to either. Each has something to contribute to the future. The Eastern ambition for spiritual perfection is undoubtedly a higher aim than the Western ambition for material prosperity, but a study of the Oriental leaves me with a haunting sense that there is something missing in the wisdom of the East. I am afraid the Easterner all too often dodges the facts of life when he should dominate them, running away from the world in order to be good. Does this lead either to the highest goodness or to the highest efficiency? When West and East sit down to the mutual making of a cultural audit, I think the Oriental and the Occidental will come to agreement that it does not.

The brooding Oriental and the bustling Occidental are alike only half-men. If we could only contrive, alike in West and East, to combine in our personalities the qualities of a successful American and the qualities of a saintly

Indian, we might at last master the secret of complete and creative living. The mere fact that materialistic America has more bath tubs than meditative India does not necessarily mean that India has found the only key to the complete and creative life or that America will necessarily be the breeding-ground of a new humanity. Each is fumbling at the gates of life with a half-key. It is all right for the Indian to bathe in thought, but the American

might be an even better man if he would only think in his bath.

The existing tension between Western civilization and Eastern civilization challenges the citizens of both to develop personalities with a double genius for the spiritual and for the practical. And I am happy to share in the inauguration of a society that is dedicated to the method of comprehension rather than the method of conflict in facing this issue.

THE UPANISADIC VIEW OF TRUTH

BY DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D.

(Continued from the last issue)

BEING AND BLISS

Delight is the soul of Being. "Brahman is Anandam," the text says (Taittiriya II, 7). Spirit is delight, and delight is spirit. There is no difference between the two, nor is a difference conceivable. And corresponding to spiritual transcendence and spiritual expression, delight has two forms: the delight of quiet and the delight of expression.

The delight of quiet is delight-in-itself, not enjoyable, nor ever enjoyed. Still it is delight, for delight is being, and where being is the essence, delight is *in excelsis*.

Such delight in transcendence is accepted as calm and refused as delight. This is a common mistake. Delight is not unoften identified with a psychological state, and even in spiritual life the psychological sense or feeling is sought to be multiplied and intensified. Delight in spiritual life is, therefore, supposed to be the heightening of feeling. Such, however, is not the delight felt in transcendence. Still it is delight, and though it has not the warmth of feeling, it has the joy of an unbounded expanse. It is not the delight of a free flow of spiritual dynamism, the ease of a fluid and elastic being, it is the delight of a luminous consciousness and transparent being which is beyond the touch of spatial expansion. It is not the delight of spiritual experiences, it is the delight of

spiritual being. Though it has not the vibrative blessedness of love, it has the blissful repose in itself. It is not the joy of life, it is the joy of freedom.

Anandam has the highest spiritual value and is the index of value in spiritual consciousness and is not unoften set as the value-concept. Felicity is sought. Felicity is realised. Such is the case in spiritual life. But the Upanisads say: "Felicity is Being" (Taittiriya III, 6). Felicity is the essence of the soul. It is not a value-concept, it is the concept of existence. Where being is complete, felicity is full. It is not to be realised, it is there. It is not in fruition. It is not to be, but eternally so. Anandam is then not the value of being, it is being. This delight does not delight itself. It is delight, but not self-delight. It is the delight without rise or fall, it is bliss without ebb and flow.

As such it stands different from the delight of expression or concentration, either analytic or synthetic, though no doubt the spiritual life in immanence feeds upon such delight. This is the plane where delight meets delight,—the joy of enjoying delight, and not the joy of being delight. When the self moves in the world of becoming and relativity, it sees not the delight in the self, it seeks the delight in the other, the other in the self. This reciprocity meets us in the order of expression, and such delight of

reciprocity is to be distinguished from the delight of being. The former is essentially an elevation in psychological consciousness, the latter, a fixity in being. The Taittiriya lays special stress on the transcendence of bliss. "Speech turns back from it, mind cannot attain it. He fears not at any time, who knows the bliss of Brahman."

The former is well indicated in Taittiriya Sruti, *i.e.*, it is the juice of life, the nectar of the soul, and he becomes suffused in gladness who is filled with it (II, 7). The psychological consciousness, no doubt, awaits a consummation, but this consummation is still an opening in the fine sensibility and fine shades of being, and not the delight which awaits on the transcendental awakening. But this distinction is thin, for bliss or delight is initial expression, for the being is bliss, and the first contradiction must be the multiplication of bliss. And, therefore, the text reads after two lines: "Who could have breathed, but for this ether of bliss?" The delight in expression is the delight in festivity, it is the delight of delight embracing itself.

The delight of expression is the delight in the widest commonalty in every fibre of being, manifested and unmanifested. But even in this wide distribution of bliss, the Upanisad conceives higher and lower stages in proportion to the assimilation of wide or restricted bliss in life. Life moves in bliss; and the move of life is merely rhythmical where bliss is more profound and expansive. Men, nature's gods, the creative deities cannot enjoy the life of bliss in its completeness. They live by its touch. Their being is confined, naturally they cannot enjoy the rarest privilege of unbounded delight.

The hierarchy of beings is determined by the possibility of more elastic life in bliss. Bliss is life; the more the bliss, the more the life and the greater the privilege. This scheme pervades from the smallest to the highest existence. The Taittiriya and the Brihadâraṇyaka bear testimony to the scheme of distri-

bution of bliss in the different grades of being. The higher assimilates the bliss of the lower and contains still more. In this way we reach the highest.

The text runs thus :

"A hundred human blisses are one bliss of the human Gandharvas (genii)—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures (srotriya) and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the human Gandharva are one bliss of the divine Gandharvas—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the divine Gandharvas are one bliss of the fathers in their long-enduring world—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the fathers in their long-enduring world are one bliss of the gods who are born so by birth (âjânâja)—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the gods who are born so by birth are one bliss of the gods who are gods by work (karṇadeva) who go to the gods by work—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the gods who are gods by work are one bliss of the gods—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of the gods are one bliss of Indra—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of Indra are one bliss of Brihaspati—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of Brihaspati are one bliss of Prajâpati—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire.

"A hundred blisses of Prajâpati are one bliss of Brahmâ—also of a man who is versed in the scriptures and who is not smitten with desire."

In Brihadâranayaka we have the conception of the hierarchy of bliss :

“ ‘If one is fortunate among men and wealthy, lord over others, best provided with all human enjoyments, that is the highest bliss of men. Now a hundredfold the bliss of men is one bliss of those who have won the fathers’ world. Now a hundredfold the bliss of those who have won the fathers’ world, is one bliss in the Gandharva-world. A hundredfold the bliss in the Gandharva-world is one bliss of the gods who gain their divinity by meritorious works. A hundredfold the bliss of the gods by works is one bliss of the gods by birth and of him who is learned in the Vedas, who is without crookedness, and who is free from desire. A hundredfold the bliss of the gods by birth is one bliss in the Prajâpati-world and of him who is learned in the Vedas, who is without crookedness, and who is free from desire. A hundredfold the bliss in the Prajâpati-world is one bliss in the Brahmâ-world and of him who is learned in the Vedas, who is without crookedness, and who is free from desire. This truly is the highest world. This is the Brahmâ-world, O King!’ Thus spoke Yâjnavalkya.”

Delight of rhythm is to be distinguished from the delight of transcendence. The delight of rhythm is the delight of life, and the whole creation enjoys this kind of delight, it is inherent in its constitution, and none can live without it. Life is delight, for life is rhythm, the more the harmony, the easier the flow of life and this rhythm does not exist in even proportion everywhere. Where the rhythm is the highest, the delight is the greatest. Life and more life is the prayer that goes out from men and gods, for life is rhythm, and rhythmic existence is the felicitous existence. The rhythm of life is cosmic and the cosmic rhythm is distributed amongst individuals according to their capacity and power. Cosmic joy in individual life is, therefore, the reflection of the cosmic rhythm. Where the life’s dance is the most intensive and extensive, there the

joy is the greatest, and the Taittiriya and the Brihadâranayaka most probably mean this apportionment of the cosmic rhythm to the gods and men, when they are representing a hierarchy of the beings, men, creative and preservative gods. The delight of the collective men is focussed in the gods, for they feel the greater rhythm of life. The greater the rhythm, the finer and the wider the delight, and the rhythm may be intensive enough to feel the cosmic life in the inward and outward urges.

But the delight of rhythm is essentially the delight of life, it cannot be the delight of expanse, for however intensive and exclusive the urge may be, it is still limited in its being. It may be life and eternal life, but it is feeling the pulse of life in expression. It has then the limitation of expression. It is lived and enjoyed, it is the delight of life. The delight of being (Atman) is the delight of an awakening from the urge and rhythm of life. Urge is the index of limitation, it is the sign of concentration. However vast and expansive be its influence, it cannot be the plenum of existence, and as such the Chhândogya truly says that in the expanse of being, no experience is possible of it, no urge is felt in it. This expanse has been called delight by Sanatkumâra. It is an expanse without the oscillation of life, it is an expanse which can be lived but not felt. It is the expanse whence disappear the waves of life, the urges of cosmic consciousness and feeling. It is the expanse of undivided bliss, the bliss of calm and not the bliss of life. The bliss of life is the joy of rhythmic dance which widens our sympathies and enlarges our visions, and can give expression to the finest currents of the soul. And a few can stand indifferent to the intoxication of life and welcome the silence beyond. Religious attraction is often the attraction for the subtle delight of life, and the more life is freed from grossness and its restrictions, the more it becomes the source of pure delight. The joys become almost overwhelming when life reveals its unfathom-

able depths and its finest currents. The more it is enjoyed, the more unceasing becomes the attraction.

But such intensive attraction of life ceases to be effective in the transcendent calm, when the soul becomes completely freed from its intoxication. The joy of life cannot compare to the dignity of silence. Life has ebb and flow. Calm is life without ripple, without ebb and flow. It is the plenitude of existence.

Spiritual life in academy and parlour is so often identified with the finest dynamism of our being that the calm in spiritual life as distinguished from its rhythm is not seriously taken into consideration and this probably has been the cause of confounding the silence of spiritual life with void. It is not void, it is the *Pleroma of Eternal Light*, as the Gnostics call it. The urge of life is so insistent and so attractive that the seeker experiences difficulty to get beyond the urges and appreciate the illumined silence. This pleroma of eternal light is to be distinguished from the radiating effulgence which the seeker feels in the dynamic being when the rhythmic oscillation of life is at its highest. The rhythmic oscillation produces an apparent calmness in the dynamic being and is very often accompanied by an all-pervading transparent orb of light. This orb of light is perpetual in Isvara, but transient in man; for in the one case the finest dynamism exists in the state of an apparent equilibrium and in another it is in a state of unstable and disturbed equilibrium. The undisturbed rhythm of life is always associated with the finest transparence of dynamic being and the widest form of expression. A stage, it will be made clear later on, is reached where the light shines eternally, without the veil of ignorance prevalent in man. The former is the genial light of the dynamic divinity, but not the light of silence. The divine light is the orb of light in unbounded space, the light of silence is the light beyond space, the limitless space. This is the light of Atman.

The present-day mysticism seems to

be so much appreciative of life and rhythm, probably as the inevitable after-effect of the devitalising World War, that it cannot rise above the melody and the music of life and welcome the silence beyond profounder urges and meanings of life. Count Keyserling appraises the value of the basic tones of the melody of life in its eternal process of change. "It is the eternal truth which ensouls all temporal sense-formations just as it is eternal life which animates every life." "The ultimate terminus, undefinable as such, the Logos-side of which I call 'adjustment', is nothing else than Life itself. For it is life which gives its content a meaning." Keyserling has shown sympathetic appreciation of the Indian spirit of rising above 'name' and 'form' as necessary to the apprehension of truth (p. 194, *Creative Understanding*), and (in page 196) he says: "The East recognises as a self-evident fact that spiritual light—as is true, ultimately of all life—can only come from a Beyond of the plane of formations." This 'beyond' is the life above all concrete formations.

So deep is the conviction in life, that it is indeed very difficult to raise our vision from the fluidity it promises to the appreciation of the affirmation of the ancients that the Beyond transcends life, transcends formations and expressions. The mystic urge is generally the urge of finer life. The finer the rhythm felt in the dance of life, the greater the attraction felt to life, and the mystic vision has the possibility of being clouded by and fixed upon the dance of life: in fact, it may not get over the conception of life as the basic reality. So great may be the hold of life, that in our aspiration to rise above its concrete expressions in the details of existence, we may read finer values and deeper appreciations into them in reference to their cosmic setting, in their profounder sense-consciousness. We may thus live in the Beyond while holding on still to the immediate.

Almost akin to the appreciation of

life, mysticism by another writer has been identified with *the contemplation of value*. "One day life will emerge, and warmed by the Sun of Pure Being, will come to rest in the contemplation of value which the mystics have called the vision of God. . . . There are the mystics who achieve in sudden flashes of illumination the vision of the world of value which will one day, if evolution goes aright, be the privilege of all things that are living." "This intimation logically involves, and in practice includes, the conviction that life is purposive, in the sense that it is trying to develop a clearer and fuller apprehension of what is now but imperfectly felt and, for some of us, a recognition of the fact that in the mystic this clearer and fuller apprehension has intermittently been achieved." (C. E. M. Joad: *The Present and Future of Religion*, p. 193). Joad conceives a spiritual world in addition to the everyday material world: "The latter is the world of struggle, change and imperfection, the former is the world of permanence, perfection and changelessness." Life evolves to a fuller and more continuous knowledge of this world. The mystic world, to Joad, is the world of absolute and permanent values which can be apprehended but cannot be created by us.

Keyserling's vision of the Life Beyond and Joad's vision of the order of values as the end of the quest do not fall in with the Upanisadic ideal. None of them have been able to rise above the basic conception of life and life in its basic being is associated with permanent values. The vision of a Beyond and a Beyond deep with meaning and expressed in values, is the vision of the causal and the subtle beyond the physical. It is the revelation of the mysteries lying deep behind the division of life on the physical plane, it is continuous with our present experiences which are in effect expressions of them. Joad seems to have been captivated by the fine turns of life in the rarefied consciousness of mystics, and his imagination is struck

by the transcendent world of values as offering the blessed contrast of order, peace and perfection to the disorder, confusion and conflict of the divided life.

Be it transcendent life or value, the mystical ideal cannot confine itself to 'the identification of the object of mystical experience with the transcendent world of values.' The mystic search is after the one, after that beyond which nothing exists, without which nothing exists and that which is the essence of our being, which saves us from the insurgent demands of a restricted self. The great promise of mysticism is, therefore, this felicitation of an emancipation from the inrush of the vital demands of a divided life. The emancipation is certainly different from the values and ideals that lie hidden in life and find expression in the order of finer existence and get appreciation in a truer vision. We shall see that the Upanisads are alive to the finer order of values and show insight into life beyond, but its finest contribution to mysticism is that it seeks to present the ineffable one, as beyond values, beyond life, the spring of all existence, yet the intangible reality which none can divine, a wonder to gods and men, the bliss of existence.

In the delight of rhythm, life enjoys a freedom from discord inevitable to the conflict inherent in the surge of impulses. Rhythm gives us delight because it offers a relief and a deliverance from the discord and therefore presents the aspect of life which is not usually experienced. No doubt life has in every stage of its expression some degree of rhythm, the discord is possible because we have not the life in the fullest. Life is rhythm, and the more we have it, the more we enjoy the joy of rhythm.

Be it noted here that the joy of rhythm is more apparent in the cosmic than in the individual life, for in the cosmic being life has its fullest possible expression without the least possible discord. The more the dance of life is rhythmic, the more it is freed from the anxieties of life, from the hopes and the fears. It enjoys the evenness; but this

evenness is felt where the oscillation of life is free from the claims of the divided life. It is in a sense a recovery from the battle field of desires, from the vital and mental urges. It is enjoying the dance inherent in life itself. The freedom from the waves of impulses is a freedom from the desires natural to vital and mental life. This freedom is the enjoyment of the wider life, stimulating and inspiring us in every moment of our existence. Its rhythm is deep, its delight pure, its harmony musical. It is the joy of life which the adept alone can feel.

It appears more delightful only because it secures a relief from the stirring and stressing of the surface life. It is as it were a temporary forgetfulness of the insistent demands connected with our vital existence. The more life converges towards the fulfilment of want, the more it is restricted to a plane of existence where it cannot feel itself at its highest and enjoy the blessing of a forgetfulness and escape from the limited urges of expression. The higher urge of life has a freedom from this constant tension of a concentrated purpose. Life is enjoyed most in its elasticity, and the more free it is from limited visions, the more is the possibility of enjoying the wider and deeper currents of the soul.

The finer appreciation of life, therefore, always requires greater freedom from its limited urges. This truth is seen by C. E. M. Joad. He sees in æsthetic experience a freedom and release from the constant urges of life and a momentary forgetfulness of the claims and interests of life. Joad says: "We who are part and parcel of the evolutionary stream stand for the time outside and above the stream, and are permitted for a moment to be withdrawn from the thrust and play of impulse and desire . . . for so long as we enjoy the vision of the end, life leads us alone. We feel neither need nor want, and losing ourselves in contemplation of the reality beyond us we become for the moment selfless." Joad has almost the true appreciation of the

mystic consciousness as chiefly self-forgetfulness. In other words, it implies the transcendence over the surface ripple of life, but he seems not to be quite alive to the delight of silence. The finer rhythm may give us a freedom from the persistent claims and counter-claims of desires, life may be tasted with its full cup of delight in its serene melody and absorbing harmony. The riotous claims may be hushed in the silence where the original music of life may enrapture the soul and flashes of light may overcome it with the rich experience of the sublimities and beauties of the cosmic life. The strength and vigour of the cosmic self may stir our being to its very depth. Still such a mystic consciousness has not the full expression and unique presentation of the transcendent. The forgetfulness of our confined experience and the enjoyment of the dance of cosmic life meet us on the pathway to the realisation of the silence of the beyond, but they should not be confounded with the true appreciation of the mystic consummation. The order of æsthetic beauty and moral value with their possibilities cannot compare to the delight of silence. A persistent demand there is to rise from the discords into the harmony of life, but this music of life is not the finality in the mystic exaltation. The Upanisadic seers have the final appreciation of the calm beyond the waves of life, of the great beyond in which silence reigns supreme. It is indeed a terrible experience for those who are anxious to enjoy the dance of life and who have not the boldness to go further. The mystic silence is a unique experience beyond all descriptions in the terms of concrete experience. Life here is hushed into silence, experience vanishes into nothing, the dream of life for ever dwindles away, the cosmic dance comes to a close, the joy of fellowship in an eternal fraternity evaporates for ever. Life is awakened from the fatal division which for ever binds it. Silence reigns supreme. The final delight is this delight of

silence. Gods, archangels, angels and men do not know it; knowing it they cannot exist. It is the eternal wonder, the everlasting Yea behind all existence, the ether of consciousness, the eternal

background, the ever-present Now, the stay of all, but the ever inaccessible, the ever impenetrable, the eternal mystery that always attracts but always eludes our grasp.

(Concluded)

SWAMI BRAHMANANDA THE SPIRITUAL SON OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

From Puri he visited Madras for the first time in October, 1908, on an invitation from Swami Ramakrishnananda, who came all the way from Madras to escort him. Sister Devamata of America, who had come to India to hold communion with the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, was then living in Madras in a rented house close to the Math. During the Maharaj's stay at Madras the Sister served him with whole-hearted love and devotion. The Maharaj also treated her with kind and affectionate regards and often enquired of her about the American work, and specially about Swami Paramananda who had gone there recently. While at Madras, the Maharaj is said to have passed into *Samâdhi* (superconscious state) one evening at the time of *ârati* (vesper service). Of this the Sister has given the following account in her *Days in an Indian Monastery*:

"He sat on the rug at the far end of the hall away from the door of the shrine, his body motionless, his eyes closed, a smile of ecstasy playing about his lips. Swami Ramakrishnananda was the first to observe that he did not move when the Service was over. . . . For half an hour no one stirred—a boy who was crossing the hall did not even draw back his foot. Perfect stillness pervaded the monastery—a radiant, pulsing stillness. Then Swami Brahmananda opened his eyes, looked around in dazed embarrassment, got up from his

seat, went silently to his room and was not seen again that evening."

Before he came to Madras there was no proper arrangement in the Madras Math for the ceremonial performance of the evening service. It was the Maharaj who introduced it there. And every evening after the service, he would hold an assembly of devotees in which scriptures were studied and devotional songs were sung. The Maharaj himself also would play on musical instruments in accompaniment.

In December next he went on a pilgrimage to Rameswar accompanied by Swami Ramakrishnananda, Swami Dhirananda, Swami Vishuddhananda, Swami Ambikananda and C. Ramaswami Aiyangar. On reaching the sacred spot, the Maharaj went straight to the temple from the railway station and worshipped Sri Râmeswara. The Maharaj and the party stayed there nearly a week in a bungalow belonging to the Raja of Ramnad. Many an inhabitant of the place came to seek his instruction and blessings. The Maharaj received them all with utmost kindness and love. On his way back to Madras he stopped at Madura to worship the Goddess Minâkshi there. Here the Maharaj had a wonderful spiritual experience which beggars description. He realised the living presence of the Mother in the Temple. As he was escorted to the *sanctum sanctorum*, he stood before the image firm and motionless gazing at the

lotus-feet of the Goddess. Soon his whole body began to tremble in ecstasy. Tears trickled down his cheeks. The attendants stood round his person to prevent a fall. This spiritual mood lasted nearly an hour after which the Maharaj gradually came down to the plane of normal consciousness. He spent a couple of days at Madura visiting notable historical places. Thence he returned to Madras direct.

In January, 1909, the Maharaj went to Bangalore to open the new Ashrama there. This time Sister Devamata also joined the party. The elite of the town including the officials of the Mysore State attended the opening ceremony. They all assembled under a Durbar Samiana set up for the occasion. Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, C.I.E., the then Dewan of the Mysore State, made over the key of the Ashrama to the Maharaj on behalf of the public with a nice little speech, to which the Maharaj gave a suitable reply. It was on this occasion that the Maharaj spoke before the public for the first and last time. The speech lasted only fifteen minutes, but it made an excellent impression on the audience. Though he generally felt very shy in a function which had a public character, this time he stood like a rock, as he humorously said to some of us afterwards.

After a week's stay at Bangalore, he returned to Madras. In March next he went to Conjeevaram and remained there for three or four days. He worshipped the Goddess Kâmâkshi and visited the temple several times during his short stay there. He also visited Shiva Kanchi and Vishnu Kanchi. He was much charmed with the sanctity of the place and the beauty of the images. The Maharaj left for Puri towards the end of April. He very much enjoyed his sojourn at Madras. Many of its residents approached him for religious instruction. Justices Krishnaswami Aiyar and Sundaram Iyer and other leading men came to pay their respects to him. At Madras he heard for the first time the *Râma-nâma* chant of Southern India and

was much fascinated by it. It at once struck him that it could be set to a more melodious tune and sung by the monks of the Order in congregation as a form of devotional practice. Since then *Râma-nâma Sankirtana* has been introduced into the Ramakrishna Math and its branches. Now it is sung in almost all the centres of the Order once a fortnight. In Bengal it has been adopted by some other religious societies as well.

Towards the last part of April, 1910, the Maharaj visited Benares for a fortnight. The occasion was the opening of the first permanent buildings of the Sevashrama there. He had, in the April of 1908, laid the foundation-stones of two of the Sevashrama buildings. At that time he had stayed at Benares for about a month. The buildings were now completed and the workers of the Sevashrama eagerly invited the Maharaj to come to Benares and formally open them. At first he refused—he was not doing well. But one of the workers went to the Belur Math where he was then staying and persuaded him to come. He went accompanied by several monastic and lay devotees. On an auspicious day, special ceremonies were performed and the buildings declared open. There was music by one of the celebrated musicians of the day, and all felt a great spiritual joy sweeping over them. The Maharaj himself looked absorbed in a deep blissful mood and blessed all from the bottom of his heart. The occasion has left an indelible impression on all who were present. After two weeks he returned to Belur.

Early in 1911 Swami Turiyananda returned to the Math after about nine years' secluded life of strenuous *tapasyâ*. He went to Puri and lived with the Maharaj for some time. They came back to the Math in the latter part of the year. In April of 1912 the Maharaj left for Kankhal accompanied by Swami Turiyananda and Swami Shivananda. They stayed there at the Sevashrama for about six months. At the instance of the Maharaj, the worship of the

Goddess Durgâ, the typical *pujâ* of Bengal, was celebrated in the Sevashrama. The image of the Goddess measuring about $2\frac{1}{2}$ cubits had to be conveyed there all the way from Calcutta under the personal care of a lay devotee. A considerable number of local *Sâdhus* were sumptuously fed on the occasion. At Kankhal some of the young members of the Order met in his room almost every evening. The Maharaj spoke to them most fervently of devotion to God, glory of renunciation and the responsibilities of monastic life, and repeatedly urged them to make strenuous efforts for the realisation of their life's ideal. Sometimes they sat in meditation before him till late at night. While at Kankhal, he had once to go to Roorkee for the registration of a deed relating to the Ramakrishna Mission Orphanage at Sargachi, Murshidabad, for which Swami Akhandananda, the founder-president of the Orphanage, had come to him.

From Kankhal the Maharaj came to Benares late in autumn. Swami Shivananda and Swami Turiyananda were also with him. They had not stopped at Benares on their way up. The Maharaj was accommodated in the Sevashrama building. The Holy Mother had already come to Benares and was living in a house close by. The Maharaj joyfully attended the *Kâli Pujâ* and the *Jagaddhâtri Pujâ* performed at the Advaita Ashrama. A number of lay devotees and monks of the Order assembled in the holy city from different places to attend the *pujâs* and to have the blessing of their company. An ineffable joy and peace reigned in the hearts of all. The Hindustani opera *Râma-lilâ* and the *Râsa-lilâ* of Sri Krishna were also performed in the Ashrama. The *Râma-nâma* chant of Southern India mentioned above was introduced at Benares centre at this time. One evening while listening to the *Râma-nâma Sankirtana* in the Sevashrama Hall, the Maharaj had a vision of Mahavir, the ideal devotee of Sri Ramachandra. The opening invocations had

just begun, when an old man was seen entering the place slowly. He took his seat beside the portrait of Sri Ramachandra before which the *Sankirtana* was being held. The Maharaj looked at him twice or thrice, as he had never seen him before. After a few minutes, he was seen no more. Then the Maharaj realised that he had seen Mahavir who comes wherever the name of Rama is sung. Tulsidas, a great saint and devotee of Sri Ramachandra, also had a similar vision.

The following incident which happened in Benares exhibits the Maharaj's great devotion to the Holy Mother and the highly developed *sâttvika* character of his person: One day he with his *Gurubhâis* and some other monks of the Ashrama were invited by the Holy Mother to a noonday meal. On his return from the Mother's place, he had a severe attack of diarrhoea. He was given medicine, but it did him no good. Towards evening he refused to take medicine, but wanted to drink water sanctified by the touch of the Holy Mother as the only remedy. This was given him. At night he felt better. In the morning he was all right. He took his usual diet with the Holy Mother's permission, though the doctors had prescribed lighter food. On the previous night the Holy Mother had a vision in which Sri Ramakrishna appeared to her and said that Rakhal's ailment was due to his taking an article of food which had not been offered to the Divine Mother. It did not agree with the *sâttvika* nature of his physique.

The Maharaj returned to Belur at the end of winter some time before the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. In the next autumn, *i.e.*, of 1913, he again went to Benares at the special request of Babu Navagopal Ghose's wife, a favourite lady-disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, to attend the *pujâ* of the Goddess Durgâ to be celebrated by her at the Benares Advaita Ashrama. From Benares he once visited Ayodhya. With great devotion he went round the places associated with the divine life of

Sri Ramachandra. At one or two of them he is said to have passed into trance. At his instance the *Râma-nâma* chant was performed with great fervour in the celebrated temple of Mahavir called Hanumangarh. The summer of 1914 he passed in Benares. He had no intention to return to the Math at Belur soon. He went to Allahabad and had a mind to go to Brindaban and stay there long. But Swami Premananda who was in charge of the Belur Monastery, felt his absence so keenly that he came to Allahabad to request him personally to return to the Math. The Maharaj was persuaded to come back for the sake of the young *Sannyâsins* and *Brahmachârins*, in whose name specially Swami Premananda had made the request. Accordingly he came to Belur in winter.

On his arrival at Belur, a great enthusiasm prevailed among the inmates of the Math. He looked particularly after the physical and spiritual welfare of the young members and personally enquired if they had grievance or inconvenience of any sort. They often assembled before him and asked him questions. The Maharaj gladly solved their doubts and difficulties. For some time they also enjoyed the blessed privilege of meeting in his room and practising meditation in his presence every morning. After the meditation sacred songs and hymns were chanted.

In the summer of 1915 he went to Bhadrak in the District of Balasore in Orissa. About the middle of the year Swami Saradananda and Swami Suddhananda came to Bhadrak from Puri to consult him on certain matters relating to Mayavati Advaita Ashrama. Here also a number of friends and devotees gathered round him. They met every evening to discuss with him religion and various other topics. His loving nature and gentle and polite behaviour had endeared him to all. A weekly sitting was organised for *Bhajana* in which Swami Suddhananda was asked by the Maharaj to read the *Gîtâ*. The Maharaj returned to the Math towards the end of the year.

Whenever the Maharaj was at the headquarters at Belur, he aimed particularly at the spiritual development of the *Sannyâsins* and the *Brahmachârins* of the Math. Not only did he enforce strict rules for the regular practice of meditation, but urged them with the fire of his soul to struggle hard to realise the truth. His inspiring presence and stirring words had such an elevating influence on them that their minds naturally rested on the thought of God and could be fixed on Him without much effort. The following record from the diary of a monk gives a glimpse of the Maharaj as a trainer and awakener of souls in these days :

“It is winter, December, 1915,—a few days before the Christmas. The Maharaj, Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda), Mahapurushji (Swami Shivananda), Khoka Maharaj (Swami Subodhananda) and many other *Sannyâsins* and *Brahmachârins* are at present residing in the Math. Nowadays the Maharaj has made a rule that all *Sâdhus* and *Brahmachârins* should rise at 4 o'clock in the morning and should sit for meditation and *Japa* by 4-30 a.m. Some practise meditation in the worship-room, some in the Maharaj's room which is on the first floor, others in the verandah facing the Ganges and adjoining the Maharaj's room. A monastic attendant of the Maharaj has been entrusted with the duty of ringing a bell at ten minutes to 4 o'clock. The Maharaj gets up either at 3 o'clock or at quarter to three. His sleep is very short. After practising meditation for two to two hours and a half, all assemble in his room by 7 a.m. and sing devotional songs for about an hour and a half.

“The Maharaj gives instructions to all. It is not mere giving of instruction but the transmission of spiritual powers. He raises the mind of each six or seven steps up. After hearing him, as they come downstairs they speak to one another of their experience of the Maharaj's supernal power, and most of them say that they have never experienced such manifestation of the Maharaj's power

before, nay, they have not noticed similar expression of power in any other Maharaj. One of the *Brahmachârin*s, who has been writing a diary of the Math for some days, was also present in the Maharaj's room one morning. That day his mind soared so high that he could not fix his attention on the Maharaj's language, though he tried to do so. . . ."

In January, 1916, the Maharaj went to Dacca with Swami Premananda and a few other monks of the Order at the request of the local devotees to lay the foundation-stones of the Dacca Ramakrishna Math and Mission in the newly acquired permanent site, which was the generous gift of a premier zeminder of the place. *En route* they visited the holy temple of Kâmâkhyâ at Gauhati. Thence they came to Mymensingh where they stopped only a few days. On their arrival at Dacca a great enthusiasm prevailed in this old historic city of East Bengal. A large number of young students and persons of light and leading came to them daily for instructions and blessings. People from distant villages flocked to their blessed presence. A considerable number of lady devotees also had the privilege to see them. From Dacca the Maharaj and party made a short trip to Kashimpur at the special request of a bereaved zeminder of the place, who had donated a large sum of money to erect a building in the Dacca Mission in memory of his deceased son. Besides the notable temples and other places of interest of the city, the Maharaj, accompanied by Swami Premananda, visited the hermitage of the saint Bijoykrishna Goswami. They also went to Deobhog near Naraingunge to see the house where the saint Durgacharan Nag had lived. They were much impressed with the rural beauty and the sanctity of the place.

After a month's stay at Dacca the Maharaj and party returned to Belur in the beginning of February. In July next he went to Madras on a second visit and stayed there about a month.

Then he proceeded to Bangalore. From Bangalore he went to Trivandrum to lay the foundation-stone of the Trivandrum Math. Thence he made a pilgrimage to Cape Comorin with a big party of monastic and lay devotees. He performed a special *pujâ* of the Goddess *Kanyâkumâri* with various offerings. He stayed there about a week in the State Choultry. Every day he used to sit in meditation in the hall before the temple and asked his companions to do the same. On his way back to Bangalore he visited Janardan and several other sacred places. From Bangalore he came back to Madras. Then he went to Srirangam near Trichinopoly to visit the holy temple of Ranganâtha and returned after ten or twelve days. Next he went to Conjeevaram and visited the sacred temples there a second time. He also paid a visit to Perambur, the birthplace of Ramanuja, and came back to Madras the same day. A few days after, he visited the holy temple of Tirupati. Here he had a very strange experience. As he entered the temple, he perceived the place to be presided over by the Devi or the Female Principle while the image installed in the temple was of the Male God. He expressed his feeling to the Swamis who had accompanied him. On a close examination of the sanctuary it appeared to have been originally a Shakti temple, but afterwards converted into Vishnu temple, probably under the influence of Ramanuja. During his stay at Madras he opened the new Math-building and laid the foundation-stone of the Students' Home. He left for Puri in the next summer (1917). While there, he secured a plot of land at Bhubaneswar to establish a new Math there.

He returned to Calcutta with Swami Turiyananda who had met him at Puri, in November of 1917 before the *Kâli Pujâ*. He lived at Balaram Babu's house and the Udbodhan Office alternately in day and at night. In Calcutta he occasionally attended the public meetings arranged by the Vivekananda Society. In April, 1918, Swami Prajna-

nanda, President of Mayavati Advaita Ashrama and editor of *Prabuddha Bharata*, expired at the Udbodhan Office. A few days before his death the Maharaj saw an ominous vision. One day from upstairs he saw two very tall and robust figures standing near the western staircase. They looked manlike but there was a weird and bizarre aspect about them. They disappeared very soon. He saw them once or twice again. The sight made him very anxious. He felt that some evil was imminent. In July next Swami Premananda breathed his last at Balaram Babu's house. The Maharaj who was present at his death-bed was so overpowered with grief that he wept like a child at the loss of his dear brother-disciple.

The construction of the Bhubaneswar Math commenced in 1918 at his personal initiative. The work was conducted absolutely according to his directions. He took a keen and lively interest in the matter. He secured money for it, received regular information of the progress of work and sent necessary instructions to make it a success. The new Math was opened by himself in November, 1919. After a prolonged stay at Bhubaneswar he returned to Belur in the summer of 1920 after the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. He attended the annual general meeting of the Mission, which was held shortly after his arrival.

After the passing away of the Holy Mother in July, 1920, he went again to Bhubaneswar. In January, 1921, he visited Benares for the last time accompanied by Swami Saradananda. Swami Turiyananda was then staying at Benares. He had been suffering from slow fever for some two months. After the definite news of the Maharaj's arrival had reached him, he drove in a motor car at dead of night, in spite of the severe winter cold, to escort the Maharaj from Moghal Sarai to Benares. The Maharaj appeared very bright, cheerful and spirited, as he breathed the

sublime spiritual atmosphere of the sacred city. A few days after, many monastic and lay devotees flocked to Benares from far and near to be in his blessed presence. Some had been staying there from before in expectation of his arrival. Most of the members of the Brotherhood met in his room every morning and evening and listened to his stirring words on God-vision, renunciation, *Brahmacharya*, yearning and struggle for truth and similar other subjects. Many put questions to him and the Maharaj gladly solved their doubts and difficulties. He fervently spoke of the holy atmosphere of Benares as very congenial to religious practice. It had, he said, an elevating and inspiring influence which accelerated spiritual growth. Again and again he exhorted all to be up and doing in their struggle for the attainment of the life's ideal—the bliss and peace eternal. The birthday festivals of the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda and of himself were celebrated with great eclat during his stay there. Many received initiation into *Sannyâsa* and *Brahmacharya* on those occasions. The important sanctuaries of the place were visited by him from time to time. The days passed in constant joy, festivity and divine inspiration. *Râma-nâma Sankirtana* was chanted one evening in the hermitage of the Saint Tulsidas, one of the greatest devotees of Sri Ramachandra. Another evening *Kâli Kirtana* was performed in the temple of the Goddess Annapurnâ. The memory of the sublime atmosphere created on such occasions by his holy and majestic presence will be cherished in the hearts of all who attended them. While at Benares, the Maharaj also settled with extraordinary tactfulness the internal affairs of the Sevashrama which had assumed a complicated aspect.

Early in spring the Maharaj returned to Belur and attended the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. Then he set out for Madras with Swami Sharvananda, the then President of the Madras Math, who had been staying

with the Maharaj since his arrival at Benares with a view to take him to Madras. He stopped a few days at Waltair on the way. He found the place very suitable for spiritual practice and spoke highly of the elevating character of its atmosphere. In Madras he opened the main building of the Students' Home and stayed there for about three weeks. He then proceeded to Bangalore and lived there till September. He came back to Madras next autumn, performed the *Durgâ Pujâ* and the *Kâli Pujâ* in images taken down from Calcutta. Then he left for Bhubaneswar before winter.

In January, 1922, the Maharaj returned to the Math from Bhubaneswar accompanied by Swami Shivananda. He attended the Trustees' meeting and that of the Governing Body of the Mission. In the last week of March he was attacked with cholera in Balaram Babu's house, the most favourite haunt of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples in Calcutta. The best physicians of the city were called in. He was just recovering from cholera, when there was

a sudden relapse of diabetes which he had contracted as early as 1918. On receiving the news of his illness, *Sannyâsins*, *Brahmachârins*, *Bhaktas*, admirers and friends poured in from all quarters in anxious solicitude. The monks nursed him day and night with utmost care, tenderness and devotion. But nothing could avert the inevitable end. He entered into *Mahâsamâdhi* on Monday, the 10th April, 1922, at the age of sixty. On Saturday night he called the monastic members to his bedside, took leave of them and heartily blessed them all with words instinct with the highest wisdom, love, sweetness, hope and encouragement. Then in a mood of ecstasy he gave expression to a vision which revealed to him at the last moments his own spiritual identity as the playmate of Sri Krishna. This mysteriously corroborated Sri Ramakrishna's experience as to his spiritual self before his coming to Dakshineswar,—a vision which had been carefully kept back from him and which we have narrated in the beginning of our article.

(To be continued)

ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

BY SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

न जातु विषयाः केऽपि स्वारामं हर्षयन्त्यमी ।

सल्लकीपल्लवप्रीतमिवेभं निम्बपल्लवाः ॥ ३ ॥

निम्बपल्लवाः Leaves of the *Neem* tree सल्लकीपल्लवप्रीतं loving the leaves of the *Sallaki* tree इमं elephant इव as अमी those के अपि any विषयाः objects स्वारामं one delighting in Self जातु at any time न not हर्षयन्ति please.

3. No¹ sense-objects ever please him who delights in Self even as the leaves of the *Neem* tree do not please an elephant who delights in the *Sallaki* leaves.

[¹ *No etc.*—The objects of the senses lose all their charm for one who has realised the ultimate perennial source of absolute bliss in Self and the nothingness of the sense-objects.]

यस्तु भोगेषु भुक्तेषु न भवत्यधिवासिता ।

अभुक्तेषु निराकाङ्क्षी तादृशो भवदुर्लभः ॥ ४ ॥

यः Who तु (expletive) भुक्तेषु enjoyed भोगेषु in objects of enjoyment अधिवासिता coveter न not भवति is अभुक्तेषु in things not enjoyed निराकाङ्क्षी not desiring (भवति is च and) तादृशः such a one भवदुर्लभः rare in the world.

4. Rare in the world is one who does not covet¹ things which he has enjoyed or does not desire things which he has not enjoyed.

[¹ *Covet etc.*—Once we have enjoyed a thing, an impress is left in the mind and that makes us desire for the thing again and again. Only Self-knowledge can rid us of this attraction.]

बुभुक्षुरिह संसारे मुमुक्षुरपि दृश्यते ।

भोगमोक्षनिराकाङ्क्षी विरलो हि महाशयः ॥ ५ ॥

इह Here संसारे in the world बुभुक्षुः one who desires worldly enjoyments मुमुक्षुः one who desires liberation अपि also दृश्यते is seen भोगमोक्षनिराकाङ्क्षी not desirous of enjoyment or liberation महाशयः the great-souled one हि but विरलः rare.

5. One desirous of worldly enjoyment and one desirous of liberation are both found in this world. But rare is the great-souled one who¹ is not desirous of either enjoyment or liberation.

[¹ *Who etc.*—Even the desire of liberation is imperfection, for it implies the consciousness of bondage. Absolute Knowledge is not yet, so long as this desire is there.]

धर्मार्थकाममोक्षेषु जीविते मरणे तथा ।

कस्याप्युदारचित्तस्य हेयोपादेयता न हि ॥ ६ ॥

कस्य अपि Certain उदारचित्तस्य of a broad-minded person हि indeed धर्मार्थकाममोक्षेषु in Dharma, Artha, Kâma and Moksha तथा as well as जीविते in life मरणे in death (च and) हेयोपादेयता sense of the rejectable and the acceptable न not (अस्ति is)

6. It is only some broad-minded person who has neither attraction nor aversion for Dharma, Artha, Kâma and Moksha as well as life¹ and death.

[¹ *Life etc.*—A man of Self-knowledge is ever conscious of himself as eternal. He has no body-idea. Life and death are meaningless to him.]

वाञ्छा न विश्वविलये न द्वेषस्तस्य च स्थितौ ।

यथा जीविकया तस्माद्धन्य आस्ते यथासुखम् ॥ ७ ॥

(ज्ञानिनः Of a man of Knowledge) विश्वविलये in the dissolution of the universe वाञ्छा desire न not तस्य its स्थितौ in existence द्वेषः aversion न not (अस्ति is च and) तस्मात् so धन्यः the blessed one यथा जीविकया with whatever living comes of itself यथासुखं happily आस्ते lives.

7. The man of Knowledge does¹ not feel any desire for the dissolution of the universe or aversion for its existence. The blessed² one, therefore, lives happily on³ whatever subsistence comes as a matter of course.

[¹ *Does etc.*—Because he perceives the universe as the Self itself. As long as there is ignorance, one looks upon the world as the root of all his miseries and tries to shun or destroy it so to speak. But with the birth of the Knowledge of the Self, his vision is changed and everything appears as the Self alone.

² *Blessed*—Such a person is indeed blessed.

³ *On etc.*—Because he cannot make any effort for his subsistence owing to his ego having been completely annihilated.]

कृतार्थोऽनेन ज्ञानेनेत्येवं गलितधीः कृती ।

पश्यन् शृण्वन् स्पृशन् जिघ्रन्श्चन्नास्ते यथासुखम् ॥ ८ ॥

अनेन This ज्ञानेन by Knowledge कृतार्थः fulfilled इति एवं thus गलितधीः with the mind absorbed कृती contented पश्यन् seeing शृण्वन् hearing स्पृशन् touching जिघ्रन् smelling अन्नम् eating यथासुखं happily अस्ति lives.

8. Being fulfilled by this¹ Knowledge² and with his mind³ absorbed, and contented,⁴ the wise one lives happily, seeing,⁵ hearing, touching, smelling and eating.

[¹ This—as indicated in the present chapter.

² Knowledge—i.e., of the Self.

³ Mind etc.—The mind is immersed in the glory of Self-Knowledge and its resultant blessings.

⁴ Contented—Because nothing remains to be attained.

⁵ Seeing etc.—It is not external behaviour that demarcates a man of Knowledge from an ordinary human being. The former may have everything in common with the latter except the feeling of 'I-ness' and 'mine-ness'.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

We are glad to be able to reproduce a beautiful picture of Sister Christine (an American disciple of Swami Vivekananda, who passed away shortly in New York) as our frontispiece. . . . The instalment of the *Discourses on Jnana Yoga* by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA, with which the present number opens, concludes this very interesting series. We are, however, glad to assure our readers that they will have a few more pieces of the unpublished utterances of the great Swami. . . . BOSHI SEN who contributes *Sister Christine* in this issue, is at present carrying on researches in plant-physiology in America. He had been long and intimately associated with the Sister whose life and character he sketches in his article, and was with her in her last moments. . . . We have to state that we have included in our article, *Some Fundamentals of Hinduism—I*, a few paragraphs from another article of ours published long ago. . . . *The Diary of a Disciple* is concluded in this issue. But there will be other records of conversations in the next numbers. . . . We invite the special attention of our readers to the

brilliant article, *Civitas Dei—the City of Mankind*, which ROMAIN ROLLAND contributes to the present number. The subject treated in it is of absorbing interest and claims our earnest thought. . . . GLENN FRANK who contributes *The Fruits of Tension*, is the President of Madison University, Wisconsin, U.S.A. and was at one time the editor of *The Century Magazine*, New York. The article was read at the Inaugural Dinner of the New Orient Society in Chicago last April. Readers will note that both M. Rolland and Mr. Frank deal with essentially the same subject in their articles, though their treatments are different. . . . DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D. concludes his *The Upanisadic View of Truth* in this issue.

WHITMAN AND SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Apropos of our comment in page 226 (May *Prabuddha Bharata*—article by Romain Rolland : *America at the time of Vivekananda's First Visit*), an American reader has thus written to us : "I am referring to a footnote of yours that appears in the article of Romain Rolland, where you imply that *Leaves of Grass* is 'a mere intellectual

and poetic effusion.' It has always seemed to me that Whitman was a man of some realization, but I should like very much to understand better your point of view if you have time to explain it." We shall in the following lines try to explain our understanding of the spiritual value of Walt Whitman.

M. Rolland takes the view that Whitman had mystic experience. He says: "He (Whitman) immediately perceived, embraced, espoused, and became at one and the same time each distinct object and their mighty totality, the unrolling and the fusion of the whole Cosmos realised in each morsel of the atom, and of life." And he adds: "How does this differ from the point of ecstasy, the most intoxicated Samâdhi of a Bhakti-yogin who, reaching in a trice the summit of realisation, and having mastered it, comes down again to use it in all the acts and thoughts of his everyday life?" As has been evident from our footnote, we do not agree with M. Rolland's estimate.

By "realisation," we generally mean God-realisation or states approximating to it. We do not think Whitman realised those states. The Cosmos can be perceived in different ways. It is true that most men do not feel as Whitman did. They are so circumscribed in vision, so narrow! And Whitman had certainly a wonderful genius of absorbing all things. But the question of questions is: In what aspects of those things? Things have different aspects. In one aspect they are spiritual. In other aspects they are material and ideal. How far did Whitman's vision penetrate the heart of things? Did he feel his unity with objects in their *spiritual* aspect? If not, how can we compare his experience with the most intoxicated Samâdhi of a Bhakti-yogin? All *Yogas* are concerned with the spiritual being of things. That is the essential difference between poetic appreciation and spiritual ecstasy. We have explained in our article this month the psychological implications of high spiritual realisations. Did Whitman

realise the requisite mental condition? Did he succeed in eliminating the multifarious *vrittis* (modifications) of his mind? Could he make his mind "one-pointed" so that only one *vritti* remained in it, call it God or Life or Cosmos? We think he did not. M. Rolland says: "The memoirs of Miss Helen Price (quoted by Bucke: *Whitman*, Pp. 26-31) describe, as an eyewitness, the condition of ecstasy in which he composed some of his poems." This does not tell us much. There are ecstasies and ecstasies. Surely when a poet of the calibre of Whitman writes, there is an uplifting of consciousness. But here again the question arises: How far uplifted? Where are the indications in Whitman that he felt things as spiritual? The glorification of sexuality and animality in his poems does not surely indicate very high spiritual perception. Swami Vivekananda said in course of one of his lectures: "You may take the most learned man you have and ask him to think of spirit as spirit,—he cannot. You may imagine spirit, he may imagine spirit. It is impossible to think of spirit without training. . . . Can you think of spirit as spirit?" This is the real test. We must perceive the spiritual being of things and of our own self. Then only we may be called men of realisation.

But of course, between our normal experience and the states of spiritual realisation, there are stages. And we have no doubt Whitman, and for the matter of that, many other poets and artists, felt things in a light unusual to ordinary minds. What then should our estimation be of Whitman's experience? Swami Vivekananda called him the "*Sannyâsin* of America." In what sense? Surely not in the sense of a man of realisation. The *Sannyâsin* typifies the man of freedom, the wanderer, never held back by social conventions and pettinesses, the comrade of all. We think, it is in this sense that the Swami called Whitman the "*Sannyâsin* of America." It appears

that he did not study Whitman much while he was in America. On his return to India, he requested one of his American disciples to get him a copy of *Leaves of Grass*, and we have, in our Library at the Belur Math, a copy presented to him by Mr. and Mrs. Mills.

Whitman himself has left a detailed account of the condition and preparation of mind when he wrote *Leaves of Grass*. Writing about the sources of his character up to 1860, he says in his *Specimen Days*: "To sum up the foregoing from the outset (and, of course, far, far more unrecorded,) I estimate three leading sources and formative stamps to my own character, now solidified for good or bad, and its subsequent literary and other outgrowth—the maternal nativity-stock brought hither from far-away Netherlands, for one, (doubtless the best)—the subterranean tenacity and central bony structure (obstinacy, wilfulness) which I get from my paternal English elements, for another—and the combination of my Long Island birth-spot, sea-shores, childhood's scenes, absorptions, with teeming Brooklyn and New York—with, I suppose, my experiences afterwards in the secession outbreak, for the third." This third factor in the constitution of his character interests us most, and of that, the element, *absorptions*. That was Whitman's peculiar genius. He absorbed all things and they abound in his book. This reminds us of a letter of the great English poet Keats. In it he speaks of his tendency to feel identified with all whatever he came in contact with, and he calls that the essence of poetic genius. (We regret we cannot quote his exact words). We have already stated our estimation of the value of Whitman's "absorptions." We do not find any indication of these being of the spiritual character.

Let us now see how Whitman himself estimates this. In his *November Boughs* there is a chapter, "A Backward Glance o'er Travel'd Roads," in which he details at length the motives that impelled him to write *Leaves of Grass*. He says: "I consider 'Leaves of Grass'

and its theory experimental." This is a startling statement, to say the least. One who writes down his experiences of the Eternal (and if we are to consider Whitman to be a man of realisation, we must look upon his experiences as set down in his book to be those of the Eternal), cannot talk of 'experiment'. His is the most complete certitude. The same temporal note is differently sounded in the following passage: "I know very well that my 'Leaves' could not possibly have emerged or been fashion'd or completed, from any other era than the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, nor any other land than democratic America, and from the absolute triumph of the National Union arms." There have been poets who have been also men of realisation, such as Kafir, Dadu, etc. They have talked of the Eternal and of the variegated universe. They would never have thought that their poetry was the product of certain times and circumstances. The difference between such poets and Whitman forcibly brings to our mind the quality of the latter's experience—he knew a totality of objects, which was material, vital and superficially mental, but not spiritual. He says: "From another point of view 'Leaves of Grass' is avowedly the song of Sex and Amativeness, and even Animality—though meanings that do not usually go along with those words are behind all, and will duly emerge; and all are sought to be lifted into a different light and atmosphere. . . . The work must stand or fall with them, as the human body and soul must remain as an entirety." This is not the talk of a man of realisation. He feels the separateness of body and soul, and he has no need to glorify sex and animality.

When we spoke of *Leaves of Grass* as poetic effusions and not actual realisations, we meant no slight to the great work. We are fully conscious of the great worth of poets. It is all a question of relative value. Poetry is great compared with the dull experience of most men. But spiritual experience is far

above poetry and cannot compare with anything.

AN INDO-CHINESE MOVEMENT

We quote the following from a recent issue of *The Literary Digest*:

Take the best in several religions, and stir them up together, then mix in a heavy measure of patriotism.

Such a recipe seems to have been adopted in Indo-China, where, says a Paris dispatch to the *New York Times*, a mixture of Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity is playing an important part in the present revolutionary agitation.

French political agents in touch with the native population are reported to believe that "the new religion is being used in a subtle way to arouse the people to rebellion." And this new religion is only four years old, as the writer of the *Times* dispatch informs us:

"Under the mystic leadership of Le Van Trung, former adviser to the French Government and Officer of the Legion of Honor, Cao Daism, as the new cult is called, is making a strong appeal to the more intelligent portions of the population, especially natives employed in government services. From a humble beginning, in 1926, with several hundred adherents, it has grown to be a flourishing religion counting 600,000 enthusiastic supporters and 3,000 priests.

"By permitting converts to continue to accept what they regard as essential in their old beliefs, Cao Daism attempts to combine the best of all the established forms of worship. The new religion is said to be strongly flavored with nationalism, and the members of the cult are taught that by the concentration of their spiritual attention upon the supreme God—Cao Dai—'the independence of Indo-China,' which the gods of older religions failed to preserve, will later be restored."

Little comment is necessary on the above, except that a Westerner's report of such Oriental movements has always

a wrong bias. As for example, the remark that "the new religion is being used in a subtle way to arouse the people to rebellion" has to be taken cautiously. The movement may be purely spiritual with the inevitable effect of an all-round awakening of power in all departments of life,—as it is happening in India. In any case, the item of news supplied by the *Digest* is highly significant, and some of our readers may profitably inquire into the nature and progress of the movement.

PROF. EINSTEIN ON SCIENCE AND RELIGION

The Forum of New York publishes the report of an interesting conversation between Professor Einstein, the famous author of the Theory of Relativity, and two other gentlemen. The topic of conversation was the relations between science and religion. The Professor was asked if people can reasonably ask from science for the spiritual help and inspiration which, according to the questioner, religion seems unable to give them. "How far can modern scientific theory hope to meet this yearning? . . . How far can the body of scientific theory which is now being built up by you and your colleagues be turned into a philosophy which may go some way towards establishing practical ideals of life on the ruins of the religious ideals which have fallen disastrously of late?" To this question the Professor's reply was highly significant.

"A practical philosophy," he said, "would mean a philosophy of conduct. And I do not think that science can teach men to be moral. I do not believe that a moral philosophy can ever be founded on a scientific basis. You could not, for instance, teach men to face death to-morrow in defence of scientific truth. Science has no power of that type over the human spirit. The valuation of life and all its nobler expressions can only come out of the soul's yearning toward its own destiny. Every attempt to reduce ethics to scientific

formulas must fail. Of that I am perfectly convinced. On the other hand, it is undoubtedly true that scientific study of the higher kinds and general interest in scientific theory have great value in leading men toward a worthier valuation of the things of the spirit. But the content of scientific theory itself offers no moral foundation for the personal conduct of life."

He, however, adds: "The intuitive and constructive spiritual faculties must come into play wherever a body of scientific truth is concerned. A body of scientific truth may be built up with the stone and mortar of its own teachings, logically arranged. But to build it up and to understand it, you must bring into play the constructive faculties of the artist. No house can be built with stone and mortar alone. Personally I find it of the highest importance to bring all the various faculties of the understanding into co-operation. By this I mean that our moral longings and tastes, our sense of beauty and religious instincts, are all tributary forces in helping the reasoning faculty toward its highest achievements. It is here that the moral side of our nature comes in—that mysterious inner consecration which Spinoza so often emphasized under the name of *amor intellectualis*. You see, then, that I think you are right in speaking of the moral foundations of science; but you cannot turn it around and speak of the scientific foundations of morality."

Not a very hopeful estimate this of the possibility of having a scientific religion. But can the Professor's judgment be accepted without some examination? The great Professor's point is perhaps that though science may offer knowledge of reality, it does not prescribe the standard by which to evaluate that knowledge. The values cannot be supplied by science. But is not knowledge itself a supreme standard of value? The great difficulty with the modern mind is that it is not ready to follow unflinchingly in the wake of truth and knowledge. It stops short. It takes for

granted that all knowledge cannot be realised in life,—life cannot be moulded according to knowledge. That is a mistake. The human mind has the capacity to pursue knowledge to the last limit and fully identify itself with it. It is because the modern mind is timid (yes, it is timid, very timid in the metaphysical field, in spite of its physical courage) that it halts on the way, and truth and knowledge points one way and life's aspiration another, and it does not know how to reconcile them. Knowledge, so long as it is imperfect and relates only to a part of the reality, seems unconcerned with our personal life and does not indicate the direction in which it should move. But when knowledge becomes all-comprehensive, its wooden objectivity vanishes and it becomes personal in tone and dictates life's ideals. The reason is that existence known as a whole is no dead substance, but is the very Principle of Life and Consciousness, possessing the essence of personality but devoid of its limitations. Let us know what we are and what the universe is. When we find the true nature of the world and soul, we shall find them identical, we shall find that the universe and the individual, as they appear now, are unreal, that the true reality behind them both is eternal, and that man *has* the power to realise it. This is the complete and bold pursuit of knowledge. The *Advaitists* of India did and are doing it. Why should not the whole world?

Of course, two questions at once arise. First, why should we presume that everyone would pursue knowledge? Yes, science cannot compel anyone to do so. But there is an inner compulsion. We can deny all duties except this. The modern world is bold enough to defy all injunctions, but even it cannot defy the claims of knowledge. There is that in us which compels us to follow knowledge. We cannot live content with what we know to be false. We *must* find the truth and follow it. So we say that knowledge itself is a

supreme standard of value. And if that is so, cannot science become the basis of religion? For what is science if not the finding of truth? But of course, it must be admitted that science, to be the basis of religion, must comprehend the whole of reality, physical and supra-physical. No religion can be based on the findings of mere physical science. Science must investigate not only into the world of matter, but also of life and mind. And when the complete knowledge of the triple world has been found, a religion will at once emerge, for our conduct and aspirations must change with the growth of our knowledge of reality,—the two are correlated. But here the second question arises: Has science any possibility of encompassing the entire reality? When a Prof. Einstein denies the possibility of a scientific religion, what he has in mind is that science cannot hope to comprehend the entire reality. He feels that the higher spheres,—life, mind, soul,—must for ever remain beyond the jurisdiction of science. Surely the present-day scientific methods—objective test and demonstration—will not apply to the higher life and mind. But we must understand science in a wider sense. It is true that the science of mind and soul must be, truly speaking, only psychology and metaphysics and not science in its proper sense. But psychology and metaphysics may have a basis in the truths discovered by science and may be in conformity with its findings. That there are systems of philosophy and religion, which are arbitrary and unreal, there is no denying. Such philosophies and religions have been shattered by science. But there have been others which have been strengthened by it. But those philosophies and religions are really the extensions of science, of a piece with it. In this way we may have a scientific religion. What is called speculative science is really pointing to the possibility of such a religion. Unless such a possibility can be realised, the future of both science and religion, in the West at least, seems gloomy.

There is a tendency among some Western scholars to allot different spheres to science and religion and demarcate their jurisdictions, and thus resolve the conflict of science and religion. In a sense this is correct. For as we have seen, science in its narrow sense can never expect to investigate the spiritual truths. But if a union is not attempted between the two zones of experience, physical and super-physical, human life will suffer from a division and conflict of interests. All experience must point *one way*,—both science and religion must prompt the same duty to us. Therefore some reconciliation between science and religion is inevitable. Prof. Einstein himself recognises it in a sense. He says: "I think this extraordinary interest which the general public takes in science to-day, and the place of high importance which it holds in people's minds, is one of the strongest signs of the metaphysical needs of our time. It shows that people have grown tired of materialism, in the popular sense of the term; it shows that they find life empty and that they are looking toward something beyond mere personal interests. This popular interest in scientific theory brings into play the higher spiritual faculties, and anything that does so must be of high importance in the moral betterment of humanity."

The last sentences, as our readers will note, are really a counsel of despair. But they also point to science as a spiritual discipline. That the pursuit of science may be spiritually ennobling has been testified by many. Prof. Einstein himself says: "With me, the sense of beauty in nature and all my artistic leanings have developed hand in hand with the pursuit of science. And I believe without the one, the other is not possible. Certainly in the case of all the really productive minds that I know of, the one has been united with the other. The artistic talents of the men I am thinking of may not always have been consciously developed or formally employed; but these talents

or tastes have always been active in giving urge and direction to the scientific mind. . . . Modern scientific theory is tending toward a sort of transcendental synthesis in which the scientific mind will work in harmony with man's religious instincts and sense of beauty. I agree that the picture of the physical universe presented to us by the theory of modern science is like a great painting or a great piece of music that calls forth the contemplative spirit, which is so marked a characteristic of religious and artistic yearning. . . . For me, the personal worth of scientific knowledge lies, just as Poincaré has said, in the joy of comprehension and not in the possibility of action which it opens up. I am not a European in the sense that I can regard action as an end in itself." Again: "Modern science does

supply the mind with an object of contemplative exaltation. Mankind must exalt itself. *Sursum corda* is always its cry. Every cultural striving, whether it be religious or scientific, touches the core of the inner psyche and aims at freedom from the Ego—not the individual Ego alone, but also the mass Ego of humanity."

Beautiful! But that is only of science as an indirect method of spiritual upliftment. But what about the spiritual *ideal* itself being supplied by science? Einstein gives us no hope. But is the case really so hopeless? As we have seen before, perhaps mankind need not despair. In any case, what is wanted is a comprehensive scheme of life, based on reality and not imaginary, be it the product of science or philosophy and science combined.

REVIEW

TEMPLE BELLS (READINGS FROM HINDU RELIGIOUS LITERATURE). Edited by A. J. Appasamy, M.A., D.Phil. The Association Press, 5, Russell Street, Calcutta XI+148 pp. Price paper Re. 1-12; cloth Rs. 2-8.

There was a time when Christianity wanted to thrive in this land only by vilifying Hinduism or belittling its saints and sages. These evangelists would find no beauty in Hinduism. Now things seem to have changed to some extent, and one need not get surprised if even orthodox Christians use appreciative terms while speaking of Hinduism.

The present volume was written to meet the demand of a book of selections from the religious literature of India which would enable Christians to understand in some measure the heart of the religious experience of non-Christian India. But the Editor confesses that one cannot understand "the essence of Hinduism merely by reading books about, particularly in a critical spirit." According to him, "If the deeply religious impulses which lie behind the utterances in the sacred books of India are to be grasped by us, those books should be meditated on; they should be taken to the inner chamber in which we quietly face life's questions in the presence of God. . . . The

great passages of any scripture do not yield their inner meaning until they are brooded over slowly and patiently and for a long time." Quite true. The selections have been excellently done, and the book has a very great devotional appeal and contains nothing which might be termed sectarian.

It gives within a short compass many good thoughts embodied in Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, Bengali and Tamil literature and contains extracts and utterances from the Vedas, Upanishads, Gita and many saints and poets representing various provinces of India from the very early times to the present day. It has been a wise plan to give in the beginning short sketches of authors and books quoted in the volume. But in them there are a few inaccuracies. As for instance, it is a one-sided view to say that the Gita teaches the worship of God through *Bhakti alone*. Ramakrishna Paramahansa was born not on 20th February, 1834, but on 18th February, 1836 A.D.

The book has a very attractive get-up and its beauty has been enhanced by fitting illustrations by some well-known artists.

SHAKTI AND SHAKTA. By Sir John Woodroffe. Ganesh and Co., Madras. 724 pp. Price Rs. 12/-.

We are glad to welcome the third edition of this excellent work of the worthy author who has made unprecedented attempt to bring the recondite Tâtrik philosophy of India to the full blaze of modern light. The former editions have been reviewed in *Prabuddha Bharata*. In this new edition, the book has been thoroughly revised and considerably enlarged. Eleven new chapters have been added. Some important additions have been made in the original chapters. The appendices give four lectures of the author in French.

The book is a comprehensive treatment of the principles and practices of Tâtrik worship from the standpoint of Shakti Sâdhanâ, done in a way necessary for the right understanding of the subject by modern intelligence. It will serve as a very helpful introduction to the study of Tâtra Shâstras for the Oriental scholars as well as the English educated Indians. The book is nicely printed and got up. A full index would have made it all the more useful.

MAHATMA GANDHI: THE MAN AND HIS MISSION. *G. A. Natesan and Co., Madras. 136+32 pp. Price Re. 1.*

The book propularly describes the life and career of Mahatma Gandhi up to his march to the salt pans of Surat. The social and political conditions of Modern India have been briefly surveyed in connection with the Mahatma's activities. The book also gives an account of the Mahatma's work in South India. Some appreciations of him by highly distinguished persons such as Rabindranath Tagore, Srinivasa Sastri, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Romain Rolland and C. F. Andrews have been appended to the book.

STORY OF A MIGHTY SOUL OR THE LIFE OF SWAMI HEMRAJ. *By U. A. Asrani, M.A. Sut Dharam Sabha, Hydera-*

bad (Sind). 165+XXIV pp. Price Re. 1-8 (cloth).

The book depicts the growth of a spiritual personality through the common duties of life. Swami Hemraj was born in 1851 of a Mallick family in Multan. He was married at the early age of twelve. For some sixteen years of his life he was a petty clerk in the District Magistrate's Court at Muzaffargarh. But he possessed such spiritual fervour and performed his domestic and office duties so methodically and disinterestedly that he could reserve sufficient time and energy for intense religious study and practice. He is said to have attained spiritual illumination even while in the service. Many came to him for instruction and guidance, till at last he chose to devote himself fully to the service of God. For the rest of his life he lived like a Sannyâsin to all intents and purposes.

His poems and letters written mostly in Urdu and Hindi were published in his lifetime and drew admirers from far and near. He received invitations from many places in the Western Punjab and Sind to deliver lectures and discourses. But he cared more to build the spiritual lives of earnest seekers than to satisfy the curiosity-mongers by platform speeches. He established Satsang Sabhas (religious associations) in many places. The Hindus as well as the Sikhs and Muhammadans were attracted by his personality. He died in 1903.

He was an Advaitist. His instructions were natural, forceful and rational. The book deals especially with the Swami's life and character. Many incidents have been cited to reveal his public and private life. A companion volume is proposed to be published on his teachings and philosophy. The book contains several appendices, giving the English renderings of a few of his poems and sayings, an outline of his travels and a complete list of his works.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, DELHI

The following account and appeal has been received by us from the R. K. Math, Delhi:

A branch of the Ramakrishna Math at Belur near Calcutta, founded by Swami Vivekananda, was started at Delhi, in the month of May, 1927, for the purpose of

preaching a liberal idea of Religion amongst the masses. Since then the Math has been able to do the following:

(1) *Religious Activities:* The Swamis of the Math tried to help the real seekers of truth through religious lectures and discourses arranged in different places. In these three years they have delivered:

194 Lectures on Sri Geeta,
 105 „ „ Sri Bhagavatam,
 89 „ „ Vedic Upanishads,
 50 „ „ Yoga Sutras of Patan-
 jali,
 16 „ „ Bhakti Sutras of
 Narada,
 13 „ „ Raja Yoga,
 129 „ „ Teachings of Sri Rama-
 krishna,
 43 „ „ Teachings of Swami
 Vivekananda,
 and 70 „ „ different religious topics,
 in places, e.g., the Math premises, St.
 Stephens, Hindu and Lady Hardinge
 Medical Colleges, Bengali High Schools,
 Satyanarain Temple, Talkatora Club, Have-
 lock Square, different Sanatan Dharma
 Sabhas, and other places of Delhi, New
 Delhi and Timarpur.

(2) *Anniversaries*: To make religion appealing to the masses, anniversaries in the holy memory of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the chief inspirer of the Math, and Swami Vivekananda, the originator of the Ramakrishna movement in India, were organised by the Math, and men like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Mr. N. C. Kelkar, Hon'ble late Mr. S. R. Das, Hon'ble Sir Raja Rampal Singh, K.C.S.I. of Kurri Suddhouly, Sir T. Vijay Raghav Acharya, and many other eminent gentlemen took part in these functions. Every year since 1929 a Convention of Religions to foster love and goodwill between different communities was held during Sri Ramakrishna anniversaries, in New Delhi, in the month of March. It is gratifying to note that Mahomedans, Christians, Jains, Sikhs, Aryas, Sanatanis, Vaishnavas and Vedantists took part in these conventions, while learned Parsis, Buddhists, and Brahmos expressed their sympathy with it.

In connection with the latter function thousands of the poor were fed every year.

(3) *A Library*: In May, 1928, a library was started in the Math premises for the facility of those who wished to study Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda literature. To it were also added some other valuable collections. Some periodicals and dailies in English, Hindi, and Bengali were also received regularly.

(4) *Seva Works*: A free dispensary was opened on the road to Jhandewala near Paharganj in a place mostly inhabited by Nakoas, an untouchable class of the Hindu Samaj. The dispensary was kept open twice

every day. If funds are available, the Math will do more work in that direction.

(5) *During Assam Flood*: During Assam Flood, the Math organised a batch of volunteers composed of the boys of Bengali High Schools of Delhi City and New Delhi, and with their aid collected Rs. 620/- and utilised it for the distressed people of Assam.

(6) *Activity in the Punjab*: Swami Sharvananda, the founder of the Delhi Math, visited Simla in June, 1927 to carry on religious propoganda there; his lectures and discourses were very much appreciated there. Then in April, 1930, at the invitation of Sanatan Dharma Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, he went to Lyalpur, Sargoda and Rawalpindi. The number of lectures that he delivered in these places were 8, 5 and 12 respectively. Lahore, Amritsar, Gujranwala and Multan were also in his programme, but he had to abandon them because of the tense political atmosphere. It is needless to say that wherever he went he made a deep impression, and in many places people were astonished to hear such learned and rational exposition of religion.

Appeal: In the above few lines we have given to our friends a short account of the work that we have done. Our further hope lies in our countrymen on whom we look for the maintenance and progress of the works we have undertaken. So any contribution that may come in the shape of subscription, donation, present, or gift will be thankfully accepted and acknowledged by the President, Sri Ramakrishna Math, 995, Garston Road, Delhi.

R. K. MISSION FLOOD RELIEF IN ARAKAN (BURMA)

The Secretary of the R. K. Mission has published a report of the extensive relief work done by the Mission in Arakan which was very miserably affected by the disastrous flood that came over it in June, 1929, the area affected being one hundred thousand acres or about seventy miles. Ten to fifteen thousand householders lost everything they possessed and the total extent of damage was estimated to be about twenty lakhs of rupees. On receiving the news of the disaster the R. K. Mission at Rangoon at once sent to Arakan a relief party which commenced their work on the 1st of July, 1929 and continued it for eight months. Four centres were opened comprising 76 villages; and the total number of recipients

was 10,611 persons. The relief consisted mainly of: (I) Distribution of 4,007 bags of rice, along with salt, chillies, *dal* and other necessary food-stuffs; (II) Distribution of 1,491 pieces of cloths (old and new), 295 *loongies*, 136 *engyies* and 2,750 blankets; (III) Distribution of husk and oil cakes for cattle; (IV) Pecuniary help for purchasing

implements for cultivation and hand-loom for weaving; (V) Repair of silted ponds and wells for supply of drinking water; (VI) Building of 1,775 huts; and (VII) Medical Relief to 8,468 people. Besides donations in kind which also covered a large amount, the total receipts amounted to Rs. 52,873-0-9 and the total expenditure to Rs. 51,454-13-6.

KISHOREGANJ RELIEF

We have received the following appeal from the Secy., R. K. Mission :

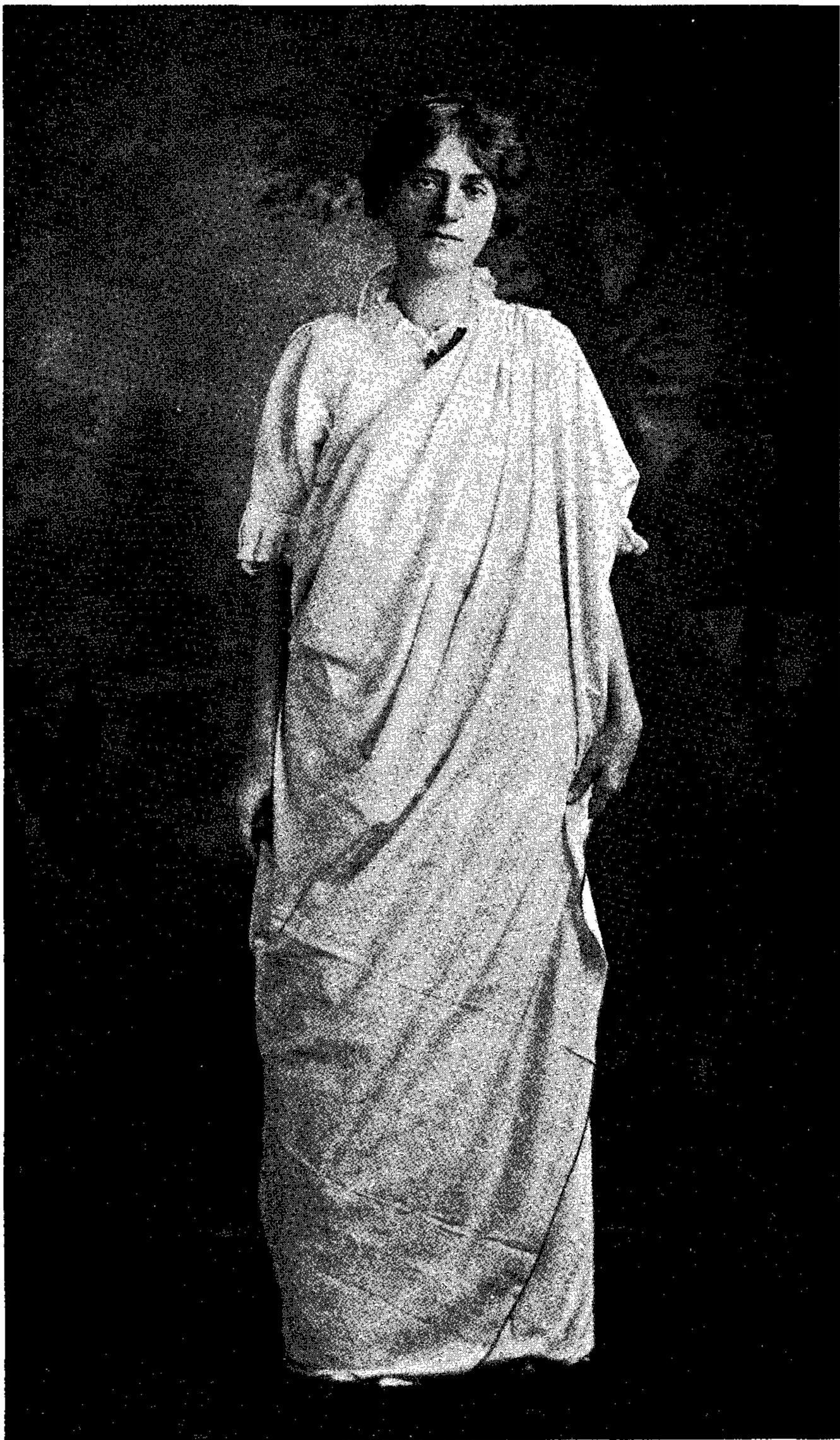
Before we had time to finish our relief work at Rohitpur, in Dacca, the cries of distress from the Kishoreganj Sub-division of the Mymensingh District have demanded immediate attention. Readers of newspapers are already aware of the nature of the atrocities committed in this part. The picture of desolation here is the same as at Rohitpur, only on a magnified scale, covering fifty villages. So far as our workers could gather, only Hindu homes were looted, Mahomedan homes being scrupulously spared. The misery entailed by this ruthless plunder—and in some cases slaughter—can be better imagined than described. Only bare houses were standing, with not a vestige of their contents left. The once flourishing bazars told the same sad tale. Everywhere poor and rich Hindus were rendered equally penniless. They were absolutely without the means of procuring their food or of cooking it and had just one piece of cloth.

Seeing this desperate condition we have started a relief centre at Mirzapur, in the Kishoreganj Sub-division, from which since the 1st of August 149 mds. 18 srs. of rice, 501 pieces of cloth and some quantity of utensils have been distributed to the extremely needy families of ten villages. It is the want of adequate funds that has prevented our taking more villages. The help must be continued for at least some weeks more, for the condition as yet is most unstable.

Our work at Rohitpur has been closed. We distributed in the last three weeks 96 mds. 28 srs. of rice, besides some quantity of cloth, utensils, tools and certain other accessories of getting a living.

We gratefully acknowledge receipt of the following amounts among others :—A friend Rs. 1,000. Messrs. Mooljee Sicka & Co., Calcutta, Rs. 1,000. A sympathiser Rs. 450. Dacca Relief Committee Rs. 200. We need substantial contributions yet to carry on the relief work in this area. We appeal with all earnestness to the generous public to help us with funds in aid of the sufferers.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses :—(1) *The President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O., Dt. Howrah.* (2) *The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Mukhtaram Babu Street, Calcutta.*



Sister Christine