

Prabuddha Bharata

MAY, 1930

Volume XXXV



Number 5

“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

DISCOURSES ON JNANA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The question why there cannot be eternal bodies is in itself illogical, as “body” is a term applied to a certain combination of elements, changeable and in its very nature impermanent. When we are not passing through changes, we will not have bodies (so-called). “Matter,” beyond the limit of time, space and causality, will not be matter at all. Time and space exist only in us, we are the One Permanent Being. All forms are transitory, that is why all religions say: “God has no form.” Menander was a Greco-Bactrian king. He was converted to Buddhism about 150 B.C. by one of the Buddhist missionary monks and was by them called “Milinda”. He asked a young monk, his teacher: “Can a perfect man (such as Buddha) be in error or make mistakes?” The young monk’s answer was: “The perfect man can remain in ignorance of minor matters not in his experience, but he can *never* be in error as to what his insight has actually realized. He is perfect here and now. He knows the whole mystery, the Essence of the Universe, but he may not know the mere external variations through

which that Essence is manifested in time and space. He knows the *clay* itself, but has not had experience of every shape it may be wrought into. The perfect man knows the Soul itself, but not every form and combination of its manifestation.” He would have to attain mere *relative* knowledge just as we do, though on account of his immense power, he would learn far more quickly. The tremendous “search-light” of a perfectly controlled mind, when thrown on any subject, would rapidly reduce it to possession. This is very important to be understood, because it saves so much foolish explanation as to how a Buddha or a Jesus could be mistaken in ordinary relative knowledge, as we well know they were. The disciples should not be blamed for having put down the sayings erroneously. It is humbug to say that one thing is true and another untrue in their statements. Accept the whole account, or reject it. How can *we* pick out the true from the false?

If a thing happens once, it can happen again. If any human being has ever realized perfection, we too can do so. If we cannot become perfect here and

now, we never can, in any state or heaven or condition we may imagine. If Jesus Christ was not perfect, then the religion bearing his name, falls to the ground. If he *was* perfect, then we too can become perfect. The perfect man does not reason or “know,” as we count “knowing”, for all our knowledge is mere comparison, and there is no comparison; no classification possible in the Absolute. Instinct is less liable to error than reason, but reason is higher and leads to intuition, which is higher still. Knowledge is the parent of intuition which, like instinct, is also unerring, but on a higher plane. There are three grades of manifestation in living beings : (1) sub-conscious—mechanical, unerring ; (2) conscious—knowing, erring ; (3) superconscious—intuitional, unerring ; and these are illustrated in an animal, man and God. For the man who has become perfect, nothing remains but to apply his understanding. He lives only to help the world, desiring nothing for himself. What distinguishes, is negative,—the positive is ever wider and wider. What we have in common is the widest of all, and that is “being”.

“Law is a mental shorthand, to explain a series of phenomena,” but law as an entity, so to speak, does not exist. We use the word to express the regular succession of certain occurrences in the phenomenal world. We must not let law become a superstition, a something inevitable, to which we must submit. Error must accompany reason, but the very struggle to conquer error makes us gods. Disease is the struggle of nature to cast out something wrong ; so sin is the struggle of the Divine in us to throw off the animal. We must “sin” (that is, make mistake) in order to rise to Godhood.

Do not pity anyone. Look upon all as your equals, cleanse yourself of the primal sin of inequality. We are all

equal and must not think : “I am good and you are bad, and I am trying to reclaim you.” Equality is the sign of the free. Jesus came to publicans and sinners and lived with them. He never set himself on a pedestal. Only sinners see sin. See not man, see only the Lord. We manufacture our own heaven and can make a heaven even in hell. Sinners are only to be found in hell, and as long as we see them around us, we are there ourselves. Spirit is not in time, nor in space. Realize “I am Existence absolute, Knowledge absolute, Bliss absolute—I am He, I am He.” Be glad at birth, be glad at death, rejoice always in the love of God. Get rid of the bondage of body ; we have become slaves to it and learnt to hug our chains and love our slavery ; so much so that we long to perpetuate it, and go on with “body,” “body” for ever. Do not cling to the idea of “body”, do not look for a future existence in any way like this one ; do not love or want the body, even of those dear to us. This life is our teacher, and dying only makes room to begin over again. Body is our schoolmaster, but to commit suicide is folly, it is only killing the “schoolmaster”. Another will take his place. So until we have learnt to transcend the body, we must have it, and losing one, will get another. Still, we must not identify ourselves with the body, but look upon it only as an instrument to use, in reaching perfection. Sri Ramakrishna summed up his philosophy in these words : “When I identify myself with the body, O Lord, I am Thy creature, eternally separate from Thee. When I identify myself with the soul, I am a spark of that Divine Fire which Thou art. But when I identify myself with the Atman, I and Thou art one !” Therefore the Jnâni strives to realize the Self and nothing else.

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA TO SISTER CHRISTINE

THE MATH, BELUR

July 6, 1901.

Things come to me by fits—to-day I am in a fit of writing. The first thing to do is, therefore, to pen a few lines to you. I am known to be nervous, I worry much; but it seems, dear Christine, you are not far behind in that trick. One of our poets says: "Even the mountains will fly, the fire will be cold, yet the heart of the great will never change." I am small, very, but I know you are great, and my faith is always in your true heart. *I worry about everything except you.* I have dedicated you to the Mother. She is your shield, your guide. No harm can reach you—nothing hold you down a minute, I know it.

Ever yours in the Lord,
VIVEKANANDA

A BRINJAL-SELLER APPRAISES A DIAMOND

BY THE EDITOR

I

Sri Ramakrishna often used to tell the following parable:

A rich man once sent his servant with a diamond to have it appraised at the market. He first sent him to a brinjal-seller. The brinjal-seller, when he saw the diamond, said: "Well, it is a fine piece of glass. I can offer nine seers of brinjals in exchange for it." The servant asked him to offer a higher price. But the man was inexorable. He said: "I have already quoted the highest price. I cannot offer a single fruit more." The servant next went to a cloth merchant who offered nine yards of cloth for the diamond. Thus the diamond was taken round the whole market and everyman gave his quotation according to his understanding. Lastly he took the diamond to a jeweller who at once offered for it a hundred thousand rupees.

The meaning of the parable is obvious.

Lately we met an astute "brinjal-seller" in the pages of *The Modern*

Review. He came across a "diamond" and has evaluated it at only "nine seers of brinjals". The gentleman in question is Mr. Mahesh Chandra Ghosh. The "diamond" is Sri Ramakrishna. In the February number of *The Modern Review*, he has attempted an estimation of the personality and teachings of the great Master in course of a review of the two volumes of *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* by M., and his conclusions literally bear out the truth of the Master's parable. He began very nicely, and we almost thought that he was a shrewd "jeweller," and would offer an adequate price for the "diamond." But very soon he belied our hopes and declared that he would not pay a single "brinjal" more than "nine seers."

Our readers, that is to say, those of them who have not read the original article of Mr. Ghosh, may be interested to know his conclusions about Sri Ramakrishna. These are as follows: "He was a simple child of nature: indeed there was 'no guile' in him—he

was all innocence. He was a 'god-intoxicated' man. He was an incarnation of the spirit of Chaitanya. His ecstatic devotion (*Bhakti*) was alone sufficient to attract devotees to his side or to his feet. He was a selfless man; his path was the 'Path of Renunciation'. He was above all types of sectarianism. His catholicity and universal toleration endeared him to all who came in contact with him." But, Sri Ramakrishna's worship and realisation of Kali was a self-delusion. His visions were self-projected hallucinations. His *Samâdhi* was not really union with God, but merely a concentration of mind. His idea of *Nâma-japa* was mistaken; in fact, his repetition of the name of Kali did not produce any spiritual condition, but only a vacuity of mind. His understanding and criticism of Brahmoworship were wrong. He was no Divine Incarnation. And he made no disciples.

One wonders what remains of the greatness of Sri Ramakrishna after these qualifying clauses. Surely his *Samâdhi*, God-visions, *Shâkta* realisations, etc., were some of the essential elements of his spiritual greatness. If we eliminate them, Sri Ramakrishna becomes empty and inane. What kind of God-intoxication or *Bhakti* is that which has not culminated in mystic realisations? Mr. Ghosh denies the essence to Sri Ramakrishna and praises the shell. But let us take the points raised by him one by one and see how far they can stand examination.

II

He begins with the *Shakti*-worship of Sri Ramakrishna. He quotes a few passages from *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* in which Sri Ramakrishna speaks of *Shakti*, and says that they are inconsistent. One who is not versed in the *Shakti*-cult and its philosophy, may be excused if he fails to appreciate the underlying unity of the different conceptions of *Shakti* as ex-

pressed in Sri Ramakrishna's different utterances. But he can never be forgiven bad logic, if he claims to be a critic. The writer admits that Sri Ramakrishna sometimes considers *Shakti* as identical with the Absolute, though at other times he appears to distinguish the one from the other. From this Mr. Ghosh concludes: (The meaning of *Shakti-worship* is now clear. *Shakti* is at the root of all evils; she is an object of terror." This is strange logic. Mr. Ghosh quotes Sri Ramakrishna as saying that *Shakti* has two aspects: *Vidyâ* and *Avidyâ*, and that it is identical with *Brahman* noumenally and phenomenally. How does Mr. Ghosh's strange conclusion follow from this? Sri Ramakrishna described *Shakti* in many different aspects, and in this he did nothing original. The whole *Shakti* cult does so. And if Mr. Ghosh wants to know the explanation of those descriptions, he must study the *Tantra* literature. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* is not a treatise on *Shakti-worship*, but a record of certain conversations, that is all; and conversations do not necessarily give philosophical delineations of subjects dwelt upon. It is all a matter of chance. What wonder if Mr. Ghosh does not find a philosophical treatment of the *Shakti* cult in the *Gospel* (supposing that it is not there)?

The strange logic of Mr. Ghosh may appear astounding to those who have been wont to consider him a scholar. But its explanation is not far to seek. This wonderful inference was necessary for substantiating the *dénouement*. He continues: "Gradually Paramahansa succeeded in getting rid of the influence of *Shakti*, and his attitude towards her became defiant and abusive." Such a categorical statement, when it was against *all* current knowledge about Sri Ramakrishna, would certainly require very strong evidence to support it. But Mr. Ghosh has nothing more than a quotation from a Bengali book written by one Trailokya Nath Deb who reports Sri Ramakrishna

as saying: "For a long time that *shâli* (sister-in-law—meaning Kali) led me astray and did not show me the right path. I do not therefore see her face." The evidence of the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna who were with him for years and to the last moment, is all false! Sri Ramakrishna's realisations of the Divine Mother before he met that wonderful witness of Mr. Ghosh were all illusion! The teachings about *Shakti* that he imparted to his disciples who practised accordingly and realised the Mother, were all wrong and false! The evidence of other Brahmos is also false! A certain obscure writer is alone true! Only a strong prejudice can produce such a line of reasoning.

Here is Mr. Ghosh's conclusion: "If we understand his interpretation of *Shakti* and the object of *Shakti*-worship, we shall not be surprised at this attitude of his towards *Shakti*. He saw no utility in *Shakti*-worship." How erroneous this conclusion is, and how unreliable his authority—the above-mentioned Trailokya Nath Deb—would be clear from the following. Mr. Ghosh himself says regarding M.'s *Gospel*: We cannot vouch for the historical accuracy of *all* the facts, but we believe that *most* of the sayings of the saint are correctly recorded in the book." We shall, therefore, give a few references from M.'s *Gospel* in proof of our statement. The incident recorded in Trailokya Nath Deb's book is mentioned by him to have taken place at Dakshineswar. But there are many devotional and respectful references to Kali in the conversations recorded of the days *after* he finally left Dakshineswar. Space forbids us to reproduce the relevant passages here. We can only give references to the Bengali edition of the *Gospel*—*Sri Sri Râmakrishna-Kathâmrita*. See 1st Vol., (10th edition), pp. 258, 279, 283, 293; 3rd Vol., (2nd edition), pp. 235, 236, 260-267; and 4th Vol., (2nd edition), pp. 304, 324, 325. Of these we would like to draw the special attention of Mr. Ghosh to the last reference of the 3rd

Vol. It is a description of the celebration of the annual festival of Kali while Sri Ramakrishna was staying at Shyampukur. The Master had asked M. to buy two books of *Shâkta* songs by Ramprasad and Kamalakanta, two famous Bengali saints of Kali, in order to present them to Dr. Mahendra Lal Sircar. He also asked him to arrange for the worship of Kali at night. How the worship was celebrated and what a wonderful experience came to the devotees that night, are all described in detail in *Sri Sri Râmakrishna-Kathâmrita*. We may also refer him to *Sri Sri Râmakrishna-Lilâ-prasanga* by Swami Saradananda, another direct disciple of the Master and an eye-witness of the events. [See *Divyabhâva*, (1st edition), pp. 336-340]. We may give another reference from Swami Saradananda's book. The incident mentioned there also occurred after Sri Ramakrishna's departure from Dakshineswar. Swami Saradananda was an eye-witness of the incident. [See pp. 159-164 of *Sâdhakabhâva*, (2nd edition)]: It was the occasion of the *Durgâ Pujâ*. Surendra Nath Mitra, a disciple of the Master, was worshipping the Divine Mother at his own house. Surendra was sad at heart that the Master, being ill, would not be able to attend in person. It was the second day of the worship. In the evening many people, including Narendra and Dr. Sircar, were assembled in the room of Sri Ramakrishna. The music of Narendra created a divine atmosphere in the room, and everybody was caught in its influence. The Master repeatedly fell into trances and in the intervals exchanged one or two words with the doctor. The clock struck half past seven, and the most auspicious moment of the day—the *Sandhi*, as it is called—arrived. The doctor was about to take his leave and Sri Ramakrishna also stood up to bid him good-bye. Suddenly the Master fell into deep *Samâdhi*. The devotees began to whisper that it was due to the special sanctity of the hour. The doctor took his seat again to see what

would happen next. About half an hour after, Sri Ramakrishna returned to his normal consciousness and related to his devotees what he had just experienced. He said: "I saw that a luminous path opened up between this place and Surendra's house. I found that through Surendra's devotion the Mother was manifest in the image—Her third eye shooting forth a divine light. The usual series of lamps were burning in front. And Surendra was weeping bitterly before the Mother, sitting in the courtyard. You had better go there. He will be comforted to see you." Accordingly, Narendra and the other devotees went to Surendra's house and learnt upon inquiry that everything the Master had said was true. The coincidence filled them with joy and surprise.

We shall also refer Mr. Ghosh to pp. 80-81 of *Gurubhāva*, 1st Vol. (2nd edition), containing a description of his prayer to Divine Mother for a slight relief of his throat-trouble and the reply he received from Her. The incident took place at Cossipore long after he had left Dakshineswar.

We do not know if these evidences would recommend themselves to Mr. Ghosh. But only a prejudiced mind can refuse them in favour of an obscure statement. Of course it is unnecessary to explain Sri Ramakrishna's alleged application of the epithet *shāli* to Mother Kali,—for when the whole report appears to be unauthenticated, a part of it does not require special examination until corroborative evidence in its favour is available.

III

The world has all along thought that Sri Ramakrishna realised the Truth at the first instance through *Shakti*-worship. Mr. Ghosh has disabused it of this idea. The world also believes that he used to have constant *Samādhi* in which he used to be united with God. Let us see what Mr. Ghosh has got to say about Sri Ramakrishna's *Samādhi*.

At the outset he learnedly opines: "Ordinary men are under the impression that *Samādhi* means 'union with God'. That is not the fact. Even in non-theistic systems, there is *Samādhi*. It is simply 'deep concentration of the mind'. In lower forms of *Samādhi* there are thought processes but in higher stages, *Samādhi* becomes non-cognitive or ultra-cognitive." He makes a distinction between "concentration of mind" and "union with God," as if union with God is quite different from *all* kinds of mental concentration. Anyone who knows anything of spiritual practice, knows that the more the mind is concentrated, the more the higher states of consciousness emerge and union with God is nothing but the realisation of the highest states of consciousness. Yet why did Mr. Ghosh make a distinction between mental concentration and union with God? Was it to imply that Sri Ramakrishna's *Samādhi* was not really union with God?

Mr. Ghosh makes another mistake. He says that Sri Ramakrishna was a *Bhakta*. No, he was also a *Jnāni*. He trained Narendra (Swami Vivekananda) in the path of *Jnāna*. Narendra himself said so. And how could he teach *Jnāna* unless he was a *Jnāni* himself? The reason why he did not like to lose himself in *Samādhi*, was that he wanted to fulfil his mission among men, which would not have been possible if he had not dwelt on the plane of normal consciousness. Sri Ramakrishna himself explained it so. Mr. Ghosh writes: "It is said that one day he plunged in *Bhāva* and said—'Om! Om! Om! Mother what is this I am saying! O Mother, do not plunge me in the knowledge of Brahman and take away my consciousness! Do not give me Brahma-jnana, I am but thy child. I have fears and anxieties! I do want my Mother! A thousand salutations to Brahma-jnana! Give it to him who wants it, O Mother! Anandamayee! O Mother Blissful!'" From this he concludes: "Ramkrishna never liked to

lose self-consciousness in *Samâdhi*, the very idea terrified him." A man who remained for six long months in *Nirvikalpa Samâdhi*, afraid of it! We have reasons to believe that Mr. Ghosh has studied the volumes of Swami Saradananda on Sri Ramakrishna. Why did he ignore the luminous passage in page 63 of *Gurubhâva*, 1st vol., (2nd edition)? Sri Ramakrishna himself explained his attitude towards *Nirvikalpa Samâdhi* to his disciples. Writes Swami Saradananda: "The Master himself has said to us many times: 'The natural tendency of my mind is upwards (towards *Nirvikalpa Samâdhi*). When once it is plunged in *Samâdhi*, it does not want to come down. I bring it down forcibly for your sakes. And as I do not have the power to come down unless I take hold of some lower desires, I raise such little desires in the mind as 'I shall smoke,' 'I shall drink water,' 'I shall take soup,' 'I shall see so and so,' 'I shall talk,' etc. and repeat them again and again in the mind, and thus does the mind come down (to the body). Sometimes while coming down, it soars directly high up again, and I have again to lure it downwards by means of such desires.' " It will be clear from this why Sri Ramakrishna did not like to soar into *Nirvikalpa Samâdhi*.

Mr. Ghosh next deals with Sri Ramakrishna's visions. He finds them of doubtful value. He cites some instances of his visions and gives the opinions of believers, sceptics, psychologists, logicians, *Vedântic* monists, and modern mystics about such visions. He concedes that some of his visions may be true. But generally speaking, he considers them illusory. Two main arguments seem to have been put forward in support: the psychologist's and the logician's views. We have little to say about them. But what strikes us is that all over the world whoever experience such visions, consider them to be true, while those who do not themselves experience them, sit in judgment and declare them to be

false. We wonder if Mr. Ghosh ever saw such a vision. If he had, he would have known better than citing glibly the so-called psychologists and logicians. People like Mr. Ghosh have always their explanations of experiences which they are never privileged to have. It may be that visions are projections of thoughts. But what kind of thought? And do we consider what that implies? Is not the world of our normal experience equally the projection of our mind? Does that take away from its reality? The real test of the truth of a vision is the *sense of reality* that accompanies it, and the *condition* of the mind that experiences it. The test is absolutely an inner one. No impertinent intellectual has any power to judge it from the outside. He alone knows who experiences. A sense of intense reality and heightening of consciousness accompany a true vision. One feels uplifted high above his normal level, a divine joy often fills his heart, and the effect of these become more or less lasting in his life. We ordinary men can judge the visions only indirectly: if he is a man of pure and unselfish character, if he can lift us up spiritually, if he radiates an atmosphere of intense power and holiness, we know he is a true man, his vision cannot be false. For it has been found that such a state is realised by a person only when he is above all *rajas*, and full of *sattva*, and it is well-known that *sattva* never causes error. Mr. Ghosh frightens us by citing modern psychologists, sceptics, modern mystics, etc., as if they are all *proved* authorities on the point at discussion. Even Mr. Ghosh knows that they are not such.

His logical argument is indeed a nice one: A must be observed to have become B! He says: "God who is supposed to appear as something material, is not known and can never be an object of observation." First of all, nobody says that God becomes something *material*. Secondly, it is wrong to suppose that God is unknown. It is not that in God-vision, form comes

first to be judged logically whether its substance is Divine or not. Both the Divine consciousness and the awareness of form blend into one single experience. Awareness of God, whether He is considered to have form or not, is an inner experience. If that experience comes to one associated with a particular form, one knows that that form is Divine. The point to be considered is not form or formlessness, but the actual inner certitude of God-awareness. No syllogism can test it. It is absolutely subjective. Saints and sages in India and elsewhere have declared again and again that the state of Divine consciousness may be realised even in conjunction with certain forms. Mr. Ghosh is well-versed in Indian philosophy and religious literature. Does he not remember that intellect is insufficient to gauge the secrets of those ethereal heights? Elsewhere he declares that the Brahmo ideal is to realise the Noumenon in phenomena. Quite a nice aspiration. But how is that possible, if God cannot be realised in forms? Phenomena also, we think, are forms. But perhaps if we see God in sun, stars, moon, flowers, wife, or child, that is correct God-vision; but if we see Him in the forms of Kali, Vishnu or Krishna, that is all wrong! Does our critic suppose that all forms are contained in the world of senses and that there are no forms beyond it?

He refers to Sri Ramakrishna's use of a vulgar word (*shâlâ* lit. brother-in-law, a term of abuse or familiarity) after a divine vision and to his anger with a certain person who caused him some worry, and considers them proof enough of the vision being of a low order. Mr. Ghosh must acquire more experience before he can judge these things. He must associate with persons who have truly realised God and observe their behaviour with a pure, unbiased mind. Then only would he know how a man of God-realisation behaves. Such anger and use of (from the common standpoint) vulgar language as Sri Ramakrishna's, are possible even after

a high realisation. It is stupid to think that for Sri Ramakrishna the word *shâlâ* had any vulgar association, or that anger with him was real anger. Mr. Ghosh forgets here what he himself said of Sri Ramakrishna in the beginning, that "He was a simple child of nature: indeed there was 'no guile' in him—he was all innocence." Some of our countrymen have developed an excessive puritanism in speech, we know. But that puritanism should not be made the standard of judging all men and things.

The vision in question is this: Hazrah, a devotee who lived at the Dakshineswar Temple, accused Sri Ramakrishna of too much attachment to his boy-disciples. This made Sri Ramakrishna anxious and he prayed to the Divine Mother. And as he prayed he saw a vision,—She Herself had become men and She manifested Herself most clearly in a pure soul. When he came down a little from the *Samâdhi*, he felt much annoyed with Hazrah. He said: "The fellow (*shâlâ*) made me miserable!" But then he thought: "How can I blame the poor man? How is he to know?" Mr. Ghosh thus remarks on the vision: "The vision which he saw is *certainly* a vision created by desire for and attachment to earthly companions." (Note the word italicised by us).

But we shall present Mr. Ghosh with two little incidents from the Master's life which would confound even his omniscience. Mr. Ghosh has said: "The *Samâdhi*, returning from which a man can be angry and can use such abusive language as *shâlâ* is a *Samâdhi* of a low order." Very good. But if one's anger is at once followed by *Samâdhi*, what will Mr. Ghosh think of that anger? What kind of anger is that which causes one to soar up to God-consciousness? Let us narrate the incident. Its authority is the nephew of Sri Ramakrishna who is still living at Dakshineswar. To quote his words: "At about 9 or 10 in the morning, after the Master had finished his talks with

the devotees, I would rub oil on his body, and only with his special permission, put oil on his head. One day, I had put my hand on his head in order to smear his hair with oil, without asking his permission. He got very angry and went to strike me and at once plunged into *Samâdhi*. I was struck dumb with wonder, and my heart began to quake with fear. A long time after he heaved a deep sigh and came down to consciousness. He then said: 'Do not put your hand on my head in this way. There is no knowing in what spiritual condition I may be in. Ask for permission before you touch my head.' " How does Mr. Ghosh estimate this strange kind of anger?

The other incident is yet more illuminating. For it refers to the same accusation of Hazra about his attachment to his boy-disciples. This time he answered it in a very startling fashion: One day Hazra took the Master to task, saying: "Why do you think so much of Narendra and Rakhal? Why do you not dwell constantly in God?" "See how I dwell in Him," said Sri Ramakrishna and at once plunged into *Samâdhi*. His beard and hair on the head and the body stood on end, and he remained in this state for an hour. Ramlal, Sri Ramakrishna's nephew, recited the names of God in his ears and gradually brought him down to the normal state. Then Sri Ramakrishna said to Ramlal: "Did you see what is meant by dwelling in God? That is why I keep my mind down by thinking of and loving Narendra, Rakhal and others. I look upon them as veritable *Nârâyanas*." Ramlal said: "It is best you live in your own way."

Does not Mr. Ghosh think that he should make a more sparing use of the word "certainly"?

IV

Mr. Ghosh's next consideration is Sri Ramakrishna's relations with the Brahma Samaj. He first tries to show that the Brahma Samaj did not borrow the idea of worshipping God as Mother

from Sri Ramakrishna and quotes a few references in proof. These references may be correct. But we must say that the occasions on which Brahmos addressed God as Mother in the days before they knew Sri Ramakrishna, were very few and casual, and the Brahma Samaj as a whole did not worship God in those days as Mother. But a remarkable change came over it after Keshab's intimacy with Sri Ramakrishna. Under the circumstances it is only casuistry to say that the Brahma Samaj did not borrow it from Sri Ramakrishna. We have dealt with this point in details in a Note in December, 1929.

Mr. Ghosh then dwells on the sense of sin of some of the Brahmos. And he remarks: "Too much thinking of one's own weakness paralyses one's power of resistance. This may be well exemplified by incidents from the life of Ramkrishna himself. He would continually think and speak of the danger of *Kamini-Kanchana* (women and gold, i.e., money). We firmly believe that he was above these temptations. But his continual thinking on the subject made him extremely nervous and produced in him a sense of imaginary danger. He could not touch metallic pots or plates; contact with them gave him a shock and pain in the hand, as if he were stung with a poisonous fang. Whatever might be the explanation given by Ramkrishna himself or his followers, the psychological explanation is that subconsciously he felt himself insecure and in constant danger of succumbing to their evil influence. *Kamini-Kanchana* became his nightmare and 'daymare'. The continual harping on the temptations created a false atmosphere of insecurity. The following is another example. An old maid-servant of the temple of Dakshineswar once saluted him by touching his feet. At once he stood up, uttering 'Govinda', 'Govinda', startled and tortured as it were by a scorpion-sting and hurried up panting to where a jar of Ganges water stood in a corner and washed those parts of the feet which

the maid-servant had touched. In mute wonder the devotees witnessed that strange happening and the maid-servant sat deeply mortified. Here also the explanation is the same as before. It is a typical case of self-created neurosis." Sri Ramakrishna did not understand himself, nor did his disciples who lived with him for years and studied him closely. But Mr. Ghosh who presumably never saw him and whose only knowledge of him is based on a biased study of a few books, has understood him! Psychology is very handy to him. But even psychologising must take all facts into account. In passing a categorical judgment he forgets to take the following facts into consideration :

(1) Sri Ramakrishna himself had no fear of danger from any woman for he saw the Divine Mother even in prostitutes. Says Swami Vivekananda in his *My Master* : "I myself have seen this man standing before those women whom society would not touch, and falling at their feet bathed in tears, saying : 'Mother, in one form Thou art in the street, and in another form Thou art the Universe. I salute Thee, Mother, I salute Thee.' Think of the blessedness of that life from which all carnality has vanished, which can look upon every woman with that love and reverence, when every woman's face becomes transfigured, and only the face of the Divine Mother, the Blissful One, the Protectress of the human race, shines upon it!" We shall quote another instance on the authority of Swami Premananda, one of the prominent monastic disciples of the Master. He said : "One day the ladies of Balaram Babu's family were sitting before the Master in his room, when a prostitute named Ramani passed along a road close by. The Master called out to her and asked : 'Why don't you come nowadays?' The ladies were scandalised to hear the Master talking with a prostitute. Shortly after, the Master took them to visit the shrines. When they reached the Kali temple,

the Master addressed the Mother saying : 'Mother, Thou indeed hast become the prostitute Ramani! Thou hast become both the prostitute and the chaste woman!' The ladies understood that they were wrong in hating Ramani, that the Master spoke with her knowing her to be the Mother Herself, and that they had nothing to be unusually proud of their chastity, for it was all due to Her will. The prostitute Ramani has now become a great devotee and sheds tears in remembrance of the Master." In the *Gospel*, 2nd vol., (1st edition), p. 58, the following conversation occurs between the Master and a devotee. It gives the Master's own explanation of his attitude towards women?

"A Devotee : Sir, should we then hate women?"

Sri R : He who has seen God, does not see woman with a different eye that he will fear her. He sees clearly that women are so many parts of Brahma-mayee, and so he worships them as Mother Herself!"

(2) He used to talk long and mix intimately with the lady devotees. Numerous instances of this can be quoted. We shall quote here one only. This is taken from Swami Saradananda's *Lilâ-Prasanga*. The Swami quotes a lady disciple of the Master as saying : "Now all say that he did not allow any woman to touch or approach him. When we hear this, we laugh and think that we are not yet dead. Who can know how kind he was? He had the same attitude towards men and women. But he could not long endure the society of women. If they stayed long with him he would ask them to go to visit the temples. We have heard him tell the same thing also to men." Mr. Ghosh is, we know, omniscient. He knows that in Sri Ramakrishna's subconscious mind he felt insecure. But why then did he thus allow women devotees to come to him? Why did he often go to the inner apartments of many devoted families of Calcutta and mix freely with the ladies?

(3) He slept for many months in the same bed with his wife without feeling the least nervous or being the least affected in the mind thereby.

(4) The touch of every woman did not cause him pain in the way cited in the example mentioned by Mr. Ghosh. Only impure characters used to produce it.

If Mr. Ghosh's explanation be correct, how can we explain the above facts? It is clear that he had no sense of danger from women, conscious or subconscious, for he saw in every woman, good or bad, only the Divine Mother. We cannot say that he developed a sort of automatic habit in his attitude towards women. For when he wished, he could sleep in the same bed with his wife. How then can we call it neurosis? He did not feel any pain when touched by a pure woman. On the other hand, if an impure man also touched him, he felt the same excruciating pain. We may mention here one relevant incident of Sri Ramakrishna's life, as narrated by Swami Saradananda in *Gurubhâva*, 1st vol., (2nd edition), pp. 11-12. On one occasion a man suffering from white leprosy approached the Master with the prayer that he pass his hand over the diseased parts, by which he hoped he would be cured of his disease. The Master took pity on the man and said: "I do not know anything about this. But since you ask me, I shall pass my hand over them. The disease will be cured if Mother so wills." And he did so. But as a result he had such terrible pain throughout the day in his hand that he prayed to the Divine Mother that he would never again act in that way. The Master said afterwards: "The man was cured, but this (*i.e.*, his own) body underwent his suffering." Here is another instance on the authority of Swami Brahmananda, a prominent direct disciple of the Master, who lived long with him at Dakshineswar: "One day the son of a public woman came to Dakshineswar. The Master was sleeping in his room. The

man entered and touched his feet. The Master at once started up, as if some one had thrown fire on him. He said: "Tell me frankly all the sins that you have committed. If you cannot, go to the Ganges and speak them out loudly. You will be freed from them." But the man was ill-fated, he could not." Evidently then, our critic's conclusion that it was neurosis, arising out of a subconscious sense of insecurity, is wrong. The cause must be sought elsewhere. Why he warned male devotees against women and gold and women devotees against men and gold, is a different question altogether. He himself gave his reasons clearly. Mr. Ghosh may accept his views or may not. But to describe Sri Ramakrishna's own attitude towards *Kâmini-Kâncana* as neurosis, is the height of complacent ignorance.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say that the essence of spiritual practice was "to make the mind and mouth one," *i.e.*, one must practise by thought, word and deed whatever one considered to be right. We know how our actions and professions differ. Sri Ramakrishna was not of our kind. Whatever he thought wrong, he gave up instantly and completely and for ever. And this renunciation was so perfect that not only his conscious mind, but his subconscious mind, nervous system, muscles, all responded to it. And this is what it should be. If the mind and body are our instruments, as our philosophies and the sages have often told us, they must be fully obedient to our wishes. That they are not so in our case, is proof that our mind and body are beyond our control and we are weak. In Sri Ramakrishna's case they were completely at his service. From this the ordinary man would infer that they should respond only to so-called voluntary or conscious thoughts. This is a great mistake. *Our* ego is related to the conscious mind only. Not so the ego of men like Sri Ramakrishna. We are in our present condition only our lower self. But Sri Ramakrishna and

men like him are both the lower and the higher selves and more the latter. Thus if his lower self ever acted in a way which was against the wish of the higher self, his mind and body at once responded to the latter's wish and obstructed the action. Here the action was not involuntary, but it was controlled by the will of the higher self. Our lower self presides over only an infinitesimal part of our mental and physical system. But the higher self over the whole. Thus it happened sometimes that when the lower self of Sri Ramakrishna wanted to act in a certain way, his mind and body resisted it. This higher self is nothing different from God, and is omniscient and omnipotent.

We shall cite a few illustrations :

(1) When his mother died, he wanted to make oblations of water (*Tarpana*) to his deceased mother. But as soon as he tried to do this, his fingers became stiff and parted so that all water dropped out of his palms. He tried several times but with the same result. Later on he learnt that according to the scriptures in a certain stage of spiritual development, a man cannot perform these ceremonial actions. Besides he was a *Sannyâsin* and thus precluded from performing any rites.

(2) Says Swami Vivekananda in *My Master* : "He threw away all the little property he had, and took a vow that he would never touch money, and this one idea, 'I will not touch money,' became a part of him. It may appear to be something occult, but even in after-life, when he was sleeping, if I touched him with a piece of money his hand would become bent, and his whole body would become, as it were, paralysed." To give a specific incident : One day when the Master was absent in Calcutta, Narendra came to Dakshineswar. Finding there was no one in his room, a desire arose in his mind to test the Master's renunciation of wealth. He took out a rupee from his pocket and secreted it under his bed. He then went to the Panchavati for meditation.

After a while Sri Ramakrishna returned. He proceeded to the bed, but as soon as he touched it he started back in great pain. Wondering, he was looking round, when Narendra came in and watched his plight silently. An attendant hastened to examine the bed, which disclosed the presence of a rupee. Both the attendant and the Master were surprised. Narendra silently walked out of the room.

(3) The Master often suffered from stomach trouble. One day when he went on a visit to S. Sambhu Charan Mallick who lived in a garden-house close by, the latter advised him to take a little opium to cure his disease and asked him to take some from him that day when he returned to the Temple. But at the time of departure Sri Ramakrishna forgot it and did not remember it till he was well on his way. He returned to Mallick's house, but found that Sambhu Mallick had gone to the inner apartments. He did not send for him, but took the opium from one of his officers and started towards the Temple. But as soon as he came on the public road, he felt confused, he could not see his way and some force seemed to pull his legs towards the ditch by the road. Thinking that he might have lost his way, he looked back towards Mallick's garden, the road thereto was clearly visible. He returned to the garden-gate and again proceeded carefully towards the Temple. But before he had proceeded a few steps, he again lost his way and he felt his legs again being pulled towards the ditch. Then suddenly Sri Ramakrishna remembered that Sambhu had asked him to take opium from himself. His taking it from an officer was, therefore, a false action and theft. He hastened back to Sambhu's house, and finding that the officer was also gone, he threw the packet of opium through a window into a room, crying that he had left it there and turned back towards the Temple. This time he saw his way quite clear. (This is on Swami Saradananda's authority).

(4) Here is another incident on the authority of Swami Premananda: "Seeing that the Master liked lemon much, Yogin (Swami Yogananda) used to bring him a lemon every day. One day the Master said to him: 'Wherefrom did you get the lemon yesterday? I could not take it.' Yogin knew that the Master could not eat things brought from low and impure persons. But he had brought the lemon from the same plant from which he had brought the other lemons. Why was it, then, that the Master could not take it? Yogin felt much perturbed and began to search for the cause. After a careful enquiry he came to know that the orchard from which he used to bring the fruits, had changed hands on the day previous to the incident,—the lease had expired. Yogin received permission to get the fruits from the former lessee. On that particular day, therefore, that permission did not avail, and it was really a theft, though unconscious."

(5) One day Sri Ramakrishna went to the house of a gentleman in Calcutta and there asked for a drink of water. But when the glass of water was brought, he could not take it. Swami Vivekananda who was with him, carefully examined the water,—it was very pure and the glass also was clean. He was mystified. He knew that Sri Ramakrishna could not take anything touched by an impure person. He privately enquired who had touched the water. He came to learn that the master of the house had touched it while it was being taken to the Master, (though the Master himself had not seen it) and he was a licentious character.

(6) One day when Sri Ramakrishna was in *Samâdhi* and appeared to be falling down, a disciple who was near by, came to hold him. But no sooner had he touched him than Sri Ramakrishna gave out a yell of excruciating pain. The disciple felt that his contact had caused the Master to cry out in that way and he at once took off his hands. The disciple was one of the most favourite of the Master and he had

been often declared by him to be of very pure character. When enquiry began for the reason of this incident, it was found that the disciple had an unhealed wound due to an operation on his head. That was why his touch had caused the Master so much pain. For it is said in the scriptures that no one with sores on his body can touch a sacred image, and the Master's body in *Samâdhi* was certainly as filled with the living presence of God as any sacred image. The disciple had touched the Master in his normal mood without any untoward effect. But in *Samâdhi*, it produced a different effect. Thenceforth the disciple never touched the Master while he was in a supernatural state, until his wound was completely cured.

The Master also said: "I am sometimes in a condition in which I cannot touch anyone. If any of them (*pointing to the disciples*) then touches me, I cry out in pain." And again: "There is another ecstatic mood, in which I can touch only Baburam. If he then holds me, I do not feel any pain. . . ."

In the above instances, there is no question of constant thinking of possible dangers. He simply did not know that there were any causes for danger in these. And yet his mental and physical system reacted. How does Mr. Ghosh's theory of self-created neurosis explain it? Psychologically (Mr. Ghosh must excuse us for encroaching upon his special domain), Sri Ramakrishna's reaction in the instances quoted by him and his reaction in the instances quoted above, is the same. We must, therefore, find one single reason to explain both these sets of cases. Mr. Ghosh's explanation fails. Let him now judge if Sri Ramakrishna's own explanation or that of his disciples is correct or not.

Mr. Ghosh learnedly proclaims that "when a normal saint sees a woman, he sees a human creature." But can a human being be *perceived* without its sex? A human being must be per-

ceived as either man or woman. A human being may exist in the region of concepts, but not of percepts. We have to perceive a human being either as beyond humanity, *i.e.*, as spirit or

Divinity or as man or woman. There is no 'middle path'. We are curious to know who that normal saint of Mr. Ghosh is who sees only human being and not man or woman.

(To be concluded)

THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

OCTOBER 9, 1919.

It was 8 p.m. Swami Turiyananda was reclining in an easy chair in the veranda of his room in the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Benares. A Brahmachâri was fanning him. The hard austerities practised for years had broken the Swami's health, and diabetes had completed the breakdown. So he had to come to Benares for a change.

The disciple came with C., who after saluting the Swami enquired about his health.

Swami: "At present I am doing pretty well. Just after my coming here, I had two successive attacks of influenza, which weakened me much. Fortunately Doctor S. who treated me in Calcutta happened to be at Benares on business. On seeing me he remarked that the change at Benares might not prove effective. At that time the symptoms of my old asthma were also evident."

Disciple: "You look better than on the *Astami Pujâ* day when I saw you last. I think it is better that the effect of change is gradual rather than immediate. When Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda) went to Deoghar he improved much in the beginning. But the improvement did not last."

Swami: "Yes. Perhaps it was wrong to bring him down to Calcutta. He had an attack of influenza on the way attended with double pneumonia. On his arrival at Calcutta, Sarat Maharaj (Swami Saradananda) remarked: 'He is done for.' He did not die of his previous illness."

C: "You well know, Maharaj, that we are engrossed with the world. Pray tell us how we can reach Him."

Swami: "There is no fixed means of attaining God. Sri Ramakrishna used to say: 'A man can be truly sincere by virtue of merits acquired in many past lives.' Swamiji nicely said: 'God is not a commodity like fish or vegetable to be had for a certain price.' The sages have stated in the *Shâstras* the several paths by which they reached God. One has stated that one should perform *pujâ* in such and such a way. Another that one should practise *japa*. And so on. Narada says: 'Just as the river flows intently towards the sea in order to meet it, without deviating its course to any other direction, even so he who seeks God should move towards Him and Him alone giving up all other concerns.' It is said in the *Gîtâ*: 'Persons who, meditating on Me as non-separate, worship Me in all beings, to them thus steadfast wholly and constantly, I carry what they lack and preserve what they already have.'

"There are two forms of *Bhakti* (devotion): Firstly, the ritualistic or obligatory devotion, such as, one should practise so much *japa* or one should perform *pujâ* in such and such a way. Then there is the loving devotion. At this stage the devotee thinks ardently of God. He finds no pleasure in things unrelated to God. Above all perseverance is necessary. It will not do to discontinue practice if a little effort does not produce the desired effect. It is said that a man practised so intensely that an ant-hill grew upon him."

C: "Maharaj, what does *japa* actually mean?"

Swami: "It means that one should utter His name and at the same time meditate on His form, think of Him

and love Him. If the mind is attached to worldly things, what will the mere repetition of God's name do? What is essentially wanted is that we must anyhow make Him our own."

Disciple: "Just as Sri Ramakrishna has said: 'You should somehow meet the master of the house, either by fighting with the gate-keeper or by climbing the wall.'"

C: "What about those who think: 'I have seen the Master (Sri Ramakrishna) or the Holy Mother, I need not undergo any spiritual practice?'"

Swami: "How can I say anything about them? They best know their affairs."

Disciple: "Perhaps C. means that there are some who believe that since the Holy Mother has taken their entire responsibility, they need not make any effort themselves. They say that since she is holding them by the hand, they can do whatever they like with the other hand,—their salvation is assured."

Swami: "He who truly has this faith, has already reached the goal. But is it easy to have that faith? One must beware of self-delusion. Those who have absolute trust in God will be at once purified through His grace, though they might have committed heinous sins before. Just apply a little spark of fire to a mountain-high heap of cotton. The whole mass will be quickly consumed. If you bring light into a room which has been dark for a thousand years, will the darkness go gradually or all at once? The Lord says in the *Gitâ*: 'Even if a very wicked man worships Me, with devotion to none else, he should be regarded as good, for he has rightly resolved. Soon he becomes righteous, and attains to eternal peace. O son of Kunti, boldly canst thou proclaim that my devotee is never destroyed.' Even if the greatest villain resigns himself entirely to Him, he must be considered a devotee. And 'soon he becomes righteous.' Through His grace he no longer remains a villain but becomes a pious man. An expert dancer never

makes a wrong step. No sin can possibly be committed by him who surrenders himself to God, although he might have committed many misdeeds before. There was no sin which Girish Babu did not indulge in. He once said to us: 'I have drunk so much wine in my life that if the wine-bottles were placed one upon another, they would stand as high as Mount Everest.' He was a poet, so he spoke thus poetically. Really he drank much. When he was asked by the Master to repeat the name of God morning and evening he refused. He said: 'I am not sure I can. I do not know in what condition or where I may be at those hours.' Then Sri Ramakrishna asked him to remember God before meal-time. 'That also I cannot promise you,' replied Girish Babu, 'I am often engrossed in law-suits and have to think all sorts of things. I cannot do even that.' At that Sri Ramakrishna said: 'Then give me the "power of attorney."' Referring to this, Girish Babu afterwards said to us: 'I readily agreed to give him the power of attorney, but later on I have realised what a difficult task it is to give the power of attorney. I had said that I would not be able to repeat the name of God even once in the evening, but afterwards I found that I could not do the least bit of work without remembering Him every moment.' In one day Girish Babu gave up his fifteen years' habit of taking opium. He said that the first three days he had to suffer much, his whole body became inert. On the fourth day he was all right. Later in life he did not even smoke."

C: "How to know whether one is progressing towards Him or not?"

Swami: "He can know it himself. Others also can know it. All his passions, lust, anger, greed will wane, his attachment for the objects of senses will diminish and he will have peace at heart."

Disciple: "Maharaj, can a man have peace before the realisation of God?"

Swami : “No, real peace is far off. But if you find that a man’s desire for sense-enjoyments is growing less and less and his love is extending over all beings, then you may know that he is progressing towards God. Simply repeating the holy name will not do. If there be a hole of attachment in the mind, the result of *japa* will run out through it. A man irrigated his field all day, but in the evening he found that all the water had run out through a hole, not a drop had remained in the field.

“I remember a beautiful saying of Nag Mahasaya in this connection. I had gone to his house. His father was practising *japa* sitting in a corner. Nag Mahasaya said to me : ‘Bless my father that he may have true devotion to God.’ ‘He has already got it,’ I replied, ‘he is constantly repeating the

name of God. What more do you want?’ Nag Mahasaya rejoined : ‘What is the use of rowing a boat which is at anchor? My father is much attached to me. What will his *japa* do?’ ‘If he should not love a son like you, whom else should he love?’ said I. ‘Don’t say so, don’t say so,’ he cried out, ‘only bless that he may lose all attachment for me.’

“Oh, what a great man Nag Mahasaya was! Do you know the full meaning of ‘rowing a boat at anchor?’ One dark night several drunkards took it into their heads to have a boat-trip. They went to the river, got into a boat and at once began to row. When it was dawn they found that they were at the same *ghât* from which they thought they had started. They had been so intoxicated that they had forgotten to weigh the anchor!”

AMERICA AT THE TIME OF VIVEKANANDA’S FIRST VISIT*

*The Anglo-Saxon Forerunners of the Spirit
of Asia : Emerson, Thoreau, Walt Whitman*

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

It would be a matter of deep interest to know exactly how far the American spirit had been impregnated, directly or indirectly, by the infiltration of Hindu thought during the nineteenth century : for there can be no doubt that it has contributed to the strange moral and religious mentality of the modern United States which Europe has so much difficulty in understanding,—with its astonishing mixture of Anglo-Saxon Puritanism, Yankee optimism of action, pragmatism, “scientism,” and pseudo-Vedântism. I do not know whether any historian will be found to occupy himself seriously with the question. It is nevertheless a psychological problem of

the first order, intimately connected with the history of our civilisation. I do not possess the means for its solution, but at least I can indicate certain elements in it.

It would seem that one of the chief people to introduce Hindu thought into the United States was Emerson, and that Emerson in so doing had been deeply influenced by Thoreau.

He was predisposed to such influences; for 1830 onwards they began to appear in his *Journal*, wherein he noted references to Hindu religious texts. His famous lecture, which created a scandal at the time, given in 1838 at the University of Harvard, expressed belief in the Divine in man akin to the concept of the soul, Atman-Brahman. It is here that he attached a strictly moral or moralist interpretation to it,

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his own mark and that of his race. But its fulfilment was the ecstatic realisation of a veritable Yoga of "justice", conceived in the double sense of moral good and cosmic equilibrium and uniting at one and the same time Karma (action), Bhakti (love) and Jnâna (wisdom).

Emerson exercised little method either in his reading or writing; and Cabot, in his Memoir of him, tells us that he was easily satisfied with extracts and quotations and did not consult the authorities as a whole. But Thoreau was a great reader; and between 1837 and 1862 he was Emerson's neighbour. In July, 1846, Emerson notes that Thoreau had been reading to him extracts from his *Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*. Now this work (section, Monday) is an enthusiastic eulogy of the *Gita*, and of the great poems and philosophies of India. Thoreau suggested "A joint Bible" of the Asiatic Scriptures, "Chinese, Hindus, Persians, Hebrews, to carry to the ends of the earth." And he took for his motto, *Ex Oriente Lux*.

It may be imagined that such suggestions were not thrown away upon Emerson, and that the ardent *Asiatism* of Thoreau extended to him.

It was at the same time that the *Transcendental Club*, he had founded, was in full swing; and after 1850, the *Dial*, its quarterly, which he edited with the American Hypatia, Margaret Fuller, published translations from the Oriental languages. The emotion produced in him by Indian thought must have been very strong for him to write in 1856 such a deeply Vedântic poem as his beautiful *Brahma*.

It must be taken into consideration that New England was passing through a crisis of spiritual renaissance and intoxicating idealism, corresponding (though composed of very different elements, less cultivated, more robust, and infinitely nearer to nature) to the idealistic flame of Europe before 1848. The anarchic Brookfarm of George Ripley (between 1840 and 1847), the fever-

ish assembly of the *Friends of Universal Progress* at Boston in 1840, brought together in one group men and women of all opinions and professions, all fired with primitive energy, and aspiring to shake off the shackles of past lies without knowing what truth to adopt; for no human society can live unless it has persuaded itself that it possesses the Truth!

Alas! the Truth espoused by America during the subsequent half century bears no resemblance to the generous expectation of the honeymoon! Truth was not ripe, still less those who wished to pluck it. Its failure was, however, by no means due to lack of noble ideals and great ideas, but they were all too mixed and too hastily digested without time for them to be healthily assimilated. The nervous shocks, produced by the grave political and social upheavals after the war of Secession, the morbid haste which has developed into the frantic rhythm of modern civilisation, have thrown the American spirit off its balance for a long time. It is, however, not difficult to trace during the second half of the century the seeds sown by the free pioneers of Concord, Emerson and Thoreau. But from their grain what strange bread has been kneaded by the followers of the "mind-cure" and of Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy!

Both of them have used, more or less wittingly, Indian elements strained through the idealism of Emerson. But they have reduced them to the dead level of a utilitarianism that looks only to the immediate profit, of a kind of mystic hygiene, resting on a prodigious credulity which gives to Christian Science its proud pseudo-scientific aspect and its pseudo-Christianity.

One trait common to these doctrines is the vulgar optimism, which resolves the problem of evil by a simple denial, or rather by its omission. "Evil does not exist. Then, let us turn away our eyes!" . . . Such an intellectual attitude in all its naive simplicity was too often that of Emerson. He omitted as often as possible from his subjects those

of illness or death. He hated the shades. "Respect the light!" But it was the respect of fear. His eyes were feeble and so he began by putting the sun under a shade. In this he was only too closely followed by his fellow-countrymen. Perhaps it is not too much to say that such optimism was necessary for action, but I have no great faith in the energy of a man or of a people, which rests on conditions contrary to the *Natura Rerum*. I prefer Margaret Fuller's saying: "I accept the universe." But whether one accepts it or not, the first essential is to see it and to see it as a whole! We shall soon hear Vivekananda saying to his English disciple: "Learn to recognise the Mother, in Evil, Terror, Sorrow, Denial as well as in Sweetness, and in Joy." Similarly the smiling Ramakrishna from the depths of his dream of love and bliss, could see and remind the complaisant preachers of a "good God" that Goodness was not enough to define the Force which daily sacrificed thousands of innocents. Therein lies the capital difference separating India and heroic Greece from Anglo-Saxon optimism. They look Reality in the face, whether they embrace it as in India or struggle against it and try to subdue it as in Greece; but with them action never impinges on the domain of knowledge as in America, where knowledge has been domesticated in the service of action and wears a livery with gold-braided cap bearing the name: Pragmatism.

It is easily understood that Vivekananda would not like such trappings concealing as they did puny and degraded bastards of his glorious, free and sovereign Vedântism of India.

But overtopping this herd of living men there was a dead giant, whose shade was a thousand times warmer than such pale reflections of the Sun of Being seen through their cold methodist window-panes. He stood before Vivekananda and held out his great hand to him. . . . How was it that he did not take it? . . . Or rather (for we know

that later in India Vivekananda read his *Leaves of Grass*) how is it that Vivekananda's chroniclers, however careless and ill-informed, have managed to leave this capital event out of their story: the meeting of the Indian Ambassador of the Atman-Brahman with the epic singer of *Myself*—Walt Whitman?*

He had just died on March 26, 1892, the previous year, near Camden, the workman's suburb of Philadelphia. The triumphant memory of his obsequies—not pagan as they have been described, but exactly in the spirit of Indian universalism, were still reverberating. Vivekananda saw more than one of Whitman's intimates coming to him; he was even joined in friendship to him who had bidden the last farewell to the poet, the famous agnostic and materialist author, Robert Ingersoll. He more than once argued with him in friendly fashion, so it is impossible that he should not have heard of Whitman.

However famous this great man may be through the many works that have been devoted to him in all lands, it is necessary for me to give here a short account of his religious thought; for that is the side of his work that has come least into the limelight—and at the same time it is the kernel.

There is nothing hidden in the meaning of his thought. The good Whitman does not veil his nakedness. His faith appears best of all in *Leaves of Grass*, and is especially concentrated in one great poem which has been thrown too much into the shade by his *Song of Myself*, but which must be replaced in the front rank where Whitman himself placed it, at the head of his own definite edition, immediately following

* Evidently Walt Whitman did not appear as important to them as he appears to M. Rolland in relation to the American mission of Swami Vivekananda. M. Rolland himself admits that the influence of Whitman's thought on his countrymen was little. Besides, we Hindus are inclined to make distinction between mere intellectual and poetic effusions and actual realisation. The former count little in the life of humanity, the latter much.—*Ed.*

the *Inscriptions*, namely his *Starting from Paumanok*.

What does he say there?

"I inaugurate a religion.

. . . I say the whole earth and all the stars in the sky are for religion's sake."

"Know you, solely to drop in the earth the germs of a greater religion. . .

I sing.

For you to share with me two great-nesses, and a third one rising inclusive and more resplendent. The greatness of Love and of Democracy, and the great-ness of religion."

(Why then have the first two "great-nesses", which are of an inferior order, generally eclipsed the first, which embraces and dominates them, in the minds of Whitman's commentators?)

What was this religion which so filled his heart that he meditated spreading it abroad throughout all lands by means of lectures, in spite of the little taste he had for speaking in public? It is summed up and contained in one word, which rings in the ears wonderfully like Indian music: the word *Identity*. It fills the whole work. It is to be found in almost all his poems.

Identity with all forms of life at every instant; the immediateness of realised Unity; and the certainty of Eternity for every second, for every atom of Existence.

How had Whitman come by this faith?

Certainly by enlightenment, by some blow he had experienced, by illumina-tion, probably arising from some spiritual crisis a short time after he had reached his thirtieth year and ex-perienced the emotions aroused by his journey to New Orleans, of which little is known.

It is improbable that it was any reading of Indian thought that touched him. When Thoreau, in November 1856, came to tell him that his *Leaves of Grass* (first appeared in July 1855, then a second edition in the summer of 1856) recalled to his mind the great

Oriental poems and to ask if he knew them, Whitman replied with a cate-gorical "No!" and there is no reason to doubt his word. He read little, certainly very few books; he did not like libraries and men brought up upon them. To the very end of his life he does not seem to have had any curiosity to verify the similarity between his thought and that of Asia obvious to the little circle of Concord. The extreme vagueness of the expressions used every time that he introduced a glimpse of India into his Homeric enumerations is the best guarantee of his ignorance.

It is then all the more interesting to discover how he could without going beyond himself—a 100% American self—all unwittingly link up with Vedântic thought. (For its kinship did not escape any of the Emerson group, beginning with Emerson himself, whose genial quip is not sufficiently famous: "*Leaves of Grass* seem to be a mixture of the *Bhagavad Gita* and *The New York Herald*.")

The starting point with Whitman was in the profundities of his own race, in his own religious line—paradoxical though it may seem. His paternal family belonged to the Quaker Left, grouped round a free believer, Elias Hicks, to whom at the end of his life Whitman dedicated a pamphlet. He was a great religious individualist, free from all church and all *credo*, who made religion consist entirely of inner illumina-tion, "the secret silent ecstasy."

Such a moral disposition in Whitman was bound to bring about from his childhood a habit of mystic concentra-tion, having no precise object but filtering nevertheless through all the emotions of life. The young man's peculiar genius did the rest. His nature possessed a kind of voracious receptivity, which made him not only, like ordinary men, glean from the vine-arbour of the spectacle of the universe, some grains of pleasure or pain, but instantaneously incorporate himself with each object that he saw. He has described this rare

disposition in the admirable poem:
Autumn Rivulets :

“There was a child went forth. . . .
And the first object he look’d upon,
that object he became,
And that object became part of
him for the day or a certain
part of the day,
Or for many years or stretching
cycles of years. . . .”

Instinctively rather than reflectively he had reached the conclusion that the whole universe was for him not object but subject—it was he. When he wrote an account all at once in his thirties of what appeared to him his real birth, (probably about 1851—1852) it was a blinding flash, an ecstatic blow :

“Oh! the Joy,” he said, “of my soul leaning pois’d on itself, receiving identity through materials. . . . My soul vibrated back to me from them”

It seemed to him that he was “awake for the first time and that all that had gone before was nothing but a despicable sleep.”

Finally he heard some lectures or conferences of Emerson’s and they may have intellectualised his intuition so that it came to fruition in ideas, however imperfectly determined and connected; for with this man, always indifferent to the logic of reasoning and to metaphysical construction, his whole chain of thought brought him inevitably to the present moment and to a degree of illumination that made an infinity of space and time arise from them. Hence he 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 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?

Here then is a typical example of the predisposition to Vedântism which existed in America well before the arrival of Vivekananda. Indeed it is a universal disposition of the human soul in all countries and in all ages, and not contained, as Indian Vedântists are inclined to believe, in a body of doctrines belonging to one country alone. On the contrary it is either helped or hindered by the chances of evolution among the different peoples and the creeds and customs whereon their own civilisations are built. It may be said that this attitude of mind is latent in all who carry within themselves a spark of the creative fire, and particularly is it true of great artists, in whom the universe is not only reflected (as in the cold glance of the medium), but incarnate. I have already mentioned in the case of Beethoven crises of Dionysiac union with the Mother, to use one of many names for the hidden Being whom the heart perceives in each earth-beat. Moreover, great European poetry of the nineteenth century, especially that of the English poets of the age of Wordsworth and Shelley, is full of such sudden gleams. But no Western poet possessed them so strongly or so consciously as Whitman, who collected all the scattered fires into a brazier, transmuting his intuition into a faith—faith in his people, faith in the world, faith in humanity as a whole.

How strange it is that this faith was not brought face to face with Vivekananda’s! Would he not have been struck by so many unexpected similarities: the sentiment, so strong in Whitman, so insistent, so persistent, of the journey of his ego “through trillions” of years and incessant “incarnations,” keeping the record in double column of profit and loss of each of his previous existences,—the dual self wherein no one god must debase himself before the others, the net of Mâyâ which he tears asunder so that through the widened meshes the illuminating face of God may shine, “thou orb of many orbs—thou seething principle,

thou well kept latent germ, thou centre,"—the glorious "Song of the Universal" wherein fusion is realised by the harmony of antinomies, embracing all religions, all beliefs and unbeliefs and even the doubts of all the souls of the universe, which in India was the very mission delegated by Ramakrishna to his disciples,—his own message that "All is Truth!"

And is it not true that they were even alike in some individual characteristics such as the high pride which compared itself to God; the warrior spirit of the great Kshatriya "the enemy of repose," and that of the brother of war, fearing neither danger nor death, but calling them rather; the worship rendered to the Terrible, an interpretation recalling the dark yet magnificent confidences of Vivekananda to Sister Nivedita during their dream-like pilgrimage in the Himalayas?

At the same time I can see clearly what Vivekananda would have disliked in Whitman: the ridiculous mixture of *The New York Herald* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, which awoke the fine smile of Emerson—his metaphysical journalism, his small shopkeeper's wisdom, picked up from dictionaries—his eccentric affectation of a bearded Narcissus, his colossal complacency with regard to himself and his people—his democratic Americanism with its childish vanity and expansive vulgarity ever seeking the lime-light; all these must have roused the aristocratic disdain of the great Indian. Especially would Vivekananda have had no patience with the compromising coquettings of his idealism with the forbidden joys of "metaphysics," spiritualism and intercourse with spirits, etc. . . .

But these differences would not have prevented the drawing of this mighty lover to the metal of the soul of a Vivekananda. And, in point of fact, they did not prevent it later on, for we have the proof that Vivekananda read in India *Leaves of Grass*, and that he called Whitman "the Sannyasin of America," and thus declared their com-

mon parentage. Is it then to be believed that he did not make his discovery until the end of his stay in America, since, during the stay, there is no mention of the relation published by his disciples in detail?

Whatever the truth may be, the spirit of Whitman was there, attesting that America was ready to listen to Indian thought. She went ahead. And the old prophet of Camden had solemnly announced the arrival of India:

"Towards us, O my city,
The Generator comes,
The nest of languages, which has
given us poems, the race of
former times. . . .
The race of Brahma is coming."

He had opened his arms to her. He had confided to America, "the nave of democracy," the Pilgrim of India.

"The past reposes in thee. . . .
You bring great companions with
you.
Venerable priestly Asia sails with
you in this day."

The Indian biographers of Vivekananda have then made a regrettable omission in not naming Whitman in the front rank of those whose thought did the honours of the New Continent to the stranger guest.

But having put him in his proper place—next to Vivekananda, shoulder to shoulder—we must be careful not to exaggerate his influence over America. This Homer of the "masses" did not succeed in prevailing upon the masses. This annunciator of the great destinies of Democracy in America died misunderstood, almost unperceived by the democrats of the New World. This singer of the "Divine mean" was only loved and revered by a small group of selected artists and exceptional men—and perhaps more in England than in the United States.

But all the same he is one of the true Forerunners. And it is no less certain that they are the true representatives of their people—even if their people are

unaware of it: in them is liberated before their time the profound energies which are concealed within the human masses and which they repel: they announce them; sooner or later they

will come to light. A Whitman was the index of genius of the hidden soul that was sleeping—(she is not yet quite awake)—in the ocean depths of his people of the United States.

PHASES OF IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE

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

INTRODUCTION

The Upanisads appeal at once to imagination and the philosophic instinct by the problem they set forth and the promise they offer. Mankind is restive over its little existence and is anxious to get a light that can break through the phenomenal real and can put at rest all questioning that wells up in its breast. Truth is the summit of existence. Truth is the proper object of search. And so long as the heart is not upon the enduring, the heart cannot have rest, the soul, its anxiety over. The search for the enduring becomes a sole motive in life when life's move in other directions stands baffled at the little they can yield unto it. The quest for the Eternal in most persons cannot seriously begin before the conventions set up in the priestcraft and in popular theological course have had their trials. The sacrificial rites with the promises of subtle sense-delights in the subtler planes of existence cannot satisfy the seeker, for he is still burdened with the anxieties of divided existence; and however the privileges increase in volume and quantity, life labours in the mire of ignorance. But the failure of the sacrificial rites to give full satisfaction has its effect and use. It establishes the futility of a life in nature accumulating and enjoying nature's possibilities and privileges.

The sacrificial mysticism cannot give lasting satisfaction, for the gaze is still towards the external and the transient. And the merit which the seeker acquires cannot last long. It is an acquired momentum which is exhausted with its fruition.

Progress, however high, is attendant with a fall, and naturally the earnest seeker has to revise his method of search and manner of approach. The dawn of philosophic instinct is possible when the other courses and methods of approach are found inefficient. Philosophic reflection becomes possible when the smooth and almost blind adaptation, due to the incessant activities of nature's forces in us, has a check, and the forces act inwardly in generating thought and reflection without exhausting themselves upon the ill-conceived and mistaken attempts at a satisfaction in an outward gaze on life. Man is an instinctive being by birth. He is a thinking being by experience. He is an illuminated being by intuition. The first impulses are natural, these impulses have hasty expirations and gratifications, based as they are upon the unilluminated instincts of survival. The instinct of survival breeds a semi-mystical attitude towards the forces of nature. The confined vision of man's utter dependence upon nature, his instinct of self-preservation and the gratification of instincts soon evolve in him a mystic understanding of nature as the sole source of power. The primitive insight does not go beyond that and the sacrifices are the symbols of what the primitive mind feels towards nature's forces. These forces are soon deified, and this deification reads Devas in the beneficent powers of nature and Asuras in the malevolent forces of nature. With the dawn of philosophic vision the Vedic pantheon is reduced to a unity of Godhead and a cosmistic vision of life displaces the least sense of difference

between the presiding forces of nature and the immanent Divine life.

The animated vision of nature's forces gives a fine penetration and understanding of nature, and exalts it into the conception of a living and vibrative existence endowed with an oversoul, to which all the forces are subordinate and of which they are inadequate and partial expressions. The vision of such an animated being of nature is immediate. It is a form of mystic exaltation. This form of exaltation takes delight in the wonders that nature has revealed before man.

The first dawn of mystic life begins with the sublimation of nature, where the forces are felt as if living and powerful with the capacity of not only offering us privileges but of shedding upon us genial light to lead us aright. In this way the mystic sense begins to feel the Divine light through the orb of the dawn, through the silvery rays of the moon, through the shining rays of the stars, and Divine life through the winds and thunders. The mystic soul is bold enough to stand the kindly and the fierce expressions of the forces of nature, and keen enough to catch the animation which throbs in them. The seeker stands radiant with the mystic sense that nature, however fierce and violent, carries to the soul the message of a new life, though occasionally it may overpower us with the sense of our littleness and utter helplessness before it. Religious consciousness is stirred by the majesty of nature. The majesty excites wonder and admiration. Both of them continue to foster a religious feeling and a reverent attitude towards nature. But this attitude can grow when the intellect has overcome the primitive tendencies of regarding Gods as the carriers of privileges and the recipients of oblations. This primitive religious feeling of surrender comes out of the feeling of self-preservation. This instinct of self-preservation is a biological instinct, and religious consciousness originally has a reference to

this instinct. The-will-to-live sticks to the soul and the Gods and the shining deities are worshipped to satisfy this original instinct.

But soon this attitude is transcended, and the seeker begins to feel more than what meets the senses in nature's forces. This mystic attitude gives the sublimated perception of nature animated and installed in the philosophic conception of a supersensuous reality, and the conception of an all-pervasive spirit soon begins to displace the individuated conceptions of earth-spirits, sky-spirits, etc. This is a distinct advance in the philosophic and religious consciousness and indicates the beginning of true wisdom; for the religious consciousness keeps the soul at rest, not so much by hope of reward here or hereafter as by silencing all expectations by the inward light of the soul. Before the inward light can attain its fulness, the outward vision has a finer reading of an identity between spirit and nature. But this identity cannot be complete unless man has a direct vision of spirit in his inward being. The tendency of installing nature's God in place of nature is a definite tendency, and so far as religious consciousness is concerned, it makes a definite advance in spirituality. The pan-psychic idea of nature is a favourite theme in some texts, but it leaves an effect on feeling which is the realization of a life and consciousness as yet not developed into a clear and definite knowledge. So vast is the experience that almost overpowers the seeker, that definite consciousness becomes an impossibility. We have, therefore, an indefinable feeling which has an inadequate expression.

The necessity of feeling this existence in the inward soul is still there, and led by this necessity the external gaze and outward appeal are displaced by inner search and inward vision. However lofty the inspiration and subtle the vision may be, the mental effort to grasp the meaning and realize the import of the influence received from without, still speaks of an external reference of

knowledge and feeling. The mental effort is still objective.

This objectivity makes the apprehension of the spirit-self still mediate and external, and the quickening touch can at best make the experience deep and expression definite and clear, but cannot change mediacy into immediacy. The apparent immediacy is still an immediacy of the senses outer or inner; it is the immediacy of feeling but not of transcendence.

Though this form of heightened feeling has an elasticity not met in the neophytes at the start, still not infrequently it is regarded as the acme of spiritual consciousness inasmuch as the new experience has the vivifying and vitalizing force, and nature seems to be vibrating with new light and life. Such a vision has been a fruitful source of a panpsychic conception which appeals by the immanence of spirit in nature and man. Such a vision proves fruitful in conceiving a co-conscious super-existence embracing the conscious centres in men and the living centres in nature.

But this vision is still regarded as insufficient. It does not satisfy fully the intellectual and spiritual needs. The animistic vision is a delight in exalted feeling. But it is not wisdom though it touches the fringe of transcendental consciousness. The culture of feeling has an importance in waking up esoteric wisdom, but exalted feelings are to be distinguished from transcendental wisdom.

The exalted feeling and animated being are values in determinate consciousness. These values are originally ideal but become actually real in heightened religious being. These feelings are supremely delightful and usher in an ideal existence—the archetypal consciousness which permeates the actualities and facts of life. Such consciousness of ideal forms is to be distinguished from the basic being. The ideal-form-consciousness is a penetration into the causal aspect of existence, the aspect which lies immanent in the world order.

It is necessary to distinguish the actual and the ideal aspects of existence in the determinate from the transcendent in the indeterminate. The exalted feeling aroused by a fellowship with society and nature is a form of consciousness which has its enjoyment of the ideal in the actual but is not strictly transcendental. It is an elevated feeling, a superior consciousness in which serene delight finds its adequate expression, but which cannot pass for the knowledge of the basic reality.

Such an animated vision of nature has a touch upon mystic consciousness,—it differs from logical consciousness. It can fitly be called nature mysticism and is akin to poetic intuition of beauty and sweetness. The adept feels the living nature as the mirror of the reality. Nature does not replace spirit, nature becomes infused with spirit.

Nature is raised from its inertness to a medium of expression, and the concrete is felt and enjoyed, and the mind cannot rise above the delight of the rhythm and harmony and embrace the transcendent.

Consciousness cannot approach that height so long as the feeling attitude has not been displaced by a deeper penetration.

This penetration is what really makes the teaching of the Upanisads different from the Vedas (the Samhitās and the Brâhmanas). The vision and the appraise of the living nature have no doubt reduced the Vedic pantheon to the conception of an all-permeating being; still mind needs greater penetration to touch the basic being.

In the Upanisads the search has been into the basic reality. In this sense the mysticism which they represent is transcendental. The search is no longer external, it becomes inward.

The Upanisads in this sense are more appealing to the philosophic instinct, for the search for reality must begin necessarily in the inward soul. But philosophy cannot convince if the reality is not felt and apprehended immediately. The immediate conscious-

ness is the highest revealer of truth when this immediacy is not of the senses, nor of the mind, but of intuition. The Upanisadic approach is, therefore, to be distinguished from the Vedic approach of apprehending Truth.* The one is inward, the other is outward. The one searches the truth through the intuition of the soul, the other through the revelation through nature.

FORMS OF INTUITION

The sublimated consciousness of nature has to be distinguished from the philosophic or transcendent intuition. The word "intuition" is often loosely used and has a wide application. It has the common connotation of immediacy of apprehension. The forms of immediacy are to be distinguished, and because they are not clearly distinguished they become the veritable source of error and confusion. The exact appreciation of a phase of truth is always relative to the faculty which receives it, and unless a clear discrimination is exercised, the seeker makes a confusion between exaltation of feeling and appreciation of truth.

Intuition is the faculty of immediate apprehension. It may be empiric and transcendental. An empiric intuition is the immediate consciousness of reception through the affections of the senses and the mental being. It includes the intuitions of the sensibility, the instinctive intuitions. It embraces even the intuitions of supersensuous consciousness. These intuitions differ amongst themselves, but there is no difference in kind, for they are phenomenal expressions. The affections of sensibility might have an outward touch of reference, the instinctive intuitions might help unerringly in biological adaptation. The supersensuous intuitions are really not

* This is a general statement. There are passages in the Rik Veda, which indicate that the truth of the Upanisads are implicit in the Vedas. *Vide* Rik Veda, 10th Mandala, Sukta 80, Mantra 2, Sukta 81, Sukta 82, Mantras 8 and 7, Sukta 114, Mantra 5,381, Sukta 121, Mantra 1.

non-sensuous, they differ from the sensuous only in affecting the finer impulses and the delicate fibres of our being. But still they are forms of affections and cannot be strictly different from empiric intuitions. In this sense the psychic (yogic) penetration and the modern spiritistic revelations are, however subtle and fine, still empiric so long as they touch the fringe of reality. It may sound strange, but it is so, since such perceptions are still a finer sensibility and must differ from the apprehension through transcendental or philosophic intuition. They affect the fine senses and being but cannot touch the underlying essence or reality. It has been said truly: "Metaphysical truths can be conceived only by a faculty which because its operation is on the immediate, we may call intuitive, if it be thoroughly understood that it has absolutely nothing in common with what certain contemporary philosophers call intuition, a merely sensitive and vital faculty properly inferior to discursive intelligence and not superior to it" (a quotation from Rene Gue'non in George Santayana's *Realm of Essence*). Even religious consciousness, when it confines itself to a fine feeling, is still empiric; though such feelings or experiences are far removed from the ordinary sense-consciousness. Of course religious consciousness as grasping reality should be distinguished from religious consciousness as a fine feeling and an urge. The human consciousness is elastic enough to embrace infinite shades and phases. The seeker makes a confusion of the glorious feelings on the path with reality. The absence of a discriminating sense has been the fruitful source of false religions that creep up on the finer phases of our empiric intuition. The Upanisadic seers are anxious to raise the caution not to make the mistake of identifying an exalted feeling with the appreciation of reality. When the inner consciousness has a sudden elasticity and swift flow of fine ideas and finer feelings, it naturally clings to them and has the possibility of mistaking

a shadow for reality. And this accounts for the tendency in the later history of mystic thought to install an object of adoration in place of reality. No doubt it is possible that such religious mysticism can stir the depth of consciousness, still one should not identify such feelings with transcendent intuition. Such experiences are flights into supersensuous consciousness, but cannot compare to the religious consciousness reared up in philosophic reflection and finally passing into transcendent intuition. Popular religious consciousness perchance hits upon an exalted sublime feeling and is carried on by such feelings, and an intellectual consciousness follows to give it a basis. Such emotional enthusiasm is to be distinguished from philosophic or transcendent intuition. It dominates more in the truth aspect of reality than in its delight aspect. It convinces where conviction is the demand, and in the life of search conviction is more imperative a demand than anything; for conviction in truth is the end of the search. If the transcendent intuition delights, it delights because it convinces; and the highest delight is the delight of conviction. Such delight is not shared in the heightening of feeling. Feeling delights but does not convince. Truth convinces as well as delights. Such conviction cannot come unless the intellectual intuition is touched and exercised. It penetrates the depth of being, religious feeling only touches the emotional being.

FORMS OF MYSTICISM

At this stage we should make clear the difference between the forms of mysticism, for mysticism is so vague a term with such a wide range of application, that a discriminating knowledge of its different shades is a necessary presupposition to a clear understanding of the kind of mysticism we have in the Upanisads.

Mysticism is an approach to truth rather than rational and discursive. It comes out of an anxiety to have a face to face vision of truth, and in this anxious search and deviation from

rational pursuit, it has not been infrequently identified with the different tendencies laid deep down in the soul. Though the search has been directed to the appreciation of truth and all forms of mysticism lay claim to that, still different forms can be distinguished from the manner and method of approach and also from the different conclusions and realizations they set up.

Though the conclusion in mystic search is generally supposed to be the same—the vision of truth and the life of expanse—still minor differences arise amongst the mystics. The “life of expanse” is the common promise, but a clear definition makes the vision of truth different in different forms. A tendency prevails amongst thinkers to regard mysticism as a form of intuition, which leaves aside all differences from spiritual life and delights in the identity and exclusively limits mysticism to this form of transcendent consciousness. And they base their contention on the ground that the least difference left between the finite and infinite consciousness does not give a new conclusion nor does it present a new phase of life and consciousness. It does give nothing which is not embraced in popular consciousness and as such cannot pass for mysticism.

The contention has a force; mysticism, if it really claims to vouchsafe unto humanity anything, must not only give a fine instinct and appreciation but the appreciation must pass into adoration and finally into the quiet of transcendence. But this may be the consummation devoutly to be wished for, but this cannot make us ignore the revelations of superconsciousness, which bring in newer forms of experiences. No doubt these sublimated experiences are experiences in finite expansion; still their values cannot be completely ignored as showing advances in the mystic life, though not a complete approximation to the mystic ideal. Mysticism in its widest sense is the delightful experience of a wider existence which may in its acme reach its utmost expansion and complete trans-

cence. Such forms of exalted consciousness is far removed from ordinary experiences. But there are forms of consciousness intervening between this expanse and the present limitation, and they cannot be ignored in the life of search as they are pregnant with elevated feelings and illumined consciousness and as such they are far removed from the ordinary consciousness working under the limitation of categories. They are also mystic consciousness, but if mysticism is confined to the transcendent oneness, the term pseudo-mysticism can suit them better.

But in India the term mysticism has not such a confined meaning. It is used in the wide sense to denote the immediate consciousness of truth and reality, and though differences of opinion are possible and actually exist about truth, still every form of serious philosophy and thinking which counts, claims this immediate and expansive vision of truth. And this seems to be happy in view of the fact that each form of mysticism claims a direct apprehension of truth, though the definition of truth and its presentation may vary, a variation which is sought to be fixed and established by logic.

Such a conception naturally is open to the charge that if the mystics differ amongst themselves in their definition of truth, they cannot lay claim to infallibility, and if they do so, their position becomes dogmatic. Curiously enough, none is so positive about their assertions as the mystics, none so eloquently expressive. This leads us on to a dilemma: The mystics either have or have not realized the truth; if they have, there should be no contradiction in their professions and beliefs, an actual agreement, on the other hand, is desirable; if they have not, they should not make the absolute claim to truth. The former as well as the latter make their position untenable, their mission undesirable.

Mysticism is not a definite philosophy of life. It is the heightening of life

and consciousness. It is a process of infinite expansion. It realizes new correspondences, infinite harmonies, new sympathies and affinities. It is life in its unfathomable depth and widest expansion. It differs from ordinary empiric consciousness in that it is freed from its limitations.

As such it has the widest stretch of meaning and embraces the expression of spirit in the indefinite and the definite; and any serious mysticism can hardly ignore the search of the indefinite, as the indefinite, because of its unapproachableness, is always an admiration for the intellect; and if we mistake not the reading of the inner stirring, we can hardly fail to cognise the eternal quest of the indefinite in man. The definite delights us only when it exhibits from within the shadow and reflection of the indefinite, and in the ever widening mystic consciousness the definite also appeals when it opens on new and untasted vistas. The definite has a place in the mystic consciousness only because the definite presents the indefinite in immanence before the mystic, or the definite is seen in the indefinite which adds to its life, beauty and meaning. The definite is never an attraction. And even when the indefinite is not fully presented, the definite can attract only because it presents unseen and unexperienced phases of life. The mystic is always for the charm of novelty which is the promise of an ever widening and ever quickening life, and this yearning for the novelty is increased with the presentation of the newer phases of the definite, but however deep and changing the experiences may be, the search for the indefinite remains fixed. The mystic sees more in the definite than the laity, for the indefinite is his delight and the uncommon is his search. But even here in the enjoyment of the indefinite in the definite, his soul has not its cup of delight full, for it still feels the stirring of life, the blooming of an unrealised self, and has not the quietus of the deep. Life is enjoyed and lived the most, when life and consciousness are felt beyond

its expression and stirring. The mystic has the rare privilege of seeing and enjoying life in its expression and in its quiet, and he passes from the subtler enjoyment of the expression into the deep of the quiet.

The determinate has its delight. The indeterminate has its quietus. The mystic enjoys both. The mystic consciousness in its fullest development embraces life both in its concrete manifestations and abstract transcendence. The transcendence delights him more. The definite delights only as the shadow of the transcendence, just as music delights the more as it dies away. The mystic takes delight in the definite passing off into the indefinite. He is the rare soul awakened unto the subtle beauties and delights of life; and subtler they become as they soar more and more into the indefinite.

This elevation of the determinate in the mystical consciousness and its fine expression therein have made forms and branches of mysticism possible. Mysticism is sympathetic understanding of the concrete tendencies of the soul in synthetic intuition, in love-ecstasies and in selfless service. These forms may be fitly called devotional and practical mysticism. Devotional mysticism enjoys the touch of love-consciousness, practical mysticism the delight of active service. Both claim to be mystic forms of consciousness, both have a fine being and expression. Love breathes pure under mystic inspiration. Sympathy becomes cosmic under mystic touch. Both transcends the limit of finite urge and passes into the limitless. They have in them the secret of mystic urge, the look to the beyond. They are anxious to cross the limit. Synthetic intuition and sympathetic vision enjoy the touch and embrace of the infinite life in poetic intuition and philosophic insight. All these are forms of mystic consciousness inasmuch as they are approaches to the unknown and the indefinite and that in a way that does not engage the services of the normal faculty. Mystic love and cosmic sympathy are the hidden trea-

asures of the soul, which cannot be discovered by surface-mentality. Each soars into the unseen. Each breathes in the infinite expanse. Though each has a separate faculty and a special method of approach, still each is anxious to go beyond the fringe of experience and breathe in the free, holy and rarified atmosphere of the subtle, the beyond, and the deep. In this sense, mysticism is a term that has wide application, and will cover every urge of the soul pressing beyond. The reception and this gift in mystic life require the quickening of the faculties, active, affective and receptive. The quickened activity of the normal faculties is the promise in mysticism, which touches every function of the soul and makes it highly vibrative and cosmically active. The novitiate even can feel this, and herein lies the greatest attraction, value and reality of life.

Mysticism touches every chord of our being, but its great promise lies in quickening the understanding and rearing up the intuitive faculty to see and feel truth, the essence of being. It is in this fruition that lies the importance of mysticism, for humanity is in search of the truth and meaning of existence, and no method can be refused in this baffling task. And what is most puzzling to unilluminated understanding is evidently clear to illuminated vision. "Science" has its use, illumination its value. When the former fails, the latter helps.

VISION AND INTUITION

Mystical experiences are of different kinds. They need differentiation. Some experiences are of the finer appearances, some of reality. The former are forms of psychism, the latter is knowledge.

We shall use the words "vision" and "intuition" to connote the difference. Intuition may spring from the different chords of our complex being, and they carry with them different forms of experiences, all are equally impressive, but not equally true. Their value and

truth cannot be the same. Some are true because they appear, some are true because they endure.

To avoid confusion, a distinction has to be drawn between intuitions giving the final illumination, and intuitions yielding the secrets of the finer realms of appearances. Vision proceeds from the fine and causal mental being when they are highly strung up. Inspiration, psychism, cross-correspondence, clairvoyance, clairaudience, thought-transference, etc. are included under visions; it will be wrong to call them intuitions. They are forms of psychism, and cannot touch reality. They are indications of a fine mentality which can work in the different layers of psychic being, but they are not indications of spirituality or wisdom; not of spirituality, because they cannot produce the sense of intrinsic value, nor of wisdom, because they cannot break the sense of division, the spell of divided existence. They are the effects of a highly electrified mental being, waking up its latent powers and exercising them to its psychical profit and advantage. Nature unveils herself, and the secret powers thus attained can be misused unless the initiate is held up by high wisdom and spirituality.

Intuition proceeds from our being (spiritual being) and has no connexion with our mental being, lower or higher. It is not to be confounded with the psychic revelations, however fine and high. Even visions which proceed from the cosmic dynamism and not from the individual dynamism cannot be strictly called intuition; for they are indicative of the exercise of *Mâyâ* in its causal aspect, they cannot be called strictly intuition. Intuition is the final term, which is self-consciousness and not other-consciousness. The other-consciousness is the knowledge of not-self. It may cover the revelation of the cosmic mind, but since it is confined to the relative order, it cannot be strictly called intuition. Intuition is confined to the final knowledge of the Absolute, it is that stage of knowledge where the division of subject and object does not obtain,

and is therefore unique and immediate. The immediacy of vision is either the sense-immediacy or the psychic immediacy, it is not the immediacy of the Absolute or transcendent intuition. The immediacy of the supra-sensuous revelations is to be distinguished from the immediacy of transcendent intuition. The supra-sensuous revelations are not truth in the sense in which intuition is. Revelations have a reference to supra-mind, intuition has none. Revelations proceed from the cosmic dynamism, intuition transcends dynamism.

Hence vision, revelation and intuition are not truth in the identical sense. Vision and revelation are truth of the mental and super-mental dynamism, intuition is truth in the absolute sense. The one is empirical, the other transcendental. The empirical here connotes that which is received in sensuous, vital or mental and supra-mental planes of relative existence. These may imply supra-mental sublimities, immanental immensities; but they are not to be confounded with the absolute intuition, which is beyond all experience, however fine and sublime.

CONCRETE AND ABSTRACT INTUITION

Concrete intuition acquaints the soul with a synthetic vision of realities. It gives a harmony and poise of the higher mental being and is a source of serene joy, not because it gives a pleasing sensitization, but because it is a penetrating touch into the soul and a quickening force to make it realize reality on the point of expression. It feeds the being in its concrete set-up with the harmony of relations. The vision it gives is the vision of the whole, the delight it yields is the delight of harmony. It gives a unison, a sense of rhythm. It gives the synoptic vision of reality as it presents the meaning of existence.

It is to be distinguished from psychism. Psychism gives a fine dynamism, concrete intuition gives a synthetic apperception. It gives a dynamic symmetry. Psychism wakes up the fine powers, it endows us with dis-

tant visions, but it may not give the symmetry and the rhythm implied in concrete intuition. The one gives us fine power and esoteric visions, the other, the knowledge of relations and proportions. The one may accompany the other, but the one should not be confounded with the other. In the unfathomable depth of our inner being, symmetry goes along with fine possibilities.

They serve two distinct functions, and in the fine economy of life, power and organization, possibilities and order help each other. The one supplies the matter, the other form. And our being would have been a dead stone without the unity of both. Psychism penetrates into the secrets of our nature, concrete intuition adjusts them and finds their meaning in the whole. It harmonises them in the common thread of life. The one discovers new forces, new perspectives, the other gives them new synthesis and reads in them new harmonies.

Concrete intuition has the rare privilege of setting up visions and ideas in the order of a whole. Sympathetic vision is its life, synthesis its soul. It has no access into the depth of the inexpressible.

Abstract intuition excels concrete intuition; it claims access into the inexpressible. It claims to touch and penetrate the calm. When ordinary

faculties and powers are asleep, when the faculties are quiescent, the soul is awake from within; and awake it is in silence. In it it has an illumination which is not possible when the faculties are active and the soul is receptive to all influences from within and from without. When the soul has the blessed freedom from the exercise of the faculties, it has the rare privilege of knowing the unknown, of touching the intangible, of getting over the expression and activity of the ideas and of passing into complete illumination. It is illumination without expression, for expression is activity, but illumination is self-expression without activity. Expression connotes a limitation, and complete illumination is expression without the impelling urge of passing into concrete forms and moods.

Abstract intuition has the rare privilege of grasping reality without concrete expression. No faculty of the soul can vouchsafe this consummation. No science, no philosophy can have this rare claim. The abstract illumination is better to be called silence to distinguish it from expression, for the human understanding has a tendency also to pass into the concrete and it cannot understand expression as different from expressive activity. The term "illuminated silence" better expresses the nature of the transcendent illumination as different from symbolical expression.

(To be concluded)

A NATIONAL LANGUAGE FOR INDIA

BY SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

One of the things that strike one forcibly on return from a trip to a foreign country like the United States of America is the diversity of tongues obtaining in this country. Over a dozen languages, each with a more or less developed literature of its own, divide among themselves the allegiance of three hundred and twenty millions of people. The persistence of this Babel of tongues is

all the more striking because the country is culturally one. Europe, too, has a great many languages, but it is a continent, and there is nothing strange in each country having its own language. But the existence of so many languages within the same country is a great hindrance to the progress of national unity. It subconsciously engenders prejudice in the minds of people speaking a certain

tongue against those who speak a different tongue. The object of this article is to suggest some remedy for minimising the evils which are due to the multiplicity of languages in India. The subject may not be new, but at this time of national awakening it is worth while to go over the ground to see whether we can find out a common language for India or not. By a common language I mean one that will serve as the medium of inter-provincial communication, a language by means of which the residents of one part of the country can exchange their views with their brothers and sisters in another part. Nothing more than this is possible now, because each of the dozen languages is old and, as already said, has a literature of its own. It is neither possible, nor is it desirable, to stamp out any language under such circumstances.

What then are we to do? We are to find out what language will best serve the purpose of the inter-provincial language we need so badly in India. Such a language must have a copious and comprehensive vocabulary capable of expressing ideas in the different fields of life, and possess withal a more or less rich literature. Here one may ask, 'Have we not already in English a language which is just doing this function?' The answer is that though English does this function in certain respects among the educated sections, yet it has some serious disadvantages which will for ever preclude any attempt to install it as the national language for India. The first drawback of English is that it is not an indigenous language of India. As such it has to be laboriously acquired. And everyone with some experience knows how many patient years of toil are needed before familiarity with the language is gained. Contrast this with some of the existing Indian languages. How much easier is it to learn them! The curse of a foreign language is that every single word of it has to be committed to memory, and as everybody knows, English idioms are a difficult study for an outsider. And as to English pronun-

ciation, it is simply hopeless. As against this let us take up an Indian language, say Hindi. The very fact that Hindi is spoken by over one hundred and twenty millions of people, that is, nearly two-fifths of the entire population, naturally brings us into contact with it in season and out of season. We are more or less familiar with its words and sounds. Moreover it has a simple grammar which, in spite of its exaggerated difficulties about one or two things to which I shall presently refer, is very easy to learn. And, what is of prime importance it is phonetic. It is also a language which is pre-eminently adaptive, and has a wonderful capacity—in common with most of the Indian vernaculars—for expressing religious and philosophical ideas, the thing which is India's special province. It has also a very rich poetical literature and a fast developing prose literature too. All these things should at once give Hindi a predominance over English, no matter how rich the latter is in literature. The treasures of English literature will be beyond the reach of the rank and file of the Indian people unless they can have a sufficient command over the language, which it will take them years to do. The dream of certain enthusiasts that Indian children will readily pick up English if they hear it spoken in their nursery, will never materialise in India, for the simple reason that there will never be available a sufficient number of English people to form the required background to the Indian home-life. On the contrary, there are a hundred times more chances for an Indian language, Hindi for instance, to be so widespread in the land as to be imbibed with the mother's milk by every Indian child. The odds against English are overwhelming.

There are indeed people who are so convinced of the importance of English as a world language that they cannot think how any other language can be the national language of India. I refer them to countries like Japan, or France, or Germany. They do not use English as the common speech, but are just as fully

alive to what is going on in the world, by having the latest books on science or philosophy or literature translated into their own tongue. It is thus only that the millions can get into touch with the best thoughts of other countries in a short time. Of course France or Germany has English-speaking groups. India too will have them. They will be our specialists in that line. English will remain as one of the second languages in the country to be learnt at option. That is all. But that does not prevent Hindi or any other equally suitable Indian language being the national language of India. From whatever angle we look at the question, English cannot stand in comparison with any of these Indian languages as regards the ease with which it can be acquired and spoken *en masse*.

Now let me explain why I claim for Hindi advantages over any other Indian language. Why should we not choose Bengali, which is as easy to learn as Hindi, and much richer in literature, or Marathi, which comes next in order? Why not take up Tamil, that great language of Southern India, which is so ancient and so very rich in literature? The answer is, we must choose that language which is easy to learn, easy to pronounce, is widely spoken, is capable of great adaptability, and is rich in literature. If we consider all these five points, we shall see that Hindi's claims are the highest. As regards the first and last points, Bengali scores over Hindi. It is learnt more quickly because of its simpler grammar, and it has a very rich literature. Regarding this last point it yields place, if at all, only to Tamil. But Bengali pronunciation is difficult compared with Hindi, which is phonetic. Students of Northern India who have learnt Bengali through the eye, find great difficulties in speaking it correctly. They read and understand, but they cannot speak Bengali. The colloquial forms of expression are different from the literary forms, which makes it so hard for non-Bengalees to

speak correct Bengali. In fact, they are so conscious of their defects in this matter that they do not often dare to speak it for fear of exciting ridicule. So Bengali cannot be the language we are seeking for. I have conceded that Bengali has a richer literature than Hindi, but let it be remembered that the poetical literature of Hindi is vast and exceedingly rich, although slightly more difficult. Marathi and Gujarati are even more difficult than Hindi, because of their three genders, more or less arbitrary, instead of two, as in Hindi. Tamil is very much more difficult, specially as regards pronunciation, which every outsider can testify to. As regards the second point, Hindi, in common with Marathi and Gujarati, has advantages over Bengali or any Southern language. While as regards the third point, extensivity, it easily has the first place in India, with Bengali following at a distance. With reference to the fourth point, *viz.*, adaptability, Hindi yields to no other Indian language. So taking all things together Hindi fulfils most of the conditions that a national language in India should satisfy.

There is another point to consider. All the great North Indian languages are derived from Sanskrit. This is the reason why anyone of them can be easily acquired by those who speak the cognate languages. All of them open the door to the vast cultural wealth which Sanskrit, 'the language of the gods,' possesses more than any other language of the world. And it is impossible to overemphasise this point, for we, Indians, must always draw our inspiration from this inexhaustible mine of ancient treasures. Three of the four Southern languages, *viz.*, Telugu, Canarese and Malayalam, too, have a large percentage of Sanskrit words in them. And for this reason no Southerner, except the Tamilian, will find it difficult to learn Hindi. On the other hand, a Northerner who wishes to learn Tamil or any other Southern language, knows how much more laborious it is

for him than it is for his Southern brothers to learn his own. I make bold to say that one born and brought up in Southern India, even a Tamilian, and possessing an average culture will be able to pick up Hindi in six months or even earlier. This should effectively silence those who oppose the idea of Hindi being chosen as the national language of India. Does not English exact fifty times more labour? One may question this statement by pointing to the perplexities of Hindi gender. But on closer scrutiny the subject will not appear so formidable as one thinks. There is method in its madness. French in spite of the same handicap is the continental language of Europe. Yet Hindi verbs, notwithstanding their complication with gender, are much easier than French verbs. The position of French as a continental language is a settled fact, and nobody demurs to it, while objections are raised against Hindi on the ground of difficulty, simply because it is a new-comer in the field. With a little familiarity the outstanding advantages of Hindi will be patent to one and all. Its association with the *Devanagari* script is another point in its favour, which links it up with Sanskrit. Moreover, Urdu, the language of Indian Mahomedans, is but a variant of Hindi. Therefore, since Hindi has so many outstanding advantages and can be learnt so easily, it is not wise to raise objections against its use as the national language of India, specially when national interests are at stake. Let me repeat that not one of the existing vernaculars of India will be cast aside. They will con-

tinue to be spoken just as they are, in the provinces. All we want is that Hindi should be made the medium of an interchange of views between one province and another. I have already said that English will remain as an optional language. It will lose its present position no doubt, but that should not deter us from exercising our judgment in this all-important matter. What we want is a suitable national language, and Hindi, as I have tried to show, is the best one available. So let us choose that.

The solution of the language problem in India requires some little sacrifice. If instead of choosing that language which has the greatest claims, we fight for our respective mother-tongues—for which we have naturally a partiality—it will be hampering the national cause. For a united India a common medium of intercourse, a national language, is absolutely necessary, and for this let us throw overboard our personal predilections and be guided by practical considerations of the highest national importance. The one thing needed now is to provide facilities in every High School for learning Hindi. Let us earnestly do that, and the result will be marvellous. The national language cannot be delayed any more. The day is not far distant when Hindi will occupy its rightful place among the languages in India. We shall no more have to depend on a foreign tongue to speak to our own brothers and sisters of other provinces. A little more effort, and Hindi as a national medium of expression will be an accomplished fact.

MAHATMA GANDHI ON THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF INDIA

BY SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L.

The economic problems of India which have mostly occupied Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts are the following: 1. Poverty and Unemployment. 2. Village Reconstruction. 3. Cow Protection. 4. Muni-

cipal Problems. 5. Capital and Labour. 6. The Consumption of Wine, Tobacco and Tea. 7. Birth-control. An attempt will now be made to give a summary of his views on all these topics.

1. POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Of the various economic problems of India which have interested Mahatma Gandhi, the two which have attracted his attention most, are the twin evils of poverty and unemployment. He has repeatedly urged that the masses of India are very poor; that they are so poor that they almost lead the lives of cattle; that 30 millions of men do not get even two meals a day. Not only are the people very poor, but their poverty is growing.

One of the main causes of their poverty is, according to him, unemployment.¹ The peasants do not get employment for more than six months every year. For the remaining period, they remain idle. Hence, he says that what the peasants want is not so much food as work. If work is brought to their doors, then they can easily purchase their food with their increased earnings.

How has this unemployment been brought about? The reason is that the peasants have been deprived of their main supplementary occupation, *viz.*, hand-spinning. Who are responsible for depriving the peasants of their supplementary occupation? The parties responsible are, first, the Lancashire Mills, and secondly, the upper and the middle

¹ Mahatma Gandhi is of opinion that another important cause of their poverty is the drain on the country's resources caused by 'the marine, the military, the currency, the railway and the revenue policy of the Government.' Some other causes (the social system imposing the burden of maintaining a large family on a single person; the presence of a large number of *Sādhus*; enervating climate; lack of determination to fight against poverty; faulty educational system) mentioned by Prof. Vakil in a series of articles on the Poverty Problem in *Young India* for 1928, are regarded as contributory; *Vide Young India*, 1928, p. 304.

He also points in the same article that the spinning wheel (which will provide the peasants with a supplementary occupation) will bring but *partial relief* and that India's poverty will not be abated so long as the economic exploitation of India by the Government continues unabated.

classes in India. The Lancashire Mills have destroyed the supplementary occupation by sending cheap machine-made products. The upper and the middle classes in India are also responsible, since they have acted as middlemen in importing these foreign products. The peasants have thus been deprived of their supplementary occupation, but they have not been provided with any other subsidiary employment to take the place of hand-spinning. He has pointed out that no doubt in the West also machines deprived the peasants of the occupation of hand-spinning and hand-weaving, but there they were provided with many other new employments.

REMEDIES OF POVERTY

Various alternative remedies of Indian poverty are considered by Mahatma Gandhi.

1. Agricultural improvement.—He thinks that there are 'tremendous difficulties' in the way of bringing about agricultural improvement, *e.g.*, unwillingness of the Government; lack of capital; refusal of the peasant to take to new methods. The problem of manure cannot be solved without the education of the masses. The size of the holdings cannot be enlarged without revising the family system. For these reasons, agricultural improvement would take generations to bring about. It is not, however, declared to be unnecessary. It is necessary, but it must be preceded by a better and immediate remedy, *viz.*, the revival of the spinning industry. ('Spinning does not replace the contemplated improvement but it will herald it.')

2. Industrialization, *i.e.*, the establishment of factory industries.—It has been already said that according to Gandhiji, industrialism can thrive only on the exploitation of the Indian masses, since there is no other race big enough to be exploited by so large a country as India. Since it can thrive only by exploiting the poor, it cannot possibly remedy the poverty of the masses. Industrialism, therefore, is no remedy

for pauperism.² "Pauperism must go. But industrialism is no remedy." (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1187.)

It must be said in justice to Mahatma Gandhi, however, that though he is a firm believer in the incapacity of industrialism to solve the poverty problem of the country, he would not oppose the industrialization of the country by those who believe in the efficacy of industrialism to cure the poverty problem.³

8. Hand-weaving alone is not the appropriate remedy: for, (1) hand-weaving is not a supplementary, but a whole-time occupation, but what the peasants need is a supplementary occupation; (2) hand-weaving without hand-spinning would make the weavers but feeders to the cotton mills in Manchester, Bombay or Japan, *i.e.*, they would be made dependent on profit-seeking mill-owners; (3) besides, all mills are trying to produce cloths of the designs produced by the weavers.

Hand-weaving, however, is necessary only as supplementary to hand-spinning.

4. The multiplication of cotton mills to provide for India's cloth-supply is not a satisfactory solution, because (1) cotton mills cannot grow up like mushrooms; (2) they would require the importation of foreign machinery; (3) they cannot provide the millions with employment (providing the masses with employment is more important than making India self-sufficient as regards the supply of cloth); (4) they would ex-

² "What will you do with unemployment? Industrialize the whole country and become a nation of exploiters" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 276).

³ "I should have no objection whatsoever to industrial enterprise. . . . Only I would not call it necessarily humanitarian. A humanitarian industrial policy for India means to me a glorified revival of hand-spinning, for *through it alone* can pauperism, which is blighting the lives of human beings in their own cottages in this land, be *immediately* removed. Everything else *may thereafter be added*, so as to increase the productive capacity of the country" (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 719). (*Italics are ours*).

plot the masses; (5) the consequences of the failures of mills are very disastrous.

5. Hand-spinning alone is the only and the best immediate remedy.⁴

The reasons given for this special fitness of hand-spinning are: (1) A large market for hand-spun yarn can be immediately created in India, if imports of foreign cloth are stopped; (2) hand-spinning is easy to learn; (3) there is an ancient tradition behind it; (4) it can be carried on in the homes of the peasants; (5) it can be carried on during leisure hours; (6) it is the only supplementary occupation which can employ millions of men; and (7) it will equitably distribute wealth in millions of cottages.

ADDITIONAL MERITS OF THE SPINNING INDUSTRY

Apart from providing the peasants with work during idle hours, spinning will render valuable help in various other ways: (1) if school-children are taught to spin for a certain number of hours every day in the school, education can be made financially self-supporting, at best to a certain extent; (2) beggars can be made to work at this easy occupation; (3) women leading a life of shame can earn their living by taking to spinning; (4) during times of famine and flood, the afflicted men and women can earn at least as much through spinning as through work at Government Relief centres.

Hand-spinning would give rise to a demand for other workers such as weavers, bleachers, dyers, carders and ginners. Hence, it would provide many others with new employment.

Other industries may be encouraged after hand-spinning. But such indus-

⁴ Will Khadi help to make the nation prosperous, or will it simply save the people from starvation? In many passages (*Young India*, 1919-22, Tagore & Co., Madras, pp. 494 and 540) Gandhiji claims the former effect for Khadi, but in at least one passage he says that it will save the people from starvation. "I do claim that if the *Charkha* becomes universal, it will drive away starvation" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 276).

tries must be 'healthy and life-giving.' It is doubtful whether the establishment of large-scale industries is at all contemplated.

DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF KHADI

The obstacles in the way of Khadi ('hand-spun and hand-woven cloth'; it is supposed that hand-spinning would be accompanied by a vigorous revival of its necessary concomitant, *viz.*, hand-weaving) as mentioned by Mahatma Gandhi, are: (1) competition of foreign mills; (2) competition of indigenous mills; (3) apathy of the masses; (4) coarseness and dearness of the cloth.

The first obstacle is sought to be removed by asking the people to give up the use of foreign cloths and to take to Khadi only.

The second obstacle is not yet a reality, since if foreign cloth is displaced, it will not be possible to immediately organize the manufacture of the huge quantity of Khadi that would be needed to meet the entire needs of India with regard to cloth. Hence, for a certain length of time, there is room for both Khadi and Indian mill-made cloth. For the present, therefore, the two can co-exist. But Mahatma Gandhi's ultimate objective is undoubtedly the displacement of even Indian mill-made cloth by Khadi.

The apathy of the masses is to be overcome by inducing the classes (including the school students) to spin regularly every day for a certain period. That would give a respectable status to the occupation and would be considerably helpful in inducing the masses to take to it.

The difficulty about coarseness and dearness does not at all arise where peasants spin for the production of their own cloths. Where however yarn is spun for sale organizations will have to be started to purchase yarn from the spinners, to get cloths woven by the weavers and then to sell them in the market. In such circumstances, competitions with mill-made cloth will naturally arise. It will be difficult for Khadi to compete, as it is coarser and

dearer than mill-made cloth.⁵ To meet this difficulty, the upper and the middle classes are asked, first, to 'revise their taste' and to adapt themselves to the use of coarse cloth and, secondly, to bear the burden of the extra cost in order to help their poor and starving countrymen. The classes should bear the burden of a self-imposed policy of protection in order to place 'the national industry of India' on its legs again.

KHADI TO RESIST INDUSTRIALISM

It should be noted with the greatest care that the stress laid on Khadi is not due simply to the fact that it provides a supplementary occupation for the agriculturists. There is another important reason underlying the stress laid on it. And that is that Khadi will be a helpful weapon in resisting the advent of industrialism. This is evident from numerous passages in Mahatmaji's writings. A few are quoted here: "Just as both prince and peasant must eat and clothe themselves, so must both labour for supplying their primary wants. . . . Europe may not realise this vital necessity at the present moment, because it has made of exploitation of non-European races a religion. But it is a false religion bound to perish in the near future. The non-European races will never allow themselves to be for ever exploited. I have endeavoured to show a way out that is peaceful, human and therefore noble. It may be rejected. If it is, the alternative is a tug of war, in which each will try to pull down the other. Then, when non-European races will seek to exploit the Europeans, the truth of the Charkha will have to be realised." "The sword is probably more responsible for misery than opium. Hence do I say that if India takes to the spinning wheel she will contribute to the restriction of armament and peace of the world as no

⁵ Admission that Khadi cannot compete with mill-made cloth, *Young India*, 1927, p. 318.

other country and nothing else can.” “We must thus restore our ancient and health-giving industry if we would resist industrialism.” “India’s destiny lies not along the bloody way of the West, of which she shows signs of tiredness, but along the bloodless way of peace that comes from a simple and godly life.” “The Charkha at any rate is incapable of harming any body and without it we, and if I may say so, even the world, will go to rack and ruin. We know what Europe has been feeling after the War in which lies were propagated as the highest religion. The world is weary of the after-effects of the War and even as the Charkha is India’s comforter to-day, it may be the world’s to-morrow.” (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, pp. 713, 716, 1108, 1108; *Young India*, 1927, p. 43). The sum and substance of all the passages is that industrialism leads Europe to wars, hence in order to avoid wars we should resist the advent of industrialism and adopt a simple economic system raised on the basis of the Charkha.

That Khadi is to serve the purpose of the first step in re-establishing a simple economic system, is strikingly brought out in the following passage in an article by Mr. C. F. Andrews (whose views in relation to Khadi are almost the same as those of Mahatma Gandhi) in the *Young India* for 1927, p. 315: “The word Khaddar means home-spun and home-woven cotton cloth in which *machinery has played no part at all from start to finish*. The Khaddar ideal thus represents a *very daring declaration that the Machine Age has carried mankind in a wrong direction, bringing along with it the disintegration of earlier moral values. It is leading directly to disaster. The simpler rural civilisation, so it is positively asserted, is the best*. Mahatma Gandhi regards the *ideal of simplicity and closeness to Nature as higher than the ideal of the civilisation of our modern towns together with the factory life which is bound up with them*.” (Italics are ours). Mahatma Gandhi

also is of the same opinion. For example, he says at p. 415 of the *Young India* for the same year: “It (the spinning wheel) is a *standing rebuke against the modern mad rush for adding material comfort upon comfort and making life so complicated as to make one doubly unfit for knowing oneself or one’s God*.” (Italics are ours).

His fondness for a simple economic system (which is sought to be revived through Khadi) will be further evident from the following passages: “It is my claim that as soon as we have completed the boycott of foreign cloth, we shall have evolved so far that we shall necessarily give up the present absurdities and *remodel national life in keeping with the ideal of simplicity and domesticity* implanted in the bosom of the masses. *We will not then be dragged into an imperialism, which is built upon exploitation of the weaker races of the earth, and the acceptance of a giddy materialistic civilisation protected by naval and air forces that have made peaceful living almost impossible*.” “Suffice it to say that the problem to-day is not to bring about *that political and economic reorganisation of our country which disturbs the West to-day*—an organisation which has led to the breaking up of the society by ceaseless struggles, bitterness and rupture between capital and labour. We want to work out *the real political and economic regeneration of the country by Swadeshi*.” (Italics are ours.) (*Young India*, 1919-22, Tagore and Co., Madras, pp. 526 and 546).

2. VILLAGE RECONSTRUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi’s expectation is that spinning will save the peasants from poverty, will infuse new life into them by banishing their lethargy brought about by idleness and will instil into them the habit of co-operating with themselves for their own good. Once these desirable results are secured, the restoration of the village artisans to their own occupations and an all-round improvement of the village will not be

difficult to bring about. "Round the Charkha, that is, amidst the people who have shed their idleness and who have understood the value of co-operation, a national servant would build up a programme of anti-malaria campaign, improved sanitation, settlement of village disputes, conservation and breeding of cattle and hundreds of other beneficial activities" (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 714). "With spinning and weaving coming to their own, there will grow up a number of allied industries. The carpenter, the blacksmith, the washerman and others will find additional work, and a lot of skilled labour. In other words, you will reconstruct the Indian village" (*Young India*, 1927, p. 276).

The aim is, therefore, to retain the self-sufficient and simple villages almost unchanged in their essential characteristics. Life in the villages is sought only to be made a little more tolerable than what it is to-day.

3. COW PROTECTION

In India the cow is slaughtered for consumption by non-Hindus. It is also slaughtered by the Mahomedans as a part of their religious obligation.

Protection of the cow means that the cow is to be saved at least from being slaughtered for food.

Protection of the cow is a religious obligation with the Hindus. This religious obligation has arisen because of the economic utility of the cow.

Mahatma Gandhi is of opinion that half the poverty problem of India can be solved if the cow can be protected.

The various suggestions made by him from time to time for the protection of the cow, are as follows :

1. Better treatment.—The Hindus specially should not maltreat the cow and should not practise cruel tortures on her in order to make her yield milk.

2. Improved *Pinjrapoles*.—There are already about 1500 *pinjrapoles* in the country. But the slaughtering of cows, instead of diminishing, is gradually increasing. Hence, the mere multi-

plication of *pinjrapoles* is not enough. The existing *pinjrapoles* should be improved and their functions extended. They should be placed under expert management. They should have wide plots of land all around, where the cattle can graze and take exercise. Dairies should be started for the milch cows. Milk and its products would fetch a good income. Besides, tanneries should be started for the proper treatment and disposal of the hides and the other parts of the carcasses of dead cows. This also would bring some profit to the *pinjrapoles*. The profits derived from the dairies and the tanneries should be utilized in buying up cattle sold to the slaughter-houses, and in maintaining them if they are totally disabled and useless. The *pinjrapoles* should also endeavour to improve the breed of the cow.

The central idea is that not only are the useless cows to be maintained but the cow is to be made so valuable that its slaughter would be economically a dead loss.

3. Altruistic tanneries.—Exports of hides to be stopped. Leather to be manufactured in altruistic tanneries. The profits derived therefrom to be utilized in buying up the cows sold to the slaughter houses.

4. Hides of dead cattle.—The use of hides of dead cattle only is to be encouraged.

5. Release of the buffalo from bondage.—Buffaloes generally yield more milk than cows. Hence, the breeding of the buffaloes has become a profitable occupation. But the breeders resort to the inhuman practice of killing male buffaloes (except those required for stud purposes) at birth, since they are not helpful as draught cattle, nor is their flesh sufficiently remunerative. If cows are made to yield sufficient milk, then the breeding of buffaloes would no longer be necessary. The two-fold functions (drawing loads and yielding milk) now discharged by the she-buffalo can be discharged by the cow and the bullock.

6. Education of the villagers in cattle improvement.—This is very important because, first, every real reform should begin from the villages and, secondly, the villages are the places where the slaughter-houses (taking advantage of the ignorance of the peasants about cattle-breeding) generally draw upon for cattle.

4. MUNICIPAL PROBLEMS

Mahatma Gandhi has received many addresses of welcome from various municipalities in India. In the course of his replies to these municipalities he has laid stress on the various duties which they should make it a point of discharging. These are :

1. The municipal councillors should rise above all petty quarrels and intrigues, should develop a proper sense of civic responsibility and should devote themselves to their duty in a spirit of service.

2. The habits of the people of India are very insanitary. Epidemic diseases like cholera, hook-worm and malaria are due to the insanitary habits of the people. Not poverty, but ignorance of the principles of sanitation is responsible for the prevalence of dirty habits.⁶ The municipalities should keep the cities clean and should start model schools of sanitation.

Mahatma Gandhi is opposed to almost everything that comes from the West. But he considers that the Westerners are experts in city-building and hence we might learn a good deal from them as regards the science of municipal sanitation.

3. Municipalities should do all they can to protect the cow in order to ensure a supply of cheap and pure milk. It should be made so cheap that it can be had 'as easily as water.'

⁶ Usually Mahatma Gandhi is willing to rely on private efforts for the removal of any evil. But the problem of insanitation is considered by him to be so very serious that he is willing to resort to compulsion in order to change the habits of the people.

4. Food-stuffs sold within the boundaries of a municipality should be clean and unadulterated.

5. A supply of absolutely clean water should be ensured. A supply of clean water is 'the first essential condition of corporate, *i.e.*, of city life.'

6. The suburbs are to be opened up if there is any congestion within the city.

7. The fullest facility is to be given for the education of every child in the municipality.

8. Endeavours should be made to draw people away from gambling dens and liquor-shops, if any, within the municipal area.

5. CAPITAL AND LABOUR

Mahatma Gandhi is fond of styling himself as a labourer. He has mixed much with labourers and has an actual experience of their woes and troubles. Besides, on numerous occasions he has taken a hand in organizing them. Hence his views on the relations between capital and labour are bound to be interesting. His views are mainly the following :

Labour and capital may be struggling with one another in the West. But India's history is not one of strained relations between capital and labour. Nor will the Indian system allow of the introduction of such relations.

Some of the grievances of the labourers are that their wages are insufficient, their dwellings are unsatisfactory and their employers are indifferent to their welfare. The labourers should organize themselves in order to get their grievances reduced. But the organization should be on Indian lines. Violence is to be completely eschewed and rights are to be secured through suffering.

Labour and capital are 'interdependent'. They are 'partners' in the process of production, labour being 'the predominant partner'. Hence, labour should recognize its obligations to capital. Capital also should observe its obligations to labour.

Capitalists in the West are satisfied with looking after the material welfare of the labourers. But Indian capitalists should not be satisfied with that but should aim at a higher ideal. They should also take an interest in their moral welfare and should cease to regard them as their servants. Capitalists should take a 'parental interest' in the welfare of the labourers. But that even is not all. Labourers should even be promoted to the position of proprietors of the mills and factories in which they work.

Perfect co-ordination is possible between capital and labour, and it is in this way that it can be brought about.⁷

6. THE CONSUMPTION OF WINE, TOBACCO AND TEA

Mahatma Gandhi regards wine as responsible for much of the physical and spiritual depravity of man. Hence, he is anxious for the introduction of total prohibition in India. Total prohibition is not difficult to introduce in this country, since the drink-habit is not regarded as respectable in this country and is even prohibited by the Indian religions. The main obstacle in the way is the pro-drink attitude of the Government due to its inability to part with the revenue derived from drink. Hence, according to him, lack of political power alone prevents us from introducing total prohibition.

Failing the better remedy of total prohibition, Gandhiji advocates the less effective remedy of trying to reform the habits of drunkards by persuasion.

⁷ Mahatma Gandhi has taken some interest in the economic condition of clerks, whose circumstances he considers in certain respects to be even more deplorable than those of the labourers, owing to the fact that in the families of the former the clerk is usually the only earning member, while in those of the latter, practically all adults are earning members. He suggests two measures for their amelioration: (1) organization, (2) 'educating their wives and dependants to engage in some gainful occupation.' (*Young India*, 1928, p. 139).

The drink evil prevails much among the factory labourers. The latter take to drink because of the environments in which they live and work. Attempts should be made to provide them with centres of recreation where they can congregate in the evening and get innocent drink. In this way they may be tempted away from the public bars.

Smoking is regarded as a much greater evil than drink. The reason is that the evil effects of smoking are not realized until it is too late. The evil effects mentioned are: (1) dirty habits are developed; (2) teeth are damaged; (3) the sense of delicate discrimination is dulled.

Tobacco, tea and coffee should not be consumed, for (1) they are not necessities; and (2) a large amount of money might be saved by stopping their consumption.

7. BIRTH-CONTROL

Mahatma Gandhi is of opinion that India can support twice its present population if its agriculture and land system can be improved and if the peasants get a supplementary occupation. (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1217).

Hence, restriction of the size of the family need not be resorted to out of fear for over-population.

But it is necessary because of the present political condition of the country.

The method to be resorted to is that of *Brahmacharyya* (self-control).

Married men should exercise complete self-control after the need for progeny has ceased. They are to be taught to resort to *Brahmacharyya* in order to restrict the size of the family.

To what extent is self-control practicable? Mahatmaji assures us from the experience of himself and of his followers that, 'by judicious treatment', self-control 'can be observed without much difficulty.'

Artificial methods of birth-control may or may not be physiologically harmful. But the practice of those

methods is severely condemned for various reasons. First, they would put a premium upon vice; secondly, the opportunity of developing strength of will born of struggling with, and conquering one's passions would be lost; and, thirdly, much precious vitality would be wasted.

INTEREST IN A FEW OTHER PROBLEMS

We have till now related Mahatma Gandhi's attitude towards the problems of Indian Economics which have attracted his attention most. His attitude towards some other problems which have occasionally drawn his attention will now be dealt with.

1. Third-Class Railway Passengers.—After his return from South Africa, in spite of the amplitude of his means, he used to subject himself to the discomforts of third-class travel in order to personally experience the inconveniences and discomforts suffered by the third-class passengers. In a letter to the Press in 1917⁸ and in a lecture delivered at a Social Service Conference⁹ held in Calcutta in the same year, he discussed the grievances of third-class passengers. The same topic is also touched upon in his Autobiography.

The various grievances of third-class passengers, especially mentioned, are: (1) overcrowding; (2) dirtiness of the compartments and the closets; (3) the extremely unsatisfactory arrangements in the *Mosafir khanas* (third-class waiting rooms); and (4) the high-handedness and callousness of the railway officials in their dealings with third-class passengers.

The passengers themselves do not escape condemnation. They are severely criticised for their attitude of helplessness as regards their own complaints and also for their own rudeness, dirty habits, selfishness and ignorance.

2. Free Trade vs. Protection.—Free trade is responsible for the ruin of the

Indian peasantry. It is also responsible for the destruction of Indian shipping. "No new trade can compete with foreign trade without protection." Hence Mahatma Gandhi is prepared to welcome protection for the cotton industry, Indian shipping and 'other useful industries.' Only he would like that preference should be given to Khadi. "I would any day welcome protection for mill industry, although I give and would always give preference to hand-spun khaddar. Indeed I would give protection to all useful industries" (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1271).

Is it proper to develop the steel industry by protection? Mahatma Gandhi refrains from giving a definite answer. His position is explained in the following statement: "Of what use they can possibly be at the present moment, I do not know; nor do I know the merits of the proposal regarding the Steel Works." (Cf. his remarks in connection with the Iron Works started in Mysore, *Young India*, 1927, p. 283).

3. Co-operation.—Gandhiji does not regard the co-operative movement as 'a panacea for all evils.' But he thinks that it is capable of much good. In order, however, that the movement may be beneficial it is necessary that it should be confined to men of morals, and that careful watch should be kept over the manner in which the loans advanced by co-operative societies are utilized. Special emphasis is laid on the necessity of ensuring the moral growth of existing Societies before their number is multiplied. The efforts of the Co-operative Societies to revive the cottage industries is looked upon with marked approval.¹⁰

Mahatma Gandhi has not himself taken any active part in the Co-operative Movement, but he regards the organization of the spinners and weavers, that is being pushed on by

⁸ *Speeches and Writings*, G. A. Natesan & Co., p. 268.

⁹ *Speeches and Writings*, p. 371.

¹⁰ *Vide* lecture on the "Moral Basis of Co-operation" (*Speeches and Writings*, p. 261).

him, as in itself a very big Co-operative Movement.

4. Emigration.—Emigration is regarded as harmful. The emigrants may earn more money abroad, but they do not return better men. Besides, their wants multiply after their visits to foreign lands (*Speeches and Writings*, p. 283). The difficult problem of emigration may be solved by providing the would-be emigrants with the occupation of spinning (*Young India*, 1919-22, Tagore and Co., p. 493).

5. Tree Protection.—The fulfilment of every human need is a religious necessity. ("All religions is presumably in response to the human aspiration or need. Religion is some irresistible binding force. The cow was a peremptory need and we had cow protection in India. Digging of wells where water is scarce is a religion. It would be ludicrous to dig wells where the water-supply is inexhaustible. Similarly, whilst tree plantation would be superfluous in, say Travancore, in some parts of India it is a religious necessity." (*Young India*, 1924-26, S. Ganesan, p. 1297). Hence, in barren tracts such as Cutch and Kathiawad, the protection and plantation of trees and the teaching of practical botany are stressed as a religious necessity.

EDUCATION

A full statement of Mahatma Gandhi's thoughts on current economic questions has now been completed.

In the present-day world, education is of the greatest importance from the economic standpoint. Hence, even while engaged in a study of Mahatma Gandhi's economic ideas, we should briefly notice the nature of his thoughts on education.

Mahatma Gandhi has written and spoken a good deal on questions of education. An idea will now be given of the most important elements in his thoughts on education.

These thoughts will be divided under three heads: (1) defects of the present

system of education; (2) subjects to be taught; (3) additional suggestions.

Defects of the Present System.—The present system of education manufactures only clerks and Government servants; it designs us only to be parts of a huge foreign machine; needless palatial buildings are built for schools and colleges ("the whole trend is to think of the privileged and not of the masses"); the training for occupations is neglected; a foreign language is adopted as the medium of instruction; indigenous culture and spirituality are ignored.

Subjects to be Taught.—(1) Agriculture and hand-weaving (the majority of Indians are peasants and weavers); (2) carpentry; (3) masonry; (4) practical training in the laws of hygiene and sanitation; (5) art of rearing children; (6) military training; (7) music; (8) gymnastic and body-training; (9) spinning ("the students may learn anything but let it centre round the Charkha"); (10) practical botany (in tracts where tree plantation is an economic necessity).

Some Additional Suggestions.—Western civilization not to be imitated; spirituality to be fostered; religious training to be imparted before a knowledge of the letters; manual¹¹ (industrial) training required (to teach the dignity of labour and to enable the students to partly pay for their education,—it is in the way alone that education can be made freely available to all in a country as poor as India); European dress and modern luxuries not to be imitated; education to be imparted through the provincial vernacular; Hindusthani to be taught as the national language (English to become the language of commerce and international diplomacy and hence to be learnt by a few); the family system not to be overlooked in education; indigenous methods of teaching arithmetic to be adopted; the teaching of science to be made more

¹¹ Agriculture, hand-spinning and hand-weaving favoured, training in other arts and crafts not opposed.

practical; teachers must be men of faith and character; students to be sent to join relief works from time to time during their school and college career ('the end of education is service').

Compulsory education is not favoured, as Mahatma Gandhi is usually

against all compulsion. But he does not definitely oppose it.

The function of women, according to him, is not to earn money; hence, the education of females should be the same as that of males up to a certain stage; later, it should be different.

ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

BY SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

विश्वं स्फुरति यत्रेदं तरङ्गा इव सागरे ।
तत्त्वमेव न सन्देहश्चिन्मूर्त्ते विज्वरो भव ॥७॥

(६०) चिन्मूर्त्ते^१ Intelligence itself यत्र in which इदं this विश्व' universe सागरे in the ocean तरङ्गा: waves इव like स्फुरति is manifested तत् that त्वम् you एव verily (भवसि are) (त्व' you) विज्वरः free from fever भव be.

7. O you Intelligence, you indeed are that in which the universe¹ manifests itself like waves on the ocean. Be² you free from fever³.

[¹ Universe etc.—The universe is the same as the Self.

² Be etc.—When one realises that one is the same as the universe, one does not hanker after its joys or is any way entangled by it.

³ Fever—the fever of worldliness—desires for its joys gross and subtle, and fear and ignorance about it,—all the complications that arise out of the ignorance of the true nature of the universe.]

श्रद्धस्व तात श्रद्धस्व नात्र मोहं कुरुष्व भोः ।
ज्ञानस्वरूपो भगवानात्मा त्वं प्रकृतेः परः ॥८॥

तात Child श्रद्धस्व have faith श्रद्धस्व have faith भोः O you अत्र in this मोहं mistake न not कुरुष्व make त्वं you ज्ञानस्वरूपः Knowledge itself भगवान् lord आत्मा Self प्रकृतेः than Nature परः greater (असि are).

8. Have¹ faith, my son, have faith. Never² delude yourself in this. You are Knowledge itself, you are the lord, you are the Self, and you are superior³ to Nature.

[¹ Have etc.—Ashtavakra is impressing the true nature of the Self on the mind of the disciple.

² Never etc.—Till one has actually realised the Self, one finds it hard to believe that the Self is really what the sages describe it to be and that the universe is really nothing.

³ Superior etc.—Unaffected by Nature and controlling it.]

गुणैः संवेष्टितो देहस्तिष्ठत्यायाति याति च ।
आत्मा न गन्ता नागन्ता किमेनमनुशोचसि ॥९॥

गुणैः With the organs of senses संवेष्टितः covered देहः body तिष्ठति stays आयाति comes याति goes च and आत्मा Self न not गन्ता goes आगन्ता comes किम् why एनम् this अनुशीचसि lament.

9. The body covered with the organs of senses comes, stays and goes. The Self¹ neither comes nor goes. Why do you then mourn it² ?

[¹ *Self etc.*—The Self is beyond the body and does not partake of its nature. The body changes, the Self does not.

² *It*—the changes of the body, such as death.]

देहस्तिष्ठतु कल्पान्तं गच्छत्वद्यैव वा पुनः ।

क वृद्धिः क च वा हानिस्तत्र चिन्मात्ररूपिणः ॥१०॥

देहः Body कल्पान्तं to the end of the cycle तिष्ठतु remain पुनः again अद्य to-day एव verily गच्छतु go वा or चिन्मात्ररूपिणः तव of you who are pure Intelligence क where वृद्धिः increase क where च वा and हानिः decrease.

10. Let the body last to the end of the *Kalpa* (cycle) or let it go even to-day. Where¹ is there any increase or decrease in you who are pure Intelligence?

[¹ *Where etc.*—The conditions of the body make not the slightest difference to the Self. Therefore fear not death.]

त्वय्यनन्तमहाम्बोधौ विश्ववीचिः स्वभावतः ।

उदेतु वास्तमायातु न ते वृद्धिर्न वा क्षतिः ॥११॥

अनन्तमहाम्बोधौ In the infinite ocean त्वयि in you विश्ववीचिः the wave of the universe स्वभावतः spontaneously उदेतु rise अस्तम् आयातु subside वा or ते your वृद्धिः increase न not (भवति is) क्षतिः loss न not (भवति is) वा or.

11. Let the waves of the universe rise or fall of their own¹ accord in you who are the infinite Ocean. That means no gain² or loss to you.

[In the preceding verse, complete disidentification with the body and its changes is preached. In the present, complete disidentification with the universe is enjoined.

¹ *Own etc.*—The universe is endlessly going from creation to creation with a period of dissolution between. But that should not affect the Self. The Self is beyond time and causation. Creation and dissolution are in time. We must not think ourselves as their creature, but above and beyond them.

² *Gain etc.*—Just as waves when they rise do not add to the ocean, or take away from it when they subside, so the creation of the universe which is really the same as the Self, does not add anything to the Self, nor does it take anything away from it when it is dissolved.]

तात चिन्मात्ररूपोऽसि न ते भिन्नमिदं जगत् ।

अतः कस्य कथं कुत्र हेयोपादेयकल्पना ॥१२॥

तात Child (त्वं you) चिन्मात्ररूपः pure Intelligence itself असि are इदं this जगत् world ते from you भिन्नं different न not (भवति is) अतः therefore कस्य whose

कथं how कुत्र where हेयोपादेयकल्पना the thought of the rejectable and the acceptable (भवति is).

12. My child, you are pure Intelligence itself. This universe is nothing different¹ from you. Therefore² who will accept³ and reject? And how and where would he do so?

[¹ *Different etc.*—When we try to grasp the reality of the universe, we find it to be our own self, which is pure Intelligence itself.

² *Therefore etc.*—If we know the universe as the pure Intelligence and as our self, the distinctions of good or bad in the universe cannot arise. Only “I” exist. I cannot reject or accept myself. There is also no instrument,—the mind—for such rejection or acceptance. And there is no space or reality outside me from where I can accept or where I can reject.

³ *Accept etc.*—This transcendental attitude is possible only when we realise the universe as the Self. So long as we know it as phenomenal, there must be necessarily the distinctions of good and evil. Ashtavakra urges us to outgrow the present limited and distorted vision.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS

In This Number

As usual, the number begins with *Discourses on Jnana Yoga* by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. We draw the special attention of our readers to the Swami's remarks on the nature and limits of the knowledge of the Perfected Ones. We dare say this subject has engaged the attention of many at some time or other. . . . *An Unpublished Letter of Swami Vivekananda to Sister Christine*, though short, is a revelation of the character of both the Swami and the disciple. We regret to say that Sister Christine passed away on the morning of the 27th March in New York. . . . ROMAIN ROLLAND contributes *America at the Time of Vivekananda's First Visit* to the present number. It is a very interesting essay, as every reader will admit. M. Rolland's extraordinary genius enlivens whatever it dwells upon, and his penetrative vision easily discovers the larger, cosmic movements behind the passing events, as is well illustrated by his present article. We wish space had not prevented us from including the footnotes, for these with M. Rolland are really parts of the text itself. . . . DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR,

M.A., PH.D., whose *Phases of Immediate Experience* we publish in this issue, is not unknown to our readers. The Professor is a learned writer and can well claim a very close attention from his readers. The present article which will be completed next month, deals with various grades of supernormal experience. This is a kind of introduction to a series of essays to follow, in which the author will deal with the intuition, vision and truth of the Upanisads. . . . *A National Language for India* by SWAMI MADHAVANANDA deals with a crying problem of Modern India. The Swami is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order. He was president of the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama for many years before he went to San Francisco, U.S.A., to take charge of the Vedanta Centre there. He returned to India last year. The Swami is quite proficient in the language, the cause of which he so ably pleads. . . . SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L. contributes his second article on Indian Economics,—*Mahatma Gandhi on the Economic Problems of India*. He will next deal with the views of Prof. Benoy Kumar Sircar. The articles are designed to give dis-

passionate accounts of these eminent workers and thinkers in the field of Indian economics, without the slightest criticism in any way.

The Passing of Sister Christine

It is with a heavy heart that we record the passing away of Sister Christine on the 27th March last in the city of New York. Sister Christine's original name was Miss Christina Greenstidel and she was a resident of Detroit in America, where she had the good fortune of listening to the lectures of Swami Vivekananda in 1894. She was, as she once told us, much struck by the Swami's great love for his motherland, so much so that she at once procured books on India in order to acquaint herself with the greatness of the land which was the object of so much adoration on the part of the Swami. This was significant, for she was destined soon to make India her own adopted country.

The Sister did not meet the Swami personally at Detroit. But his influence worked on her. And very soon she went with a dear friend to meet him and, if possible, to be accepted as his disciple, to Thousand Island Park where the Swami was then staying with a band of chosen disciples. They reached there on a night which was dark and rainy. But the Swami at once came down to receive them. When they saw him they could only say: "We have come to you just as we would go to Jesus if he were still on earth and ask him to teach us." He looked kindly at them and said gently: "If only I possessed the power of Christ to set you free!" and he asked them to join the household. It was there that the Sister became a disciple of the Swami and received the best of her training from him. The Swami had a very great love for this gentle disciple of his, as will be evident from a letter which we publish in page 211. And he often used to say: "My disciples who travelled hundreds of miles to find me and they came in the night and in the rain!"

At Thousand Island Park, Swamiji devoted a considerable part of his time and energy to thinking out solutions for the various problems of India, and he chose the Sister for his educational work for Indian women. Accordingly the Sister came to Calcutta in the early part of 1902, a few months before the Swami's passing. In the autumn of 1903, when Sister Nivedita started her Girls' School in the Baghbazar quarter of Calcutta, she joined her with great enthusiasm. Sister Nivedita herself said: "In the autumn of 1903, the whole work for Indian women was taken up and organised by an American disciple, Sister Christine, and to her, and her faithfulness and initiative, alone, it owes all its success up to the present. . . . Before her advent our school consisted of classes for little girls, in which Kindergarten methods were practised with more or less success. When Sister Christine, however, took up management at the end of 1903, it was with the intention of devoting herself specially to the cause of married women and widows. This effort she added to that already established, and, by this means, greatly extended the scope of the work." Sister Christine was no novice in educational work, for before she came to India, she had held a lucrative post in the educational department of the city of Detroit.

She continued her work in the Nivedita School with a whole-hearted devotion till her departure for America about 1914. After the passing away of Sister Nivedita in 1911, the entire work had fallen on her shoulders, but she worked on untired and with unflagging zeal. She was purity, sweetness and gentleness personified, and she naturally made a profound impression on all who came in contact with her.

Sister Christine returned to India in 1924. But soon her health broke down, and though she rallied a little about 1927, she had to go back to America the next year again. The authorities of the Ramakrishna Mission very recently invited her to come to India to direct the affairs of the School. But a

greater call sounded in her ears and she passed away.

She was a rare soul. She was one of the best beloved of the Swami's disciples, and undoubtedly she has passed through the gate of death to that realm of eternal peace and joy, to which she in truth belonged.

Vedantists in America

We extract the following paragraphs from an article under the above name contributed by Dr. Sudhindra Bose, M.A., Ph.D., to the March number of *The Modern Review*. Dr. Bose is well-known to readers of Indian journals in which his writings often appear. He has been a resident of America for many years, and is a lecturer in the Iowa University, U.S.A. The testimony of an enlightened mind not related to the activities of our Swamis in America, is certainly worth recording. Says Dr. Bose :

“Modern India, in its hurly-burly of politics, often forgets those noble souls who are spreading the light of the Vedanta in America. Any one with half an eye can see that the message of these consecrated men has been beneficial not only to America, but to India as well. On the one hand they have placed before America, torn and distracted by hundreds of Christian sects, an ennobling ideal of universal religion, and on the other, they have helped to build a bridge of better understanding and appreciation between India and the New World. Their services in multiplying points of rational contact between these two countries are invaluable. They have at least made a magnificent beginning in bridging a gulf between the two great peoples. Those who belittle the services of these selfless men are in the kindergarten state of their thinking. . . . To-day there are six Vedanta centres served by nearly a dozen Swamis. They are all members of the order of Ramkrishna-Vivekananda.” We should add that the number of centres has increased in the mean time, there being

as many as nine well-established centres of work, not to mention a few more which are not yet well-grounded. And we have seven Swamis working there, and there are insistent calls for more. Dr. Bose continues :

“The record of the activities of this group of devoted workers in the cause of humanity calls to mind the early Buddhist missionaries who went from India far and wide, and preached the gospel of Gautama Buddha. Their work was not wasted. The seed is living. The Swamis are men of vision, seers, dreamers of dreams.

“The Indian missionaries have not come to the United States with a mercantile outlook. In this respect they stand apart and above the ordinary run of Christian missionaries who are eager to have the flag follow the Gospel. Consider, for instance, the case of Henry Morton Stanley who went to rescue David Livingston, the Scottish missionary to Africa. Stanley on his return from the ‘Dark Continent’ delivered a speech before the Manchester Chamber of Commerce urging it to support the missionary cause in the Congo.

“The religion of the Vedas as taught by Indian missionaries is as different from the calico-Christianity of Stanley as North Pole is from the South Pole. Moreover, the Indian missionaries are men of education, culture, and refinement. They are, without any exception, men of exemplary character. They honestly try to live up to their highest ideals. It often thrills me to compare them with many Christian stalwarts like, for example, Sir John Hawkins—that pious English burglar and pirate who enjoined his men to ‘Love one another’ and ‘Serve God daily’ while he kidnapped African negroes to sell them into slavery. Even to this day there are innumerable Bible pests who preach one thing and practise another.

“Let me mention here the six Vedanta centres in this country :

“The Vedanta Society of New York is under the direction of Swami Bodhananda. He has been in New York City

for over fifteen years. Associated with him is Swami Jnaneswarananda.

“The Vedanta Centre of Boston, is under the charge of Swami Paramananda.

“The Vedanta Centre of Providence enjoys the leadership of Swami Akhila-nanda.

“The Ananda Ashrama of La Crescenta, California, is headed also by Swami Paramananda.

“The Vedanta Society of San Francisco has, as its spiritual leader, Swami Dayananda. It came into being as the direct result of Swami Vivekananda’s work in San Francisco in 1900. It is the second oldest Vedanta centre in America. Like the Vedanta Society of New York, the San Francisco organization has been a sort of training post for many new Swamis from India. It has also the distinction of having the first Hindu temple in the United States.

“Last, but not least, is the Vedanta Society of Portland, Oregon. It is presided over by Swami Prabhavananda.”

There are a few more centres. There is a Santi Ashrama in California. And lately two centres have been started in Hollywood and Chicago under Swami Prabhavananda and Swami Jnaneswarananda respectively. The Portland centre is now directed by Swami Vividishananda who lately went there from India.

“Volumes could be written about the Swamis who are connected with the Vedanta movement in America. . . . They are men among men. They do not need my commendation.

“There is in the United States a babel of religious views; but the leaders of the Vedanta movement are not concerned with any particular creed. They preach a universal religion of truth, justice, and love. ‘Vedanta is antagonistic to no religions or philosophies,’ observes Swami Bodhananda of New York, ‘but is in perfect harmony with them all. What humanity is to mankind, what life is to living being—that, the Vedanta is to religions. It is their inner unity—common essence, and

as such has no quarrel with them. The whole can have no quarrel with the parts. Vedanta has room for all religions. Nay, it embraces them all.’ . . .

“There are many in America who are not satisfied with the present system of Christian religion with its theology. Its God is the blood-thirsty Jehova of the Old Testament, hostile to strangers, full of fury and bombast. Enlightened Americans are disgusted with it. They want rational explanation of life and existence. Then there is another class of Americans who believe in religion, just ‘religion,’ and want to know the practical aspects of religion. There is still another group of people who are scientifically minded. They want a scientific religion. These three types of people do not and cannot get the help they need from any of the organized religions of America. For them the teachings of Vedanta offer a refuge. . . .

“The Swamis are of the opinion that Vedanta is intensely practical. It puts faith in one’s own self by emphasizing that all power and perfection is already within the individual. The difference between the perfected man and the ordinary man is not qualitative but quantitative, not in essence but in the degree of manifestation.

“Christian missionaries in India, with a few exceptions, breed ill-will, hatred and hot antagonism. During my last visit to India, I heard this view explained by scores of men. They told me that these uninvited guests abuse the hospitality of the nation. The proselytizers are among the sharpest critics of Indian national aspirations, and not infrequently seek to influence the bureaucracy and even to control legislation. Whether just or unjust, these are among the most important causes of the existing dislike against Christian missionaries.

“Now, the Indian missionaries never meddle with American political and social problems. They confine themselves exclusively to the field of religion, or to be more accurate, the message of Vedanta. They try to interest Americans through lectures, interviews, discus-

sion classes, talks over the radio, and informal social intercourse. In addition they all hold regular Sunday services. Needless to say that all Americans are not interested in religion. Only those who have learned to think for themselves, and are looking for a rational way of life feel drawn towards the Vedanta.

“The task of the Swamis is by no means easy. Most Americans are brought up on mass-emotion and seldom think rationally. From mere inertia of habit they swallow such puerile dogmas as: ‘Man is born in sin and iniquity’; ‘the world was created in seven days’; ‘Christianity is the only true religion’; ‘this is our only chance, after death we shall remain buried in the grave until the Day of Judgment, when there will be a bodily resurrection and we shall go to eternal heaven or eternal hell.’ Only people who have ‘grown up and are not simply grown grey-haired can turn away from such nonsense, and listen to the appeals of reason.

“The intellectual presentation of Vedanta is not always pleasant to American ‘sermon tasters’. The Swamis, so far as I know, keep Vedanta in its original purity and majesty, and never stoop to adulterate it with healing and mystery-mongering. Moreover they do not seek to make converts. . . .

“The prospects for Vedanta work in this country, according to those who are in close touch with it, are bright. The

demand for Vedanta societies is increasing rapidly. The people with whom the Swamis come into contact are mostly sympathetic towards India and Indian philosophy. One must not forget, however, that they have to work against many handicaps: foreign customs, foreign tongue, opposition of Christian churches, and inherited inertia. Besides, the American mass mind craves for entertainments and emotionalism. Where the masses find these things, they flock by hundreds. The Swamis avoid all sensationalism as pestilence, and yet they get a good hearing. . . .

“The Eastern thought as developed in Asia, particularly in India, seems to be coming again to rescue the Western world from materialism. ‘The East’, asks Mrs. Adams Beck in her *Story of Oriental Philosophy*, ‘haughty, aristocratic, spiritual and other-worldly, leisured, tolerant of all faiths and philosophies, moving on vast spiritual orbits about the central sun: the West, eager, hurried, worldly, absorbed in practical and temporary affairs, opinionated, contemptuous of other peoples and faiths, money-loving less for money’s sake than its pursuit, younger, infinitely younger in tastes and psychic development than the East—what point of fusion can there be between the philosophies of these two divergent branches of the same great root?’ That question is being answered by the Vedantists in America.”

REVIEW

THE RELIGION WE NEED. By S. Radhakrishnan. Ernest Benn, Ltd., London. 32 pp. Price 1s. net.

In this little book the famous Professor has boldly taken up the challenge of atheism which is the chief characteristic of the modern age, and conclusively proved that we cannot avoid God and Religion however we may try. In the book the author has first analysed the modern tendencies and shown that the theory of evolution is incapable of undermining our faith in God. For did not Darwin himself say: “The births both of the individual and the species

are equally parts of that grand sequence of events which the mind refuses to accept as the result of blind chance. The understanding revolts from such a conclusion.” But the author does not ask us like the fundamentalists to shut our eyes to the facts of modern thought and inquiry, nor is he afraid of the light of scientific discoveries, for, according to him, “science is essentially spiritual in temper and pleadings. Instead of abolishing mysteries of the world, it has deepened them.” About the ultimate reality, the author frankly confesses that it “is difficult to grasp and impossible to define. We

can be sure of what God is not, but not of what God is."

The reason why people are scared away by religion is that they have no real idea about it. The author nicely clears that point when he says, "Religious life does not consist in the acceptance of academic abstractions or the celebrations of ceremonies. It is not sentimental adoration or cringing vague social idealism. It is spiritual certainty offering us strength and solace in the hour of need and sorrow. It is the conviction that love and justice are at the heart of the universe, that the spirit which gave rise to man will further his perfection. It is the faith which grips us even when we suffer defeat, the assurance that though the waves on the shore may be broken, the ocean conquers nevertheless. . . . This is release from one's bondage, escape from one's littleness. This is to have the peace which the world can neither give nor take away." According to him, self-perfection is the aim of religion, but until this aim takes hold of society as a whole, the world is not safe for civilisation and humanity. About the practical aspect of the problem the Professor thus states in soul-stirring words: "Religious life is a perilous adventure to be carried out on the principle of 'die to live'. It is well that it should be so. An heroic temper does not confuse happiness with the mere pursuit of pleasure. We need not be sorry that we do not find ourselves in a world where there are no unfriendly forces to master. The aim of life is not safety and comfort, but heroism and happiness. The cosmic supplies the conditions by which personalities can be perfected."

The book is highly illuminating. We have enjoyed it immensely.

THE NEW VEDA OR JEEVAN VEDA.
By Keshub Chunder Sen. Pluck Office, 62, Mission Road, Karachi, or Peace Cottage, 84, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta. 149 pp. Price As. 8.

The book is an English translation of sixteen sermons delivered by Keshub Chunder Sen from the pulpit of the Bharatvarshiya Brahma Mandir, Calcutta, in the nineties of the last century. The fire of devotion, which was the chief characteristic of the Brahma-nanda lies embedded in the pages of the book and is sure to blaze forth when brought in contact with kindred spirits. The book also gives a glimpse into the inner life of Keshub Chunder. He says: "The first word of the scripture of my life is Prayer. When no one had offered to help me, . . . there surged up in my heart an impulse, a voice crying 'Pray,' 'Pray'." "By continuing in prayer I began to gather the strength as of a lion,—strength boundless and irresistible! Lo! I had no more the same body, no more the old spirit. . . . I shook my fists at sin and prayed. Doubt, disbelief, and temptation, to these I presented a grim, determined front. Every evil fled when I threatened to pray. Thus as with child-like insistence, I sat, a suppliant, at the feet of the Deity, I would exact some boon or blessing. Is there something to be won? Who would give? Where should I go? Who was to show the way? Who would carry my sins away? In all things prayer was my help."

When attempts are not wanting in the present age to cure us of God and religion, circulation of books like the present one cannot be too much wished for.

One would naturally like to see such a nice book with better printing and get-up.

NEWS AND REPORTS

A CORRECTION

In the *News and Reports* for March we wrote under the heading, "A Prospective Sevashrama at Hrihikesh," that a lady of Rangpur had contributed a sum of Rs. 2000/- for the construction of a well, and a gentleman of Rangoon had promised to build a ward consisting of 2 beds for which he had donated Rs. 1200/-. The statement was unfortunately wrong. Those contributions have been made to the R. K.

Mission Sevashrama at Kankhal, and not to the one to be started at Hrihikesh.

VEDANTA SOCIETY, CHICAGO, U.S.A.

The inauguration ceremony of the Vedanta Society of Chicago, U.S.A., was celebrated on the 19th of January at 8 p.m., at the New Masonic Temple. The delightfully decorated Hall was filled up to its utmost capacity by a crowd drawn from the noblest of Chicago's society.

With glowing tributes to the memory of the great Swami Vivekananda who sowed the seeds of Indian philosophy and religion on the soil of Chicago during the World's Fair of 1893, Prof. Archibald G. Baker of the University of Chicago and Mrs. Carey W. Rhodes, a well-known social worker of Chicago and a lover of Hindu philosophy, introduced to the public, Swami Gnaneshwarananda who came from New York to open the new centre at Chicago. A wireless message of blessings and congratulations from Swami Shivananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission, Belur, and also messages of congratulations and goodwill from all the Swamis of the Order now working in America, together with the messages of many prominent American ladies and gentlemen were read out, which were highly appreciated by the audience.

Sreejot Harindra Chattopadhyay, the young poet of India, brother of Sreematy Sarojini Naidu, recited a poem of his own composition, "the Light of the Soul," at the opening of the programme, which created a wonderful atmosphere for the solemn occasion.

The Society is at present holding its regular Sunday Services at the New Masonic Temple Hall. The Office and Study Room of the Society are located at the Plymouth Building, 417 S. Dearborn St., Room 901.

The newly established Vedanta Society of Chicago has removed a long-felt want, felt very keenly by all the Indians as well as those Americans who are familiar with the work of Swami Vivekananda in America.

R. K. MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, CALCUTTA

The Home which is conducted on the lines of a Brahmacharya Ashrama by the monks of the Ramakrishna Order specially for poor youths going up for higher education in the Calcutta University, has completed the eleventh year of its existence in 1929. The authorities of the Home believe that the ideals of all education, all training should be man-making, and to effect this they devote their whole energy. Here the students are taught to realise the fact that "Education is not a means for escaping labour, it is a means for dignifying labour."

In 1929 twenty bighas of land at Gauripur near Dum-Dum Cantt. came to the possession of the Home for its vocational section. During 1929, the year under review, an adjacent plot of rent-free land measuring 63

bighas 12 kathas was purchased for Rs. 6,360/-. It is the purpose of the Home authorities to construct their permanent home on it. The site, however, is not at present fit to build upon. Low-lying lands have to be filled up and two tanks re-excavated. If these improvements can be made, the present site will prove very suitable for permanent residence. At present the Home is located in a rented house in the din and bustle of the City. City life has become expensive and detrimental to health. The new site which is 9 miles from the Calcutta Government House, is a solitary and healthy place. Besides, it is a suitable place for agriculture and dairy-farming. During the year under review the Students' Home Farm has made much progress.

The total number of students on the roll was 24 at the end of the year, 13 students appeared for different University examinations and all came out successful. Religious classes were held thrice weekly for the exposition of the Upanisads, Gita and the R. K. Mission literature. The general health of the students was satisfactory.

Total receipts during the year in the *General Fund* together with previous year's balance came to Rs. 9,584-0-6; total disbursements amounted to Rs. 6,440-0-0. Total receipts during the year in the *Building Fund* together with previous year's balance came to Rs. 17,634-5-11; total disbursements amounted to Rs. 9,634-4-2.

To develop the land, re-excavate the tanks and construct simple structures for the accommodation of at least one hundred students, a sum of a lakh of rupees is required. The Home appeals to the generous and enlightened public to help with necessary funds this attempt of the Ramakrishna Mission in chalking out a worthy educational programme for youths, and thus removing a long-felt want of the country.

All contributions, however small, will be thankfully received by the *President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal*, or by the *Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, 7, Haldar Lane, Bowbazar, Calcutta*.

RAMAKRISHNA STUDENTS' HOME, PATNA

The second annual report of the institution from April 1928 to March 1929 is a good record of work. The Home was start-

ed in July 1927, with the object of providing college students a healthy spiritual, intellectual and physical training as a necessary supplement to the University education. It is mainly meant for poor students. Paying students who are willing to receive such additional training, are also admitted. The Home is a college students' hostel under the direct care of Sannyasins. There is practically no difference in spirit between the ancient Brahmacharya Ashrama and this Home. Almost all household duties are performed by the students themselves.

The total number of students on the roll was 11 at the beginning of April 1928; 7 students sat for the University examinations during the period under review, and all except one came out successful. For religious training regular classes were held thrice weekly on the Gita and the Works of Swami Vivekananda. Necessary arrangements are made for the intellectual and physical training. The students of the Home have formed a Seva Samity. There are 4 night schools under the guidance of the Samity. The Samity nurse the sick and help the deserving poor in every way.

The total receipts including last year's balance were Rs. 1,527-4-6 and the total expenditure Rs. 1,507-4-6.

The immediate needs of the Home are: (1) A commodious building with library, play-ground, etc., on a permanent site, to provide for a larger number of poor, indigent students—which in a modest calculation requires not less than Rs. 20,000/-. (2) A general fund for library and gymnasium, and for better food-stuff, clothings, books, college and examination fees. For this another Rs. 20,000/- is required. We hope that there will be no two opinions about rendering financial help to this cause. The Home appeals to everyone interested in the progress of the youths of this country to contribute to the funds to the best of his ability. All contributions to be sent to *Swami Avyaktananda, Ramakrishna Ashrama, P. O. Bankipore, Patna.*

R. K. MISSION VIDYAPITH,
DEOGHAR, BIHAR

The report for the year 1929 shows a good progress made during the year. The

Vidyapith is a High School for Hindu boys run on residential lines. Situated in a healthy and beautiful place very close to the holy temple of Vaidyanath, the institution has become well known to the public. This institution, like other residential schools of the R. K. Mission, is conducted on the lines of an ancient Gurukula Ashrama. It aims at giving the boys an all-round training, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual. The institution maintains some poor and deserving students free and at concession rates. Most of the teachers of the Vidyapith are Hindu Sannyasins.

During the year under review the number of students on the roll was 70. On account of the special attention paid by the authorities to physical exercise the health of the students was satisfactory. Religion is made to form here the basis of the training. Here all the important Hindu festivals and ceremonies in honour of prophets and saints are observed. Religious classes are held in the morning and evening and devotional songs and hymns are sung. Dignity of labour and self-help form a part of the students' daily routine. Small patches of garden are managed by groups of boys. They also generally maintain their own discipline, do nursing, organise sports, excursions, festivals, etc. The report shows that 2 rooms were added to complete one of the main buildings. Another dining hall and a few petty roads round the building have also been constructed.

The total receipts in the *General Fund* including last year's balance amounted to Rs. 16,018-15-11 and the expenditure to Rs. 15,509-3-9. The total receipts in the *Building Fund* including last year's balance were Rs. 5,599-0-9 and the expenditure came to Rs. 5,416-6-0.

The urgent and immediate needs of the institution are: (1) A segregation ward, (2) A dormitory, and (3) Some up-to-date educational equipments. Funds are necessary. A sum of Rs. 20,000/- is required for the above needs. All help may be sent to the *Secretary, R. K. Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar, Bihar.*