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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

DISCOURSES ON JNANA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Both happiness and misery are chains, the one golden, the other iron; but both are equally strong to bind us and hold us back from realizing our true nature. The Atman knows neither happiness nor misery. These are merely “states”, and states must ever change. The nature of the soul is bliss and peace unchanging. We have not to get it; we have it; let us wash away the dross from our eyes and see it. We must stand ever on the Self and look with perfect calmness upon all the panorama of the world. It is but baby’s play and ought never to disturb us. If the mind is pleased by praise, it will be pained by blame. All pleasures of the senses or even of the mind are evanescent, but within ourselves is the one true unrelated pleasure, dependent on nothing outside. “The pleasure of the Self is what the world calls religion.” The more our bliss is within, the more spiritual we are. Let us not depend upon the world for pleasure.

Some poor fishwives, overtaken by a violent storm, found refuge in the garden of a rich man. He received them

kindly, fed them and left them to rest in a summer-house, surrounded by exquisite flowers which filled all the air with their rich perfume. The women lay down in this sweet-smelling paradise, but could not sleep. They missed something out of their lives and could not be happy without it. At last one of the women arose and went to the place where they had left their fish baskets, brought them to the summer-house, and then once more happy in the familiar smell, they were all soon sound asleep.

Let not the world be our “fish basket” which we have to depend upon for enjoyment. This is Tâmasika, or being bound by the lowest of the three qualities (or Gunas). Next higher come the egotistical, who talk always about “I,” “I.” Sometimes they do good work and may become spiritual. These are Râjasika or active. Highest come the introspective natures (Sâttvika), those who live only in the Self. These three qualities are in every human being in varying proportions, and different ones predominate at different times.

We must strive to overcome Tamas with Rajas and then to submerge both in Sattva.

Creation is not a "making" of something, it is the struggle to regain equilibrium, as when atoms of cork are thrown to the bottom of a pail of water: they rush to the top singly and in clusters, and when all have reached the top and equilibrium has been regained, all motion or "life" ceases. So with creation; if equilibrium were reached, all change would cease and life, so-called, would end. Life must be accompanied with evil, for when the balance is regained, the world must end, as sameness and destruction are one. There is no possibility of ever having pleasure without pain, or good without evil, for living itself is just the lost equilibrium. What we want is freedom, not life, nor pleasure, nor good. Creation is eternal, without beginning, without end, the ever moving ripple in an infinite lake. There are yet unreached depths and others where stillness has been regained, but the ripple is ever progressing, the struggle to regain the balance is eternal. Life and death are but different names for the same fact, they are the two sides of one coin. Both are "Mâyâ," the inexplicable state of striving at one point to live and a moment later to die. Beyond all this is the true nature, the Atman. We enter into creation, and then, for us, it becomes living. Things are dead in themselves, only we give them life, and then, like fools, we turn round and are afraid of them, or enjoy them! The world is neither true nor untrue, it is the shadow of truth.

"Imagination is the gilded shadow of truth," says the poet. The internal universe, the *Real*, is infinitely greater than the external one, which is but the shadowy projection of the true one. When we see the "rope," we do not see the "serpent," and when the "serpent" is, the "rope" is not. Both cannot exist at the same time, so while we see the world we do not realize the Self, it is only an intellectual concept. In

the realization of Brahman, the personal "I" and all sense of the world is lost. The Light does not know the darkness, because it has no existence in the light, so Brahman is all. While we recognize a God, it is really only the Self that we have separated from ourselves and worship as outside of us, but all the time it is our own true self, the one and only God. The nature of the brute is to remain where he is, of man to seek good and avoid evil, of God to neither seek nor avoid, but just to be blissful eternally. Let us be Gods, let us make our hearts like an ocean, to go beyond all the trifles of the world and see it only as a picture. We can then enjoy it without being in any way affected by it. Why look for good in the world, what can we find there? The best it has to offer is only as if children playing in a mud puddle found a few glass beads. They lose them again and have to begin the search anew. Infinite strength is religion and God. We are only souls if we are free, there is immortality only if we are free, there is God only if He is free.

Until we give up the world manufactured by the ego, never can we enter the Kingdom of Heaven. None ever did, none ever will. To give up the world is to utterly forget the ego, to know it not at all, living in the body but not being ruled by it. This rascal ego must be obliterated. Power to help mankind is with the silent ones who only live and love and withdraw their own personality entirely. They never say "me" or "mine", they are only blessed in being the instruments to help others. They are wholly identified with God, asking nothing and not *consciously* doing anything. They are the true Jivan-muktas, the absolutely selfless, their little personality thoroughly blown away, ambition non-existent. They are all principle, with no personality. The more we sink the "little self", the more God comes. Let us get rid of the little "I" and let only the great "I" live in us. Our best work and our greatest influence is when we are without a

thought of self. It is the "desireless" to the real self, think only pure who bring great results to pass. Bless thoughts, and you will accomplish more men when they revile you. Think how than a regiment of mere preachers. Out much good they are doing by helping of purity and silence comes the word of to stamp out the false ego. Hold fast power.

WHAT INDIA TAUGHT ME

By M. B. C.

Bees can live on "bee-bread" made of pollen mix'd with honey,
But men and women need the ripened grain and fruit.

For that they must wait till the pollen be scattered,

And the petals have fallen,

And the time of seeming nothingness is past;

Only then is there food fit for the hungry.

Ye who ache to feed the hungering souls,

Dwell in the sunlight of God's sure purpose.

Unfold your petals, breathe out sweet fragrance;

Admit the robber bees who steal your pollen, your stimulating thoughts,

And bring you new strange thoughts instead;

Then lose your life and be nothing, not even an airy blossom;

Wait steadfastly, faithfully, in the love of God,

Content to do nothing but protect and cherish the life within.

Let no enthusiast cajole you into "giving";

What have you to give?

You must receive, and receive, and receive

The sunlight of God's love.

Bad Farmer He, if yours is the only food He grows for hungering souls.

Leave that to Him. He cares

More than ever you can do. Why,

It is His care working in you

Makes you long, and yearn, and grow

In His sunlight,

Till all be fulfilled.

This is life's discipline,

The "dark night of the soul."

"Selfishness," says the enthusiast,

"Folly," says the practical man,

"Stupid asceticism," say the gay;

And you fear it may be so.

You may have lost your will to give,

You may not know the way to live,

You may not have the heart to live;

And timidity and silence shut you in;

You may be dead for all you know.

Save, now and then,

Too seldom, far too seldom, and too faint,
 Is the yearning and the striving and the longing
 To be ready to give one's very self
 In perfect ripened food for hungry souls.

Yesterday the end seemed as far off as ever,
 Save, perhaps, for an oppressive weight that nearly dragged you from the tree.
 You did not know you were so ready
 For the Farmer's hand beneath you
 To pluck the perfect fruit.
 To-day you're free.

Free to give in glorious giving,
 Free to live, and free to serve.
 Who so gay, and who so living?
 Pour your soul out for the world.

THE CONFLICT OF THE MORAL AND THE AMORAL

BY THE EDITOR

In the following pages we shall try to deal with a problem which always faces us in one form or another, especially in times of great changes. All of us may not be fully aware of its presence in our affairs, but it is nevertheless there. It is the conflict of the moral and the non-moral. The question is: Is morality completely pervasive of reality? If not, what should our allegiance be to the moral laws and to reality? On the one hand, it is staggering to think that we can live unmoral lives,—the very basis of life seems to sink down with the elimination of morality. On the other hand, reality taken as a whole, as we even now know it, can in no sense be called moral,—it is superbly apathetic to our moral standards; and if we want to fully relate ourselves to it, how can we hold on strictly to moral principles? This is the conflict. And some answer must be given to this question if our life and activity are to be soundly grounded and directed. As our readers will remember, we have dealt with the problem cursorily and incidentally in course of some of our previous essays, but certainly not fully or even adequately. Those have been merely passing references. Let us here try to envisage

the problem in its broader outlines and see if any solution emerges.

I

Morals may be divided into two classes: self-regarding and other-regarding. Certain moral virtues have a predominantly subjective value, others have mainly an objective reference. Let us illustrate. Take truthfulness. It is a moral virtue which we consider as having a value in itself. Even where its non-observance may not do any harm to anyone, we seek to be truthful. Even if we were to live in a solitary island, we would try to be truthful. It has reference pre-eminently to our own self. Take, on the other hand, marriage. In every community there is a certain ceremony, through which a man and a woman must go before their living together can be considered moral. But this morality has pre-eminently a social reference. It is well-known that the marriage ceremony is not the same with every people, nor has it always been the same with the same people. Marriage customs have undergone many changes. In some community mere mutual understanding and a feast to the neighbours and kiths and kins have

been considered ceremony enough. Whatever the outer form, the sanctity of it is not less recognised. It is conceivable that all marriage ceremony may be discarded without taking away from the sanctity of the mutual understanding between a man and a woman. The mutual understanding is the essence of marriage and pertains only to the two persons concerned. The ceremony is the seal of the community on that understanding. It has reference to society alone. Here, then, morality is mainly other-regarding. We say 'mainly,' for the division that we have made of the moral virtues is not ultimate. Those which are self-regarding are also other-regarding to some extent and *vice versa*. Truthfulness, of which the necessity arises from an inner source, has a bearing on social well-being also. It is needless to amplify how without truthfulness, social life would be impossible or at least corrupted. Similarly, other-regarding virtues which are mainly concerned with the objective life, also influence our inner life to a remarkable degree. The division is, however, true because of their predominant tendency one way or the other.

What makes this difference in their emphasis? Many thinkers have sought to find out the ultimate source of moral sanction. Whatever that might be, until we have succeeded in tracing the origin of moral virtues to a source which is eternal, there cannot be any secure morality for mankind. Morality cannot be imposed on anyone. It must be a power from within. And it should be conceived as originating from within. In these days the mere public sanction or the sanction of law is not enough for our becoming moral. These we can easily defy. Or at least we know that these sanctions have little value, being born of the very imperfect judgments of mostly ignorant people. There is another sanction,—tradition. But what sanctity or value has tradition in our eyes nowadays? There is God, it is true. Some religions have sought to derive their moral codes from God Him-

self or His Messengers. But in these days of scientific enlightenment, these stories do not have much hold on us. Who knows what was the source of Moses' inspiration, whether it was Divine or purely subjective? Even if it be true that Moses heard the commands of God, how can that be true of *us* who did not or have not heard those commands ourselves? The very fact that we can break them shows that we may break them. The fact is, a mere knowledge of the moral code is not enough. There must be an inner compulsion also. And that cannot be unless the sanction comes from within. The modern mind, with every kind of authority crumbling around it, keenly feels it. It wants a code of self-regarding morals, which must originate from our very being. It is almost a truism that nothing can be truly called a proof, which is not inherent in the very nature of the thing to be proved. The proof must be immanent and not transcendental. For to find the proof of a phenomenon in another is to suggest an infinite regress,—it is only putting off the proof. So if we are to find a permanent basis for morality, we must search for it in our own self and not outside, not even in a God.

This necessity has been keenly felt by the modern mind. Hence the theory of conscience,—the still small voice within. Conscience is all right, and surely its promptings have a great value in the conduct of life. But conscience has unfortunately a strange way of changing itself and its dictates with the change of circumstances and growth of experience. It has no finality in its decisions. It is as blind as ourselves. The fact is, conscience is not really an authority, but merely a representative of the already achieved. It represents the sum total of wisdom at any time. But that sum total, alas, falls always far short of what is expected and wanted. How little we know! A moral code cannot be established with that little knowledge. Perfect knowledge must be its basis.

Truly speaking, therefore, we cannot have a complete moral code for ourselves until we have attained full Self-knowledge. Till we have become perfectly illumined, we shall always remain in doubt. But we need not despair. Failing to reach perfect knowledge, we can at least take help of philosophy. And in this, metaphysical conclusions are extremely valuable. What is our true nature? What are the characteristics of the eternal self? Since to know ourselves fully and truly is the one objective of life, evidently whatever is against those eternal characteristics must be wrong. Whatever hinders the manifestation of the true self is immoral and whatever helps it is moral. Whatever thought and action are in conformity with the nature of the Self are moral, and whatever are against it are immoral. But here again the question arises : How are we to know what are against the Self?—In order to know it, we must know the Self. True. But what we do not know ourselves at present, we may infer from the examples of others. There have been persons who have realised their true self. They have described its nature to us as far as possible. They have told us what help its manifestation and what hinder it. This way we may form an outline of the region as yet untraversed by us. It may be supposed that here also a sort of authority is proposed for our guidance. No, we must not call them our authority, but merely our examples, and there is a great difference between the two. In authority, we are not given the freedom of our own judgment : the sanction of morality does not lie in us, but in the things or persons considered as authorities,—we are merely required to do their bidding, as if morality has no other proof than the voice of the authority. The whole scheme is an ugly superimposition, autocratic and irrational. In the case of the examples, they do not consider themselves as authorities. The authorities, they declare, are in our own Self-realisation. They only say to us : “We have found, you may also find. Such

and such is the way.” Here there is no imposition from outside. Here is an appeal to our own reason and initiative. Here is a pointing out that we are our own sanctions, only we must know ourselves fully and completely, and the ways to do so are also open to us. This, then, is a rational and altogether honourable appeal.

The self-regarding virtues have their direct basis in our own eternal self. No time, no circumstances can change them. So long as our real self abides, and it abides eternally, these moral virtues also would last. Thus truthfulness, selflessness, kindness, chastity, fearlessness, love,—these are all eternally true. We shall not indicate here the character of our real self. But we may say that all these virtues really reflect it. Their opposites would cloud its vision. It will be noted that somehow all the civilised world consider them as the primary moral virtues, though in the present age of doubt and scepticism, the validity of some is being called in question. The mind of men has somehow reflected the unrealised glory of the true self. It has somehow a prevision of Eternity, and through its reflected light is groping its way to the goal. There is nothing surprising in this. For whether we know it or not, our true self is always asserting itself. Through our insanity, our sane self is trying to assert itself every moment and eventually prevailing. Through all the darkness of ignorance, the light of knowledge is always breaking. When we think that we are moulding events according to our mad desires, events are really being manipulated by the fingers of God. This is the great fun and mystery. All our short-comings are as it were being rounded off by the all-pervasive perfection of God. That is why when we study past events from a distance, they unmistakably show the movements of eternal verities behind and among their multifarious details, though none of those who were directly implicated in the events ever felt their presence. This

is the mystery of creation and also our hope and warning. In every little thing the ways of God justify themselves. None can escape those ways which we call moral and spiritual laws. We thus see that those which we have called pre-eminently self-regarding morals, are also somewhat true of the objective life and world. One reason is perhaps that human events are in one sense the aggregate of individual doings. And since in every individual the moral qualities directly and indirectly assert their power, they must do so also in the aggregate of the actions of individuals.

But we must remember that collective happenings in the human communities are not all in conformity with the moral ideals. Things do not happen all morally. Though we can envisage the outline of moral action in and through the doings and movements of mankind, we can also espy other factors and elements in them, which spread beyond the bounds of morality. In fact we must clearly bear in mind that man's inner urge is to become one with the universal reality of which the moral is but a part. He wants to relate himself with all that is, without exception. This urge is in the very core of his being. Naturally his impulses, aspirations, motives and actions cannot be all moral; and in fact they are not. The moral are only a part, and perhaps a very small part, of his being. Let us look at the universe. Very few of its things have a reference to morality so-called. Are the stars moral? The sky? The flowers? The joys and sorrows, the beauties and uglinesses of the universe? Its life and death, its changes and unchanging elements? Its origin and destiny? Do they not, in their deeper significance, if not in their apparent, transcend the bounds of our moral life and point to a vaster, mystical life? For these our inmost heart yearns. With them our being wants to feel its kinship and unity. And hence the other-regarding morals and amoral forces,

II

What is it that signifies other-regarding moral qualities? Whatever it may be that originally creates communal life, it may be said that in the primitive stages of human society, the ideal elements have always to succumb to the claims of realities. We notice many fine moral virtues existing among savages,—truthfulness, chastity, etc. But this also we note that as soon as the savages meet with adverse communal circumstances, they easily lose those virtues and are corrupted. This clearly shows that in the primitive societies moral virtues have not triumphed over realities. In fact, primitive men grow up mostly in correspondence with their environments. There is a core of idealism in their communal life undoubtedly, but very vague, amorphous, undetermined. But around this indefinite core, all movements are in conformity with the environments. There is a spirit of subservience to realities and little attempt at moulding them after an ideal or conquering them with an ulterior purpose. Slowly, however, idealism grows, till at last some persons transcend the limits of the body and the lower mind and come in contact with a higher being, above and beyond the powers of realities. When this inner world becomes more and more known, man becomes consciously denizens of two worlds, outer and inner, and find that his satisfaction, and in fact his true kinship, is essentially in the inner world and not outer. And he tries to shift the centre of gravity of his life to the inner region. Thus grows true idealism. Since that time, his main effort is to so mould the realities as to harmonise them with the ideals. He cannot live any more merely in conformity with the realities. He must conquer them and employ them in the service of the ideals. And the ideals, we know, must be pre-eminently moral and spiritual.

But here the problem of man's communal life arises. We have seen that

our heart hankers to embrace the entire universe of realities, and these realities are not always amenable to moral idealism. They cannot always cast themselves in moral patterns. Man also is not merely moral. His satisfaction lies not only in being moral, but also real. In fact, we must conceive two streams of life, one ideal or moral and another real. Man's satisfaction lies in being both ideal and real, but more in being real, for therein is the active touch of the living reality, without which life withers away and ideals become dry and dead. Man, therefore, often accepts the real unhesitatingly and wherever possible idealises it. Out of this, other-regarding moral virtues, such as marriage customs, domestic and social relationships, etc., grow. These are not intrinsically moral as we can easily infer, nor can we also call them always immoral. They are more often than not amoral.

Now these amoral elements change with the change of circumstances, as we pointed out in the case of marriage customs. This necessary distinction between self-regarding and other-regarding morals is not, however, properly recognised by people. We must remember that the masses who do not act always after conscious thinking, have to believe the other-regarding virtues to be as much binding as the self-regarding ones, otherwise their observance and practice of them will be half-hearted and incomplete. The evolution of the other-regarding virtues has to be noted in this connection. After every stage of evolution, there comes a stage of stability and unquestioning practice. At every stage we believe in certain other-regarding virtues as intrinsically true and therefore permanent in character and we practise them with all the devotion of our heart. But after the stage of stability comes the stage of change. Circumstances have in the mean time slowly altered. New realities have forced themselves on our mind and attracted it. A new world has opened. Therefore some readjustment in our

outlook, customs and practices has become urgent. Then the other-regarding virtues have to change. And it is then that a great opposition comes from the masses who have been following those virtues as being for all time. They strenuously oppose the change and firmly hold on to the old forms. They believe that these are the very essence of all morality and if they are changed all morality will vanish. They are right to a certain extent. For it sometimes happens that the urge of realities is such that they have to be accepted if we are to live and yet they cannot be immediately idealised into moral forms. We may just point to our present circumstances. The industrial, political and cultural revolutions that are occurring everywhere have created a new world for us. They have given rude, if not fatal, shocks to our previous outlook and many of our moral and religious beliefs. It is easy to say that we must yet hold on to ideals. But it is not easy to point out how we can escape the urge of realities and how we can live by ignoring realities. We for ourselves have always considered such idealistic prescriptions as futile. They may help an isolated few, but not the people in general. The world is faced with grim realities, urgent, menacing. They cannot be overlooked. We must face them and reckon with them. And in trying to do so, we find that old moral standards are slipping through our fingers one by one. And the cry has gone forth that morality is gone, morality is of no avail at the present hour. What has happened is not that morality has gone. It cannot go. Because it is our very nature. So long as we live, it also must live. But the other-regarding morals are in the melting-pot. New forms have to emerge. We are just now in the stage of change, of evolution. Undreamt-of facets of reality are facing us. We must study, estimate and accommodate them. It will take time. Many of us will cry out in panic. Others will search for new vistas of vision and eventually—if

humanity is not to perish—new groupings would be made, new forms of other-regarding virtues will emerge. We do not for a moment forget the excesses in which large sections of mankind—mostly foolish, ignorant and thoughtless—are indulging in the name of new life. They think that morality has been vanquished, that it was a creation of interested parties in the past ages, that it cramped life and they are now to enjoy true freedom. It is a foolish dream of foolish minds.

The problem of the moral *vs.* non-moral is not to be solved, therefore, by scrapping the moral. Individual morality, the self-regarding virtues, will always remain. But social morality, the other-regarding virtues, will change and new forms must take their place.

III

What forms will social morality take? How to determine it? The one mistake that many so-called reformers make in presaging the new forms is to formulate them from the merely moral point of view. The exclusively moral man is a man of narrow vision. He reaches towards the highest point, it is true. But he merely cuts his way through reality. He traverses the infinite reality only along a line, the vast contents remain outside his view. He is, therefore, ill qualified to envisage the future for all. He emphasises the backbone. But the full form is beyond his ken and jurisdiction. One must be also an artist in order to be representative of all men and all reality. He must combine in him the unchanging moral outlook as well as an all-encompassing spiritual vision. He alone can be the leader and the guide of the new age. The artistic quality which can feel and envisage the undefined beyond the definite details and reach towards future happenings, is something above and beyond the moral vision. And that is also why the spiritual vision is superior to the moral vision. There is nothing mysterious in this. The explanation is simple. Reality

comprises not only what is moral but also what is immoral and unmoral. In fact reality is amoral. Behind the phenomenal world, upholding and moving it, is the Self. The Self, therefore, is amoral. If that is so, its realisation also must be amoral. That is to say, the manifestations of the Self, and the feelings and actions following from it need not necessarily be moral in form. This is no self-contradiction. We have stated before that moral excellences are manifestations of Self-realisation. But they are only one aspect of Self-realisation. They do not constitute the whole of it. There is another aspect which is amoral, which is understandable only intuitively—through artistic perception. Thus we often find the expression of two apparently contradictory principles in the men of realisation. In one they are most moral, the acme of what a normal man must be. In another, they are abnormal, not to be estimated by the ordinary human standards. Only intuitively we can catch the fullness of life and experience that is theirs. In the ordinary affairs of the human world, also, these two principles are constantly active. The two movements of the soul, moral and amoral, are true also of the common men, only they do not perceive it clearly. The so-called social moralities are often no morality at all. They are often conventional. It may be, they have an effect on mind, which is intrinsically moral. But they are not in themselves moral. Their real justification and ground is not moral considerations, but the apprehension of life and reality more fully and deeply, from a deeper standpoint of soul's life,—of that aspect which is amoral. Through this amoral aspect of our being we come in contact with the vaster reality, not through the moral perception but through intuitive sympathy. The new social forms that may emerge in future, will be lasting and beneficial only to the extent they represent a deeper and more comprehensive vision of the soul. The deeper and more inclusive they are,

the better is the chance of their permanence.

Mind that we do not mean a sentimental grounding, such as many wild visionaries imagine at present. The artistic perception that we speak of is a rare quality not to be met with in abundance and is not to be acquired by emotional indulgence. Artistic perception also has to be *acquired*. The dross has to be eliminated. The eyes have to acquire an unprejudiced vision. The mind and the heart have to grow pure. The cravings of the flesh have to be stilled. Only then the larger movements of the universal being would come within the range of our view. The artistic perception that we are speaking about is nothing short of the perfect spiritual vision. That vision penetrates into the future and feels every single pulse-beat of the Being. It easily perceives the inter-relations of movements and forces and knows their relative scopes, functions and values. It thus becomes easy for it to formulate the purpose of an evolving age and community and know what changes must be made in the existing conventions, forms and outlook. And since this formulation comes from a spiritual vision and is in conformity with it, it does not militate against the moral aspect of being, and can be easily idealised into a moral movement, *i.e.*, made into other-regarding moral virtues.

In the present age, therefore, all the changes that have taken place and are impending, have to be reflected above all in a heart as vast as the universe, as pure as the purest crystal, and with the widest and deepest sympathies and understanding. Such a reflection is enough to conceive the new aspirations and changes as parts of a system. To be conceived by a pure universal mind is to be systematised. Has such a mind arisen among us of the present age? We believe it has.

Henceforward, it is an easy process. What are unmoral or even immoral according to the existing standards, have to be clothed with the glory of

the new vision. They have to be perceived and conceived from the new angle of vision, and at once they will reveal unthought-of contents. New conventions will grow of themselves, new enthusiasms will be created. Little effort would be necessary to instal them on the pedestal of worship. In fact an unwonted atmosphere of sanctity will surround them, and then it will not be difficult to conceive their perpetuation and observance as other-regarding moral virtues. It is always thus that the conflict between the moral and the non-moral in the age of change is resolved.

IV

But we admit that not all non-moral aspirations of the age can be idealised into moral form. There may be some which will always remain unassimilated into morality. Hinduism has always recognised this possibility. For example, marriage customs in some lands may change and may assume forms under the pressure of realities, which may shock the present mentality. But we believe that orthodox minds will gradually adjust themselves to the new forms and invest them with a moral grandeur. But there may yet be forms which will not so easily lend themselves to idealization, say, war or other forms of violence. Let us take a different kind of example—an instance of mild violence. It is well-known that the very existence of certain nations depends on their exploitation of other races. They have not such resources in their own countries that if they cease to exploit other nations they can maintain themselves. Suppose the exploited peoples prevent this exploitation. That is quite legitimate. But one cannot still forget that their legitimate action is producing grievous results in the land of the exploiters, *i.e.*, starving them to death. This is certainly a kind of violence. But we somehow think that we are not any way to blame for this harm. And we thus justify ourselves: We say that our concern is with our own country; we must first save it at

any cost. If as a result another country suffers, that is not our concern. Here is plainly an unmoral action made moral by the urgent sanction of patriotic feeling. War for defence is also thus idealised, though killing is extremely brutal. In ancient times, it was enjoined upon the *Kshatriya* king that he should go a hunting regularly. The purpose was evidently to keep strong the fighting qualities of the king and his enterprising spirit. But no killing for any purpose can be justified on moral grounds. There were other heinous deeds which were made the duties of a king: He must sow the seeds of dissension among his enemies. Enemies might be any way outwitted. He might employ spies against his enemies; and might take recourse to all kinds of diplomatic cunning. All these were justified on the ground that they were necessary for the safety of the kingdom. And who can deny that it was so? So long as the world continues what it has been for thousands of years, all these means must be adopted, however heinous apparently.

But do they not demoralise their employers? Have they not a corrupting influence? Here comes in the doctrine of *Karma Yoga*. Hinduism recognises that all duties cannot be idealised into moral forms, and yet they have to be done. How to avoid their evil effects? By performing them with an unattached mind. Here a very important question arises. Can we avoid the evil effects of evil actions if only we perform them without attachment? Again, can we really do an evil deed with an unattached mind? How far can immoral action be reconciled with *Karma Yoga*? What is the relation of morality with *Karma Yoga*? We believe that even apparently evil actions can be done in the spirit of *Karma Yoga*. Having made this startling statement it behoves us to clearly state all the attendant conditions and reasons. We have already mentioned that there is an aspect of consciousness which is analogous to and in fact akin

to the Divine consciousness. This universe contains both good and evil, and behind them there is undoubtedly the Divine mind. The Divine mind is not corrupted by the existence of evil. Sri Ramakrishna very aptly illustrated this fact: the poison of a serpent kills others but does not kill the serpent itself. Similarly of God. The evil of the world affects the ordinary beings, but not God. Man also can become God. He also can reach a state in which he feels like God, is one with Him. In that state, he can also behave and act like God. It is only in that state that man can do evil actions without being corrupted by them. But is it easy to reach that Divine condition? God is absolutely unattached to the universe, therefore He is its master. Man also has to be absolutely unattached to the world. God's action does not arise from any egoistic motive, for God has no such ego. All Divine movements spring from the mysterious deeps of His being. Similarly man must get beyond the planes of the ego and one himself with the Divine being. Only thus his actions will become identified with the Divine actions, or rather, all his actions would be propelled by a Divine urge. That means that the necessity of doing evil even in the spirit of *Karma Yoga* must have a Divine purpose behind it, and whatever is Divine must be considered to be absolutely good, however evil it may appear to our eyes. At least his evil actions will be as mysterious in origin and influence as the presence of the principle of evil in God's creation. Such evil-doing, it must be admitted, is rare. Let us nevertheless admit its possibility.

What we have spoken here is of the culmination itself. This means that there may be also stages leading to this culmination. In fact we may recognise two stages leading to the culmination. As to the first stage, we have been familiar with it in the general teachings of the *Gîtâ* on *Karma Yoga*. There the Lord enjoins that a *Kshatriya* must do his duty unattachedly, however evil it

may seem. In this stage the question of corruption by evil-doing does not arise. For it is taken for granted that a man has the tendency of *himsâ*, violence, in his mind. If he indulges in it, it does not in fact add to his *himsâ*, for he is trying to do so in the spirit of *Karma Yoga*, unattachedly, with the purpose of getting rid of it. If he abstains from external action of *himsâ*, mere mental reasoning will not cure him of it. For it is well known that almost all our *samskâras* have to be worked out. So in the first stage of evil-doing in *Karma Yoga*, there is net gain, no moral loss. In the second stage, a man is considered to have been purged of all evil faculties and *samskâras*. His mind has been purified. He has learnt to act and live in an unattached way. He also, however, can do apparently evil actions, *when he feels that by doing them he can do great good to large masses of mankind*. We may pertinently take the example of Guru Govind Singh. He was a man of realisation. He is said to have attained the vision of the Divine Mother. He practised hard austerities, went through strenuous spiritual exercises and gained the Divine vision before he plunged into the organisation of the *Khâlsâ* and lighted a new fire in the hearts of the Sikhs. His mind represented the second stage. He acted detachedly, fought and killed enemies in order that his people might be rescued from the oppression of their enemies. He did not seem to have attained the third stage, the culmination which we may find well exemplified in the life of Sri Krishna. Of the second stage it may be said that though the form of action is evil, the motive is pure and unselfish.

It may be said that such a round-about way of reaching the Divine condition may well be avoided if we resolve on moral actions only. True. In fact, all men should attempt to be as moral as possible, though by the way we should mention that moral action also must be done in the spirit of *Karma Yoga* if it is to yield

spiritual benefit, otherwise morality would become only a kind of worldly wisdom. But as we have pointed out before, man cannot live within the purely moral groove alone. His self wants to become co-pervasive with the whole of reality. Man's aspirations, the higher ones, are more than merely moral. And these must be satisfied, if he is to be fulfilled. Necessarily he has to do much that is not strictly moral. Much of this becomes idealised into moral forms, as we have shown before. The exceptional cases that still remain, have to be done in the spirit of *Karma Yoga*. There is no other way.

But we recognise a danger in this. We know that such justification of evil-doing by *Karma Yoga* may easily lapse into actual evil-doing. In fact in the name of sanctified custom, we often indulge in practices which steadily devitalise us and lead us more and more to misery. There is, therefore, one principle always active in the world of men, which always asserts the supremacy of the ethical ideal above all other ideals and strikes at amoral practices. We shall find, if we observe closely, that among the teachers of mankind there are some who make a pre-eminently ethical appeal, and there are others who make a pre-eminently spiritual appeal. The one class condemn all ideals and practices which have the least of the immoral and unmoral in them. They stand by morality alone. We need not name them. Anyone can easily discern them. The other class are for high spiritual visions, which subsume not only the moral ideals, but transcend them by the enunciation of a higher reality and as such subsume also what are not strictly ethical. They are undoubtedly the greater teachers. But the presence and activity of the former class are a necessary corrective to any laxity that may result from the pursuit of the amoral spiritual visions.

V

In our opinion the duty of the present generations is clear. We have

in the preceding pages tried to draw in outline the present-day problems of morality. From this certain points have clearly emerged. The constructive genius of the modern age, he who would bring order into the present chaos, will not be one who would insist on the traditional morality. He must be a man of vision. He must hold before us a vision of life and reality which will reject nothing, ennoble everything and will be all-comprehensive. It must necessarily be super-ethical, spiritual. This vision will impel us to its realisation. And this impulse to realise will create new enthusiasms, new forms, new sanctions and new social morals. It will above all be a cry for the renunciation of the lower visions as stepping-stones to the higher visions. This way we shall not only have all that is valuable in our new dream well conserved, but feel uplifted to levels which are much above the littlenesses of normal life. In this way also, we believe, the conflict of the moral and non-moral can be resolved. For as we have pointed out, intrinsic morality, the self-regarding virtues, are really the corollaries of the spiritual self-realisation. And in every genuine spiritual idealism, there must be those ethical virtues. But the spiritual vision will at the same time avoid the limitations of moral idealism,

for it will, as we have already said, comprehend all life and reality and all noble aspirations, moral, aesthetic or spiritual. The need of the age is that supernal vision. We believe we have it in Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

In conclusion we must sound a note of warning against partial aesthetic visions. When art does not reach the heights of spiritual realities, it often lacks the strength which alone can sustain the human mind in its upward struggles. These partial visions have a tendency to create anarchy and license and they eventually debilitate and degrade us. Better far than these the crudities, rigours and narrownesses of traditional morality. The real conflict, we shall find if we closely watch, is between these partial artistic visions and morality. These visions do not meet all the needs of life and mind, and where they fail they often try to triumph by denying them. But that way does not lie the solution. We want moral strength and we want vision. In their commingling, or rather in realising the spiritual vision which comprehends both moral idealism and the aesthetic visions, lies the salvation of the present age. This comprehended, the details will spontaneously re-adjust themselves.

THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

OCTOBER 13, 1919.

It was 4 p.m. Swami Turiyananda was talking to a group of *Sannyāsins* and *Brahmachārins* who had come to his room in the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Benares.

Swami: (Turning to one of the monks) "Do you believe all these? (The monk remained silent.) I once felt this atheistic mood."

Monk: "Yes, Maharaj, sometimes I too feel that there is no God."

Swami: "So my confession emboldens you to speak out! Perhaps you

thought at first that if you spoke out, you would be exposed? But that is not so. Such a sceptical mood comes upon many. This is a stage on the way to God. Once the reading of a book made me atheistic."

A Brahmachārin: "Was the author a European?"

Swami: "Yes. What a terrible agony I then passed through! Nothing could give me peace. This mood lasted only a day or two. The book was full of materialistic ideas. After a hard struggle I got over its influence.

“A. also had to pass through such a state. He was an out and out *Vedântist*, you know. It is said in the *Gîtâ*: ‘He who takes the Self to be the slayer, he who takes It to be the slain, neither of these knows. It does not slay, nor is It slain.’ A. took to angling! One day the Master sent for him, and when he came, said to him: ‘Can you kill a man?’ ‘Why not, Sir? I can easily,’ replied A. ‘Will not the sense of sin prick your conscience?’ ‘Why? Who kills whom?’ ‘All right. Go ahead. This is also a stage—just as we enter one room through another. But you must not stop here. If you do, you will be ruined. Beware you do not become a householder with such an attitude of mind.’

“It is very difficult to realise God. The slightest desire blocks the way. The Master often said: ‘The thread does not pass through the eye of a needle, if the minutest fibre sticks to it.’ Swamiji once said to him: ‘Kindly pray to the Mother that they (Swamiji’s brothers, sisters, etc.) may have a bare subsistence.’ The Master sent him to the temple to beg of the Mother. But when Swamiji entered the temple, he could not beg anything but *Viveka* (discrimination) and *Vairâgya* (dispassion). How could he? He had no attachment within. When he said this to the Master, the Master remarked to us: ‘Do you see what a great receptacle he is? He could not ask of the Mother anything but *Viveka* and *Vairâgya*.’ ”

As the talk went on, Buđo Bâbâ (Swami Satchidananda) came and took his seat after saluting Swami Turiyananda. The conversation then turned on Swami Saradananda who had written from Calcutta that he had to indefinitely postpone his intended visit to Benares being occupied with the work of Cyclone Relief in East Bengal and having had to attend the opening ceremony of the Bhubaneswar Math at the request of Swami Brahmananda.

B. Baba: “You say, Maharaj, that I create work. Now you see that even men like Swami Saradananda are so

busy that they do not find time to come to Benares for rest. Such is the lot of those who take up work.”

Swami: (Solemnly) “Their action is inaction.”

OCTOBER 14, 1919.

It was 4 p.m. Swami Turiyananda was sitting in his room. Some *Sannyâsins* and *Brahmachârins* were present.

Swami: “See how my skin has shrivelled. This is the sign of old age. King Yayâti also had the same experience. One day all of a sudden his skin shrivelled, his hair turned grey and his body became decrepit.”

Disciple: “Why was it so sudden, Maharaj?”

Swami: “Do you not know?”

The Swami narrated the story of Yayâti, and said after some time:

“To be successful in any work, you must look upon the work itself as your ideal. You may have a fancy for a work for a day or two and then give it up as soon as it loses charm. This is no good. Sasi Maharaj (Swami Ramakrishnananda) demonstrated in his life how to work. For sixteen years he followed the same course in the same place. Sometimes his sufferings became so intense that he abused Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji in the strongest language. But still he did not give up the work entrusted to him.”

A: “Swamiji was once asked which of the four, *Jnâna*, *Bhakti*, *Karma* and *Yoga*, was the greatest. ‘Don’t bother yourself about that,’ replied Swamiji. ‘Take up any of them you like and follow it as best as you can. If you wish to do roguery, do it to the full. Never care for the result.’ ”

Swami: “Work for work’s sake. Your whole mind should be fixed upon the work. Let that be your ideal, the be-all and end-all of life. Never mind success or failure.”

He then mentioned the characteristics of the *Sâttvika* agent and asked Brahmachâri S. to bring him his copy of the *Gîtâ*. He read out the following *Slokas* and explained them:

“An agent who is free from attachment, non-egoistic, endowed with fortitude and enthusiasm, and unaffected in success or failure, is called *Sâttvika*.

“He who is passionate, desiring for the fruits of action, greedy, malignant,

impure, easily elated or dejected, such an agent is called *Râjasika*.

“Unsteady, vulgar, arrogant, dishonest, malicious, indolent, desponding and procrastinating, such an agent is called *Tâmasika*.”

SWAMI BRAHMANANDA THE SPIRITUAL SON OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

Meanwhile, Swami Vivekananda had been writing to his *Gurubhâis* from America to unite and give themselves up to the service of humanity, the visible representation of God on earth. The signal success that attended the Swami in his mission to spread the message of the Vedanta in the West made them more attentive to the call, as they perceived the Divine Will working behind the events and urging them from the quiet of ascetic life to the arena of public activity. Most of his *Gurubhâis* restrained their tendency for free and quiet life of individual *Sâdhanâ* and returned to the Math one by one. Gradually a stir was created in the secluded life of the Monastery. A considerable enthusiasm exhibited itself for the propagation of the Eternal Religion of India in the light of the life and teaching of Sri Ramakrishna. Greater attention was paid to study, discourse and debate. Regular weekly sittings were held for the discussion of the religious and philosophical subjects and for the training of the monks as preachers. In 1896 Swami Saradananda and after him Swami Abhedananda were summoned away to help the Swami in his work in England and America. In the same year a famine relief work was started by Swami Akhandananda in the District of Murshidabad. Though the Maharaj did not directly participate in these movements, he guided and supervised the activities with untiring zeal. He

regularly attended the weekly sittings and looked after the physical and spiritual welfare of the inmates of the Math, especially the new-comers. The birthday ceremony of Sri Ramakrishna and the annual festivals of the Goddesses Durgâ, Lakshmi, Kâli and Jagaddhâtri, observed in the Math from its very inception, were now performed under his direct management. In all important matters his advice was sought by the members of the Math.

With the return of Swami Vivekananda from the West in February, 1897, a tidal wave passed over the life of the Monastery. Even those of his *Gurubhâis* who still adhered to the traditional ideal of realising the *Atman* through meditation and *Tapas* by keeping aloof from the world, were gradually converted to his ideas of the nationalisation of religious life by dedicating it to the service of the Lord residing in all souls. They were now prepared to go anywhere and to do everything at the behest of the Swami. Swami Brahmananda who had all along stood by the Swami, accepted his views with great satisfaction and enthusiasm. Swami Ramakrishnananda who had identified himself with the daily service and worship of the Master in the Monastery for the last twelve years, went to Madras at the command of the Swami to open a new centre there.

In the summer of 1897 Swami Vivekananda went to Darjeeling for a short change with Swami Brahma-

nanda and Swami Trigunatita and a party of friends and disciples. Mr. and Mrs. Sevier had preceded him there. They were all guests of Mr. M. N. Banerjee, Bar-at-law. The party returned to Calcutta at the end of April. On the first day of May a representative meeting of the monastic and lay disciples of Sri Ramakrishna was held at Balaram Babu's house at the call of the Swami for the purpose of founding an Association to be called the Ramakrishna Mission. Swami Vivekananda became the General President and Swami Brahmananda the President of the Calcutta Centre. With great zeal and interest Swami Brahmananda looked after the work of the Association. The famine-relief operations of Murshidabad, mentioned above, were conducted under his guidance and direction. He made every possible arrangement (such as, collecting funds, sending money, workers and necessary articles to the relief centre) to help Swami Akhandananda to carry on the work efficiently. Swami Vivekananda returned from his tour in Northern India in January, 1898. The Math was transferred from Alambazar to Nilambar Mukherjee's garden-house on the western bank of the Ganges in next February. Swami Saradananda had recently returned from America, Swami Shivananda had come back from Ceylon, where he had been deputed by the Swami to do Vedanta work about the middle of 1897, as also Swami Trigunatita from Dinajpur after finishing famine-relief work. The Swami was highly pleased with the work done by them. He also congratulated Swami Brahmananda on the successful work the Ramakrishna Mission had done under his guidance and Swami Turiyananda for having trained in his absence the young *Sannyâsins* and *Brahmachârins* who had gathered round the names of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

The permanent home of the Ramakrishna Order at Belur was secured early in 1898. In this matter Swami

Brahmananda was the Swami's chief helping hand. He kept accounts of money and managed all affairs connected with the acquisition of the site and the additions and alterations in the old premises that were necessary to make them habitable. In January, 1899, it was occupied as the permanent headquarters of the Order. In their attempt to make the Math-land tax-free, the authorities of the Math had to institute a lawsuit against the Howrah Municipality. At the bidding of the Swami, Swami Brahmananda conducted the case successfully with extraordinary perseverance and indefatigable energy. Day after day he had to run under sun and rains to the advocate's house, the attorney's office and the law-courts and wait there long hours with unflagging patience. These and many other tasks, however uncongenial to his nature and mode of life, he imposed upon himself at the call of the Swami. With implicit faith in the words of the leader he faced all difficulties undauntedly and bore all hardships and privations with perfect suavity. He brought to bear upon the work the same earnestness and zeal with which he carried on his religious practices. As an ideal *Karma Yogi* he maintained such an impersonal attitude in the work that the nature of the work did not affect him in the least.

Swami Vivekananda also had full trust in him. He praised his practical wisdom and relied on him in all important matters. He used to say: "Rakhal has the intellect of a king." Considering his firm character and the mental equipoise which he maintained under all conditions, Swami Vivekananda sometimes compared him to Bhishma of the Mahabharata. He often said to his *Gurubhâis* and others: "Know it for certain that what the Master has said about Rakhal, Yogin and others is true to the letter. They are his kith and kin. They will stand by me even if I live the reckless life of a profligate."

In June, 1899, Swami Vivekananda left on his second visit to the West in

company with Swami Turiyananda and Sister Nivedita especially urged by Swami Brahmananda who thought that the Swami's visit again to the West was necessary. The work he had started in India was carried on with unabated zeal under the able guidance of Swami Brahmananda. The Mission had already organised preaching work in various parts of India in the form of classes and lectures and the publication of books and magazines. In the latter part of 1899 a terrible famine broke out in India; besides there were other visitations, such as cholera, plague, flood and landslip in the coming year. From the middle of 1899 till the Swami's return from the West in December, 1900, the Mission had to conduct vigorous relief operations in different parts of India. The internal affairs of the Math were managed directly by Swami Brahmananda. He took special care to mould the lives of young *Sannyâsins* and *Brahmachârins* who gradually increased in number. Regular practice of meditation along with other duties was strictly enforced for the development of their spiritual nature, for that was how they could be most helpful to themselves as well as to others. He also made personal attempts to improve the new home of the Order in every possible way. Besides the erection of necessary structures, he took utmost care to plant the grounds with trees, flower-beds and vegetable gardens collected from different places.

In October, 1901, Swami Vivekananda intended to perform the *Durgâ Pujâ* in the Math with image according to strict *Shâstric* rites. The day before he made known his intention to his *Gurubhâis*, Swami Brahmananda dreamt that the Ten-armed Mother was coming across the Ganges from the direction of Dakshineswar. As soon as the Swami mentioned his desire to celebrate the *Pujâ*, he disclosed his dream to him. This at once settled the question. The chief function in connection with the *Pujâ* was the feed-

ing of the poor. Hundreds of devotees and poor men were sumptuously fed during the three days of the *Pujâ*. The Swami was glad that the whole ceremony was performed with great success under the able management of Swami Brahmananda.

It has been indicated above that Swami Vivekananda looked upon Swami Brahmananda as the greatest of his *Gurubhâis* and treated him with special regard. Still he could not tolerate any default of duty on his part. It was the Swami's express desire in those days that each member of the Math should go to the worship-room every morning and practise meditation. One morning as he went to the shrine, he noticed that some of his *Gurubhâis* including Swami Brahmananda had been absent. The Swami wanted an explanation but none could give any satisfactory reason for being absent. He asked them as a penalty to go out for *Mâdhukari-bhikshâ* and forbade them at the same time to go to the house of any of their friends. The Swami himself went to Calcutta that morning unable to bear the sad plight in which he had placed his dear *Gurubhâis*. On his return to the Math next day he enquired how they had severally fared the day before. He was greatly rejoiced to know that Swami Brahmananda had obtained a sumptuous meal from a merchant's house in an adjacent village.

About two years before the passing away of Swami Vivekananda in July, 1902, the Belur Math property which originally stood in his name, was vested in a Board of Trustees. The President of the Board was the *Mohânt* (Abbot) of the Math. Swami Brahmananda was elected the first President. According to the constitution of the Mission, the Board of Trustees of the Math is to be the Governing Body of the Mission and the President of the Board the President of the Mission. Though the election of the President took place every two years according to

the Deed of Trust, Swami Brahmananda occupied the paramount position of the President of the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission for more than two decades till he entered into *Mahâsamâdhi* in March, 1922. Swami Saradananda became the Secretary of the Mission about the same time and held that office till his last day in August, 1927. In them the Institution found a wonderfully harmonious combination, unparalleled in the history of an organisation, of two most important administrative heads. Through their concerted efforts and extraordinary powers of management and organisation, the movement started by Swami Vivekananda gathered in strength and force with the passing of days. The phenomenal growth of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission during the last thirty years is too well-known to be recounted here. Wherever there has been a wide-spread calamity throughout the length and breadth of India, the monks of the Ramakrishna Order have gone forward to relieve the distress. Besides the innumerable relief-centres opened temporarily during all sorts of visitations, it has established permanent institutions, religious, educational and charitable, for the threefold service of man all over India as well as in distant America.

After the passing away of Swami Vivekananda Swami Brahmananda had to work very hard for a time to organise the public activities as well as the internal working of the Order. Swami Turiyananda had come away from America in eager expectation to meet the Swami, but no sooner did he reach Rangoon than he received the news of his demise. With a broken heart he came to the Math at Belur, but lost all interest in public work and left the Math very soon to resume the former life of solitary meditation and *Tapasyâ*. Towards the end of 1902, Swami Trigunatita, who had been conducting the Bengali organ of the Order, *Udbodhan*, since its start in 1899, went to America to work in place of

Swami Turiyananda, leaving the paper in the hands of Swami Suddhananda, the present Secretary of the Mission. Swami Brahmananda helped the young editor in diverse ways for the efficient management and improvement of the paper. His suggestions and instructions were much valued by the new editor. He also urged his friends and *Gurubhâis* with literary aptitudes to contribute to the paper regularly and was able to secure some good articles. Though not accustomed to writing, he himself contributed to the paper once.

In 1903 Swami Brahmananda managed to have a respite for several months from his strenuous duties as the Head of the Order and devoted it exclusively to the practice of meditation and *Tapasyâ* in sacred places. During this period he revisited Benares, Kankhal, Brindaban and Allahabad. He left Calcutta about July for Benares with Swami Subodhananda and other monks and stayed there at the Sri Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama for about a month. From there he went alone to Kankhal and stayed there for nearly two months. At Kankhal he practised much meditation keeping awake long hours at night, and some miraculous powers (*Bibhutis*) attainable by the *Yogis*, particularly clair-audience, manifested themselves in him. After two months he went to Brindaban.

At Brindaban he lived again with Swami Turiyananda, who had already been there. It was perhaps for the fifth time that he was at Brindaban. The two *Gurubhâis* rejoiced to revisit the places associated with the Divine life of Sri Krishna on earth. The Maharaj lived a very austere life at Brindaban, taking only plain rice and milk once a day and having very few clothings. Here he had a very strange experience one night. It was his daily practice to get up before midnight and devote the rest of night to meditation and *Japa*. As he sat up, he noticed inside the room the shadowy figure of a

Vaishnava devotee telling his beads standing by. He appeared to be very happy on seeing the Maharaj engaged in *Japa*. The Maharaj saw him every night and was not afraid. One night being very tired, the Maharaj was sleeping heavily. All on a sudden someone gave him a push so as to throw him off his bed. As he woke up he heard a voice, saying: "Get up. It is already twelve. Won't you make *Japa*?" The Maharaj felt frightened and called out to Swami Turiyananda who occupied the next room to his: "Are you awake, Hari Maharaj? What is the time now?" Just then the temple-music indicating midnight began to play. The Maharaj afterwards remarked in connection with this incident that it was a good spirit which awakened him in this fashion to keep him engaged in the regular practice of *Sâdhanâ*.

From Brindaban he went to Allahabad and from there, after a short stay, he went to Bindhachal accompanied by a young man, who later on became his disciple and a member of the monastic order. He had intended to pass only three days there but the stay proved much longer. One midnight, it was the dark night of the new moon, he awoke the young man who was a fine singer, and repaired with him to the temple of Vindhyavâsini. On entering the temple he asked him to sing a song, which ran thus: "O Merciful Consort of Eternity, remover of the great fear of death, O Kâli, who hast made the bosom of Time Thy abode, Thou, terrible and dark as cloud, wife of Shiva, standing on the corpse, the adorer of cemetery, who hast made human skulls Thy ornaments, be kind!" But as soon as the song began, the Maharaj went into ecstasy. His body began to shake and copious tears flew down his cheeks. He was crying like a child. The other visitors at the temple were much struck by these spiritual expressions. After some time the Maharaj came down a little to the normal state and asked him to sing

another song, of which the burden was: "I do not know, O Mother, how to call Thee." The Maharaj had by that time become normal and they returned where they lived. At Bindhachal the Maharaj had also another ecstasy. One day he went with his young companion to the temple of Ashtabhujâ, the Eight-handed Goddess. The place was very solitary. He sat down before the Mother and asked his companion to sing. That day also he at once went into ecstasy. His body began to shake and tears rolled down his cheeks. He sat thus for a long time and when he rose up with the names of the Mother on his lips, his eyes were red with the inflow of blood. On coming out of the temple he climbed on the top of the hill on which the temple was situated and sitting there plunged into deep meditation. Thus passed about three weeks at Bindhachal. Then they returned to Calcutta towards the end of 1903. During this period of *Tapasyâ* he had many divine visions and experiences, of which he casually spoke on his return to the Math, for the encouragement of the young monks; and he himself made *Râja Yoga* practices for some time.

During the rains of 1905 he had a severe attack of typhoid. He was removed from the Math to Balaram Babu's house in Calcutta for treatment. The case took a serious turn and his life was despaired of. The Divine Mother, however, spared him this time for the furtherance of Her work. After three months' suffering he was on the way to recovery. But the disease dealt a severe blow to his iron constitution. Even his memory became weak for the time being. The illness also brought about a change in his personal habits. He had all along lived a simple austere life. He used very scanty clothes. He hardly received personal service from any. But his health was so much impaired this time that it lost all power of resistance. Special care had henceforth to be taken of his health, which

made personal attendance an absolute necessity. Next winter he went to Simultala in the Santhal Perganas for a change and spent there about a month.

After his return to the Math he went to Puri *via* Cuttack and lived there continually for about a year. He had visited Puri once before, some time after the passing of Sri Ramakrishna. At the sight of the image of Jagannâth on that occasion he was so much overpowered with devotion and joy that he burst into tears, for which incident Swami Vivekananda often amused himself at his expense. At Puri he lived in the Sasiniketan of Babu Balaram Bose. Babu Atalbehari Maitra, the then Deputy Magistrate of Puri, was much attracted by his religious and exquisitely human personality. He was lovingly devoted to the Maharaj and sometimes took advantage of his love and gentleness. The Maharaj treated him with special kindness and patiently bore all the tyranny of his love. Atal Babu was a stern man of sceptical temperament. As an executive officer he was a terror to many. He came to the Maharaj very frequently and sometimes invited him to a dinner in his house. Through the influence of the Maharaj he was gradually drawn to religion. At the instance of the Maharaj he performed a *Pujâ* in his house with great festivity. He also spent a good deal of money on public charity.

In the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service in Benares he had a Ward erected in memory of his mother.

Swami Abhedananda returned to India in June, 1906. He came to Puri *via* Madras to meet the Maharaj. Swami Ramakrishnananda as well as Swami Paramananda also came with him to pay their respects to the Maharaj. The Maharaj was in joyous expectation to meet his *Gurubhâis* after a long time and received them most cordially at the station. On their arrival, he went straight to the Temple with them. Swami Premananda also came to Puri from the Math about this time. The Maharaj returned to Calcutta early in September accompanied by Swami Abhedananda and others.

The Maharaj was highly impressed with the religious atmosphere of Puri and its wholesome climatic condition. From 1906 to 1911 he spent every summer there and sometimes stayed till the end of autumn. He generally returned to the Math in the beginning of winter before the birthday festival of Swami Vivekananda and remained there till the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna, which falls generally in March. On both the occasions, selected candidates were initiated into *Sannyâsa* and *Brahmacharya*. At Puri an aged *Sâdhu* of the place felt special attraction for him. He often came to see him and converse with him on religion.

(To be continued)

THE UPANISADIC VIEW OF TRUTH

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

(Continued from the last issue)

THE ABSOLUTE: NETI NETI

Neti denotes that Brahman is not what meets the senses, inner and outer. It is not even the object of thought. Even the highest strength of imagination and the finest sensibility can

neither feel nor touch it, no fine vital urge can reach it. It is beyond, far beyond the grasp of human faculty.

When intuition and existence are identified, the problem of knowing Being cannot arise, for in the height of being, the ordinary conditions of know-

ledge do not prevail. But the denial of knowledge in concrete sense does not commit it to agnosticism. Knowledge is not denied of reality, though knowledge is denied in the sense of discursive and mediate reasoning.

But it is not nothing. It is the acme of existence, the essence of reality. *Neti Neti* does not deny the reality of existence, it denies all the empirical characterisation of reality. The supreme fact cannot be grasped by the ordinary process of knowledge. It escapes the effort of grasp by all the faculties that men are endowed with. Hence the highest spiritual experience and the greatest spiritual fact are beyond the pale of our knowledge.

This truth finds most emphatic expression in the *Brihadâraṇyaka Upanisad* :

“The Atman is not this, it is not this. It is unseizable, for it cannot be seized. It is indestructible, for it cannot be destroyed. It is unattached, for it does not attach itself. It is unbound, it does not tremble. It is not injured.” (IV, 4, 22; III, 9, 26).

The same truth was taught by Bâdhva when he was questioned about the nature of Brahman. “Teach me the nature of Brahman, Reverent Sir,” Bâskali besought Bâdhva. The latter remained silent. The question was again put. The sage was still silent. The enquirer still persisted. The answer came : “I teach but you do not understand. Silent is Atman.” (*Samkara-Bhâsya*, III, 2, 17).

The denial of attributes and qualifications to Brahman does not reduce it to a void. The Upanisads are definite about that. The primal reality is the essence of being,—our pragmatic and conceptual limitation of thinking creates such an apprehension. So long as the pragmatic instincts are active, the mind cannot rise to the height of accepting the truth of the non-relational planes of existence, for the pragmatic instincts are fed upon the consciousness of value and reality of the relativities of existence. When, therefore, at the height

of existence the possibilities of pragmatic satisfactions are belied, the pragmatic mind refuses the highest truth and is anxious to designate it as a void. And naturally so, for the pragmatic mind has not the power to deny its inherent limitations attendant on the divided outlook of life with which it is naturally associated, and to welcome a truth which can sound its death knell. And because religious seeking is falsely identified with pragmatic satisfaction, the higher approaches to truth which cannot appeal to the pragmatic instincts are rejected by the surface mind as quests in the wilderness. The persistent demand of our vital and pragmatic instincts has, therefore, the baneful effect of confining the mind to the satisfactions of the divided life and preventing it from the superior vision of truth which denies pragmatic values. The Upanisadic conception of the spiritual truth cannot be understood, far less appreciated, if life seeks the satisfaction of pragmatic instincts.

The realistic or pragmatic consciousness is guided by its narrow vision and it cannot accept the truth which is revealed when the mind has been able to forego the limitations. And, therefore, the intuitions and revelations coming from the height of existence, transcending the pragmatic, cannot be understood and accepted by the lower mind. And because of this, the *Sruti* says that “neither the learned nor the intelligent among men can welcome this truth.” And verily so, for the appreciation of truth and its final illumination require the quelling of the lower and pragmatic demands of the soul and the waking up of the finest intuitive intelligence which sees but does not understand. And so long as the requirement is not fulfilled, the highest intuitions will be lightly passed over, not that they have no realities, but that the mind has not the fine susceptibilities to feel them and correctly appraise their values. And so long as the vital and pragmatic demands are insistent with the empiric intuitions in life, the trans-

endent truth cannot make its impression, and perchance even if it does, it cannot make the impression lasting and enduring.

It is better for the correct estimate of the Upanisadic truths to indicate that its highest truth can be apprehended not so much by the process of reflection or the intuitions of the empiric and pragmatic mind, as by the supramental revelation and transcendent intuition. The thinking mind may not find much food for it in the pages of the Upanisads, save and except the fine hints pregnant with constructive suggestions, but the enquiring and the truly mystic soul will find in it sufficient food for itself, for its advance and realisation.

The mystic demand and the mystic understanding are different from the pragmatic and conceptualistic demand and understanding. Mysticism has its own claim; if the pragmatic vision could have satisfied the soul, the mystic demand and enquiry would have no value. The mystic approach would have no meaning. The mystic sees and reads life in a way different from the rational or the pragmatic method of approach, and, therefore, the truths and the conclusions which the theoretic and pragmatic mind are slow to receive and accept, the mystic consciousness unhesitatingly receives and accepts. But for this immediate acceptance of a truth that cannot be otherwise seen, felt and appreciated, the mystic claim and approach would be regarded as groundless and unconvincing. The real attraction of mysticism lies in offering a new venue of realisation and a novel method of apprehension. And this explains the fact why the simple truths felt by the mystic take the long and the circuitous method to be established by the theoretic reason. Nay, often reason stands baffled in its attempt.

And this becomes evident when the mystic claims the identity of fact and knowledge, the identity of reality and consciousness, for it is more an ex-

perience in the transcendent height of knowledge than a demonstration of logic. Logic may follow, but in the acme of consciousness the truth is felt.

This is why we see that the Upanisads have not drawn the distinction between fact and knowledge; on the other hand they have characterised the reality to be knowledge and consciousness. The Aitareya Upanisad has it in the conclusion: "All this is based on intelligence (Gnosis). The world is endowed with the vision of intelligence. The basis is intelligence. Brahman is intelligence."

Brahman denotes the highest existence. The highest existence is intelligence, or properly, consciousness. Though the Absolute is intuition, it cannot be intuited. The texts are positive about it. The Kena has: "He who knows not, knows; he who knows, knows not." (I, 2, 3). Again, the Brihadâraryaka (IV, 5, 15) has it: "Who has ever known the knower?" Evidently the hint is that intuition cannot be intuited. "The knower of all cannot be known."

This suggests that intuition excludes all relativity, all reference to the process and the object of knowledge. The text has also: "Brahman is immediacy of intuition. It transcends all knowledge, though it is knowledge. It is the essence of cognition, without being the cognitive process. Brahman is illumination." (Brihadâraryaka, III, 4, 1; III, 5, 1).

This conclusion puts into clear relief the character of the Absolute. It is one. It is intuition. It is luminosity.

But this denial of knowledge in pragmatic and concrete sense does not make the highest affirmation of the Upanisads open to agnosticism. Such charge can only arise when knowledge is defined in empiric terms or in terms of relativity. The pragmatic mind is accustomed to think in terms of relative verity, and therefore it fails to appreciate truth when it is presented in terms which do not represent the actualities of relative existence. The finest imagination cannot picture so sublime a truth, so

dignified an existence. The Kena Upanisad is perfectly justified in saying that "it is different from the known, it is different from the unknown." The inmost truth, "the truth which cannot be perceived by the Manas, and felt by the senses," the truth which is different from the object of adoration, is the finest existence which, by its integrity and simplicity passes comprehension. And yet it is not far, it is intimate, it is too near to be fully apprehended. The highest truth is the greatest dilemma in knowledge. All knowledge presupposes it. All existence is supported in it. It is the consciousness of consciousness. It is the fact of facts. It is far and near. It is in and out. It is the whole and the parts. Still it cannot be seen, it cannot be felt. The texts are positive about it. Who has ever known the knower of all things? None can experience the revealer of experiences. It is, as the Kena points out, inherent in individual psychoses but can scarcely be felt by itself. The sun and the stars illuminate by its light, but none can express it. The world within and the world without are illumined by its light, but the brilliant orbs of the heavens cannot cast in it "their purest ray serene." The stars twinkle with its reflected light, the soul illumines with its borrowed splendour.

The mellowed brilliance of the twilight and the dawn, the dazzling brilliance of the sun, are but its shadows. It illumines the intelligence. "The sun shines not there, neither moon, nor the stars. These lightnings shine not, much less the fire. This shining, all others shine. All this is illumined with His light." (Katha, V, 15).

Intuition cannot be intuited. The Mândukya, (Verse 7) has it: "It is not an object that can either be seen or used, it defies definition and reflection, it is incomprehensible, it is essentially the knowledge of the oneness of self."

Where the object has been identified with the subject of knowledge, the

history of experience has been closed there; the Prapancha, the cosmic manifold, is withdrawn completely from this height of existence. It is, therefore, not the seed of the creation in which the world sleeps, but it is the integral existence, beyond space, beyond time, beyond the creative urges. It is the silence which is not disturbed by the gush of life, it is the great beyond from which no traveller returns, it is beyond the joys of life and the fear of death. It is the greatest wonder of existence. It is rare in its widest commonalty, it is simple in its highest dignity.

The Chhândogya is more appropriate when it says that "the sun does not truly rise and set for him who perpetually lives in the knowledge of Brahman of the Upanisads." (III, 11, 8).

In a more significant passage in the Brihadâranjaka Upanisad we are told by Yâjnavalkya in reply to a question from King Janaka, that "when the sun has set, the moon has set, the fire has gone out, and speech is hushed, the soul (Atman) still shines, for the soul is his light, for with the soul, indeed, as his light, one sits, moves around, does his work and returns." (IV, 3, 6). The Svetâsvatara Upanisad also characterises the highest truth as the consciousness of consciousness, the super-conscience (VI, 13). It calls the supreme-soul Jna, conscience. It is Gnosis (VI, 17). The Brahma Upanisad characterises it as Sâksi Chetâ. It is the percipience, the conscience.

This conscience is the summit of knowledge, free as it is from the mental or supra-mental limitations. It is, therefore, to be distinguished from the wisdom of Hiranyagarbha or of Isvara, for it can reflect only the sum total of experience in the fine or causal dynamism. These are still relative verities and cannot cover the absolute intuition. The supra-mental revelations may give out the hidden mysteries laid deep in the root of existence, but cannot present the timeless intuition before us. The supra-sensuous revelations do not transcend the operation of the

causal law, they are events in time, impressed upon the Sâttvic, luminous, mind freed from the limitations of its working through the senses, but the invariable implication of a reception and a gift in knowledge is there. This reception may be very swift in psychological process, but it cannot forego the implication of reciprocity in knowledge. Revelation may open a direct access into the mysteries of the divine life in Isvara, but it cannot transcend the implication of relations in knowledge. The conscience is, therefore, unique in the sense that it transcends the implications of relations. It is self-luminous, it is luminosity of intuition as distinguished from the luminosity of Sattva. The luminosity in intuition is self-luminosity, the luminosity of Sattva is reflected luminosity. The one is luminosity of intuition, the other is the luminosity of intelligence (Buddhi). Conscience is intuition. Intuition is being.

This conscience is to be distinguished from the super-mind (Isvara) not only in the knowledge aspect, but also in the existence aspect. It is the supreme existence, and it is indestructible: supreme, because it is the ultimate reality beyond which nothing can exist. Isvara is the Absolute in reference to the creative order, and this reference makes it distinct from the Absolute, as it always implies a reference to the totality. So long as our knowledge implies reference, Isvara's being is supposed to be supreme, as it is all-embracing totality; but the moment the reference to the subjective locus is lost, the idea of the eternity of totality also drops from the mind. Eternity, therefore, has two senses: (1) eternity in the sense of the transcendence of time; and (2) eternity in the sense of existing through time. Avyaya in the former sense is true of the Absolute, *i.e.*, Brahman transcending all relations. Avyaya in the second sense is true of Isvara, for it is an existence which is identified with time, the history of the Absolute expressing itself and subsisting through time: Isvara is then the

Absolute seen in reference to self-expression through time. The time order is an order in Isvara, it is not an order in the Absolute.

Self-expression is, therefore, strictly true of Isvara, but not of the Absolute. The Absolute in reality transcends self-expression: the limitation of self-expression is in Isvara, but not in the Absolute. The dynamism of expression does not play any part in Being and the Absolute is such a plenum beyond the ripples of dynamic expression. The Upanisads emphasise this aspect of the absolute existence, and a clear realisation of such an existence is supposed to give that undisturbed calm which is the promise of unrestricted vision and undivided life.

In this affirmation the Upanisads draw a sharp line of distinction between the conscience and the spiritual dynamism: they do not completely negate the dynamic aspect of spiritual life,—they recognise the spiritual values; but they consider them to be the partial expression of spiritual life which does not represent its complete nature and full depth. Spiritual life is, to the Upanisadic teachers, neither evolution nor emergence, for they mean an upward motion and fine expression of our inward being. The common notion of spirituality as the fine blossoming of the inward nature implies the movement of life from its gross to its fine nature. Nay, it has the implicit reference to the truth of spontaneous generation of spirituality. Just as the biologist thinks of the evolution of life out of the lifeless, similarly it is thought that the fine spirituality emerges out of the gross vitalism,—spirituality is an offshoot of vitalism in the course of its emergence into finer expression. The Upanisads cannot in the least favour such a neo-realistic or neo-vitalistic conception of spiritual life, for in such a conception not only the spiritual sense and life in man is supposed to jump into a certain stage of evolution, but also the very centre and object of spiritual life, *viz.*

God, is supposed to be coming into being in the course of emergent evolution.

The greatest short-coming of this theory is that it makes the fine coming out of the gross, the highest values out of the coarsest existence. It does not explain how mass and quantity can pass into the specimens of finest life and spirituality.

The Upanisads steer clear of such a conception. They do not generally believe in spiritual evolution, and when they do, they do not necessarily accept the emergence of the lower into the higher, of the grosser into the finer. The fine, to them, is a higher and truer reality and is immanent in the gross; the fine, therefore, is the essence, the gross is the appearance. In spiritual life there is no room for spontaneous generation, the spirit can be a spark of spirit, life, of life. The highest reality is spiritual, the only existence is spirit. The non-spiritual is not exactly non-spiritual, it is the shadow and the restriction of the spiritual. Spiritual life is then more a close understanding and appreciation of the essence of our being than an evolution or emergence. Spiritual evolution can be true of the divided self, which, from the self-

imposed conception of a division, sees in it the possibility of degeneration and evolution. When the perfect balance and equilibrium of the spiritual life in transcendence is lost, the spiritual life can either be active for a higher evolution, or can degenerate into death. Life, when divided from the source, can work ceaselessly for the evolution of finer instincts and powers, or degenerate into lower forms of existence which check the free flow of vitality, the quickened sense of morality and the fine intellectual and spiritual receptivity. The Upanisads recognise the path of evolution and the gradual regeneration of the spirit and illumination through successive planes of finer existence; but this has not been recognised as the right spiritual quest, for this cannot emancipate the soul from the sense of a false individuality; and however fine it grows, however delicate becomes its being and penetrative its powers, they still suffer from the original limitation and cannot rise above the perfection of powers to the right understanding of the integral being. Spiritual life is then more the installing in the silence than the search of fine being and receptivity.

(To be concluded)

PROFESSOR BENOY KUMAR SARKAR ON MODERN ECONOMIC LIFE

BY SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., F.R. Econ. S.

(Continued from the last issue)

(B) BANKING

Banking has made giant strides in all the advanced countries. The development of modern banking is not very old. Even in countries like Germany and France it began towards the end of the nineteenth century. (*Economic Development*, Ch. 21).

The banking systems of the modern countries differ in many details. In some the Governments merely control

the privately owned banking institutions, in others the banks are State institutions. In some there are strong and big central banks which stand as the prop and support of the other banks, in others the banks are without any central bank in the strictest sense of the term. In some there are a few big banks each with innumerable branches, in others there are a large number of independent institutions with but few branches. In some, the types

of banks are very various, in others only a few common types exist. The banking systems of the various countries also differ as regards the system adopted for the safety of the note-issue or the control over deposit business.

But, in spite of these numerous differences, banks serve one and one purpose only, *viz.*, to properly mobilize the financial resources of the country. They draw in the funds of the community which would otherwise lie idle, multiply the funds many times over through the media of notes, cheques and other credit instruments and drive those funds into the needy channels of trade and industry. The importance of banks therefore lies in the fact that they provide the funds which the innumerable firms carrying on manufacturing or commercial operations in modern countries always require in order to carry on their activities.

The industrial and commercial advance of modern Germany owes a deep debt to the development of banking. This is emphasized by Prof. Sarkar in the following passage :

“German banking which was almost *timid* in its operations down to 1895, commenced at this date an *abrupt career of expansion*. The activity has expanded, as is evident, geographically both inland and overseas. But the geographical expansion has in every instance been brought about by the urge to *tap all sorts of industries and agricultural enterprises at home* as well as promote commercial ventures abroad. The iron and steel industries of the Rhine land, the navigation and maritime trade on the Rhine, the phosphate manufactures of Hanover, the textile and food industries of Saxony, the farming interests of Southern Germany, the electrical industries of Berlin and environs—*each and one* of the manifold *wealth-producing factors* of German life has since been *consciously served* by a bank or a group of banks.

“The *growth of the industries brought* with them the *craving for*

markets and the demand for export facilities. In this *commercial expansion* of Germany the banks have been playing a *well thought-out and systematic plan* since 1895. Every ‘group’ of banks is an industrial as well as an export institution, the enterprise of banks contributed already in 1905 to the establishment of Germany as a world power in every sense.” (*Economic Development*, p. 80).

In their efforts to advance the economic prosperity of their country the Japanese early understood the importance of banking. The first Japanese bank to help international trade, *viz.*, the Yokohama Specie Bank (before that Japanese international trade was under the control of foreign banks), was established in 1880. Banks to help industry and agriculture (the Hypothic Bank and the Industrial Bank) were established early in the twentieth century. Banks were even established which would lend without any security, only if they were convinced that the borrower has the character and capacity to profitably utilize the loan. (*Vartaman Jagat*, Volume on Japan, p. 248).

Banks have grown in size with the growth of industry and trade. The need for financial operations on a larger scale and that for the reduction of risk of the shareholders necessitated the introduction of the joint-stock principle in the banking business. The process of trustification which is going on to-day in the region of industries, has also proceeded apace in the banking world. The amalgamation of the banks, *i.e.*, the merger of several banks into bigger units, has the same impulses (*viz.*, economy, cheapness, enhanced efficiency, etc.) which lie at the root of industrial trustification. Besides, the various economic activities of the modern world are so bewilderingly complex that, as in other spheres of modern life, a sort of rough specialization has crept into the region of banking also. Banks have grown up for the support of international trade, or of in-

land trade, or for the establishment of industries, or for the extension of short-term loans to the merchants, the expansion of existing firms into bigger ones, the floating of new concerns, helping agriculturists with loans on the mortgage of their lands, keeping safe deposits, etc.

Banks have their foundations in the confidence or trust in others. The stupendous banks of the present-day world thus arise only on the foundations of a valuable moral trait. The greater and more numerous the banks of a country, the greater, therefore, is the character and the sounder the morality of that country. Banks, therefore, serve the purpose of an instrument for an infallible measurement of the loftiness of national character. (*Arthik Unnati*, Vol. I, p. 624).

Not only that. As already said, banks constitute the centre round which the economic organizations of a country congregate. They are the foundations on which economic institutions build themselves up. They manufacture the life-force which pours vitality into industrial and commercial activities. Hence, banks are not only 'the barometers of national character,' they also constitute a faithful index to the economic strength and greatness of a nation. (*Arthik Unnati*, Vol. I, p. 623).

AGRICULTURE IN THE MODERN WORLD

There are scholars both in our country and abroad who are accustomed to think that agriculture is the God-ordained line of India's economic activity and that commerce and industries are the special preserves of the Eur-Americans. Prof. Sarkar, however, realized soon after his setting foot on the French soil in about 1914 that agriculture is as much cared for in that country as industry.¹ And this convic-

¹ As regards Prof. Sarkar's reflections on the balance between agriculture and industry in France and the interdependence between the two, see *Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II., pp. 217 and 219.

tion was deepened in his subsequent visit to Great Britain in the same year. He points out in the *Vartaman Jagat* (Vol. II) written at that time that agriculture in Great Britain also is carried on with the greatest possible care, that it is carried on there on a much larger scale than in India (Prof. Sarkar points out that 150 bighas are considered the minimum for cultivation with machineries and that machineries are widely used in England), that up-to-date scientific knowledge and chemical manures and labour-saving machineries are pressed into requisition in order to extract the utmost from the soil at the lowest possible cost. He also points out that various subsidiary industries, such as animal husbandry, poultry-farming, bee-rearing, etc., are resorted to side by side with agriculture in order to supplement the earnings from the tilling of the soil. He also points out that the character of modern agriculture has been very much transformed owing to the application of the co-operative principle in agricultural production, marketing and finance. Co-operative production, marketing and finance have enabled the small scale farmers to enjoy the benefits of large-scale operations. He points out that the co-operative movement in Ireland enabled Irish agriculture to regularly supply eggs and butter of uniform quality to the British market; and in this way Irish agriculture succeeded in ousting rivals such as Russia, Denmark, etc.

Agriculture cannot improve without the introduction of the best possible legislation in relation to land. It is pointed out that in this respect, as in respect to Industrial Insurance, Germany is the pioneer. In 1820-21 a law was passed in Germany providing for the consolidation of fragmented holdings. In 1882 a law was passed for the undivided inheritance of the consolidated holdings. In 1890-91 a law was passed for the purchase of land by the Government from the landlords and for the distribution of those lands among the peasants, in order to provide them

with the minimum area (119 bighas)² that is necessary for the support of the cultivator and his family. In 1919 a law was passed abolishing the system of "Fidei Kommerse" (i.e., the tendency among industrial magnates to found country estates and to keep large areas in the control of their families) and preventing landlords in certain districts from holding any estate larger than 875 bighas.

The example set by Germany as regards increasing the size of the holdings through the compulsory expropriation of the landlords with indemnity (in most cases insufficient) began to be followed in Denmark in 1899 and in Great Britain in 1908. The same movement for the creation of small holdings in place of big estates has made its appearance after the War in some of the smaller states of Europe such as Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania, Yugo-Slavia and Poland.

It should be noted that not only is there the attempt to increase the size of the existing holdings, but there is also the attempt to convert the landless agricultural labourers into peasant proprietors. Besides, the newly created farmers are helped with Government loans to enable them to launch in agricultural operations.³ Various restrictions also are imposed on the farmers (some of the restrictions on Danish farmers—sub-division, amalgamation or addition not allowed; inheritance to be single and undivided; not allowed to let or to build any houses to let, etc.) in the interests of the nation.

Agriculture in the modern state is

² 44 bighas in Denmark and 175 bighas in England.

³ "The lands are however in many cases difficult to work and can be managed with quite liberal outlays in capital and cattle such as only 'big landowners' can command. The state is therefore coming to the aid of the peasant and seeing to it that the problem of production may be well attended to, even under the conditions of 'petite culture' such as have been created by the redistribution of the lands."—*Economic Development*, pp. 203-4.

promoted because it is considered as absolutely necessary for national self-sufficiency and for the preservation of national health and maintenance of military strength. While highly developed industrial states are trying to improve their agriculture, newly industrializing states also, e.g., Russia and the Balkan States, are not sparing their efforts for the same end.

It appears therefore that agriculture is not at all neglected in the advanced countries. In spite of it, however, the drift of men from agriculture to industries goes on unchecked. What is the reason for this? The fundamental reason is that agriculture is unpopular. It is unpopular because it is not sufficiently paying to the labourers. And low rates of wages prevail in agriculture because the incomes of the farmers are low. The incomes of the farmers in their turn are low because of the low prices of agricultural produce and high value of land. If the prevailing tendency, therefore, is allowed to go unchecked, agriculture will be made to go to the wall by industry. But because of the sociological benefits from agriculture, it is realized in modern Europe that it must be preserved and made profitable at any cost. Various methods are being adopted to make agriculture profitable—e.g. (a) co-operation; (b) internal colonizing; and (c) the small holdings movement. Prof. Sarkar quotes Dr. Hainisch as emphasizing that none of these steps will enable agriculture to thrive and that the state itself must be prepared to take agriculture out of private hands and conduct it as a national monopoly if it is to be saved from the unequal competition with industry. (*Political Philosophies since 1905*, pp. 227-8, and article on "The New Economics of Land" in *The Calcutta Review* for 1927, pp. 339-342).

RECENT TENDENCIES IN MODERN PUBLIC FINANCE

As in other departments of economic activity, so in public finance also, the modern world records a greater and

greater advance towards a better condition of things. Some of the leading features of modern public finance are: the attempt to study each item of taxation from the economic aspect, the exemption of a minimum income from taxation, the levying of taxes according to the ability to pay, the ever-increasing application of the progressive principle in taxation both as a means of 'equalizing the burden' and as 'a measure for the redistribution of wealth,'⁴ the levying of higher and higher taxes with a view to developing the community in diverse directions and thus returning the money drawn from the community with tenfold benefit, etc. These show the fundamental motives and forces that are moving public finances in the advanced countries.

On this point the following extracts from Prof. Sarkar's speech, delivered at a meeting of the Indian Economic Conference held in Calcutta in 1927, will be found interesting:

"During the last generation in all the advanced countries of Europe and America, the states have been realizing, and the peoples getting used to one and one slogan and that is, 'taxes, more taxes and still more taxes.' The British theory and practice of death duties or inheritance taxes are quite well known. The extreme Bolshevistic programme of progressive taxation which constitutes virtually expropriation or confiscation of property need not be discussed for the time being. But 'capital levy' as adumbrated in England, as well as the taxes on industry as established in Czecho-Slovakia, Germany and other countries indicate which way the financial brains of contemporary mankind have been flowing. And to-day we are in the midst of an agitation in Great Britain which seeks to graduate the taxes on property in such a manner that by the third generation it ceases to remain private and escheats to the state."

⁴ On this point see *Political Philosophies since 1905*, pp. 204 and 205.

"It is desirable to remember that the responsibilities of modern democracies are *considerable*. The states have been assuming on their shoulders the duty of providing to the people *almost everything that is necessary for their physical and moral uplift.*"

ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE OF MODERN WOMEN

The movement for the economic independence of women is very recent. It began in the advanced countries early in the twentieth century—though traces of it might be found even towards the end of the nineteenth century—and it received a tremendous push during and after the Great War.

During Prof. Sarkar's visit to England in 1914 he found women working as housekeepers, teachers, musicians, factory-workers, etc. in order to earn their livelihood. He points out that married women are compelled to work in order to meet the expenses of the family.

In the U. S. A. he found women working in large numbers as teachers, typewriters and private secretaries—apart from a large number participating in honorary and very useful social service activities.

In the course of a public lecture in Calcutta in 1927 on "Modern Women in the Economic World" he pointed out that the German women of to-day have taken to various occupations in order to earn their livelihood. The professions mentioned are the following: 1. Housekeeping. Those trained as housekeepers manage hotels, restaurants, students' hostels and also conduct model schools for boys and girls. 2. Serving as cooks and maid-servants. Even cooks and maid-servants have to get special training in schools after passing from the compulsory Government schools. These schools began to be started by the German Women's Association established in 1865 with the object of raising German women up to the modern standard. 3. The manufacture of cheap dresses, hats and other

silk, cotton and linen goods. Women cannot ply these trades unless they get certificates of competency from municipal authorities and from special technical schools after having passed from compulsory Government schools, 4. Women also work as (a) assistants in medical research laboratories, (b) assistants in hospitals, (c) research-workers in metal mines, (d) chemical examiners of food-stuffs and (e) assistants to engineers. 5. Besides, they also take to the following paid social service occupations: (a) specialists in the nursing of particular types of diseases, (b) specialists in matters affecting the health and education of children, (c) working in various types of economic institutions as collectors of up-to-date information about banking, insurance, technical matters, etc. Women cannot work as paid social service workers in any of the various capacities mentioned, unless they attain educational qualifications as high as those of Indian graduates, gain practical experience in some establishment for a certain period, get special training in some school and attain at least the age of 24 or 25.

It thus appears that in Germany an elaborate arrangement exists to enable women to specialize in various lines and thus to earn an income whereby they stand on their own feet and at the same time contribute handsomely to the economic, cultural, technical and hygienic progress of their 'fatherland.'

BENEFITS OF MODERN ECONOMIC LIFE

The most important advantage of modern economic life is that it has made the attainment of a high level of comfort and prosperity possible, because of the cheapening of commodities and the production of commodities on a large scale. The standard of living and the level of wages are much higher in modern countries than in those which are still in mediæval economic conditions or are still in the transitional stage between the mediæval and the

modern. Even the labourers of the modernized countries have a standard of living which is still far higher than that of the middle classes in countries like India. Because of the all-round economic development of modern countries, an expenditure of a certain sum of money will enable a person to get much greater comfort there than in the backward ones.

Another important advantage is this. Nature has not endowed every country with the best resources necessary for industrial greatness. For example, Switzerland is a small rugged country lacking in the raw materials necessary for material prosperity of a high order. Agricultural progress is not also possible there because of the rugged nature of the country. Yet, that country with a population of only 40 lakhs of people has achieved a high degree of material prosperity.⁵ The savings of the people in Switzerland amount to 667 fr. per head (in 1835 it was 8 fr. per head) and there are only 50,000 persons who earn an income of Rs. 40 per month. The variety of industries in that country is remarkable. And she is competing with first class nations in the production of commodities such as watches, electrical machineries, etc. Even the first class nations consume enormous quantities of Swiss goods. The industrial efficiency, the international trade and the consequent material prosperity of Switzerland are such that Prof. Sarkar lovingly calls her, "a Germany in miniature." The prosperity of the Swiss has been possible because they have adopted modern

⁵ "Switzerland with a population of four millions, i.e., forty lakhs is not larger than any two or three districts of Bengal. And it yet may be described as a power in the world's economic system Waterpower is perhaps the only resource with which nature has plentifully endowed Switzerland. 22.4 p.c. of the territory is unproductive land. And yet Switzerland happens to be one of the richest and most expensive countries of the world. The hand of men has converted this rugged mountain region into an earthly paradise from the economic point of view." (*Economic Development*, p. 246).

economic organization and modern industrial technique.

THE EVILS AND HOW THEY ARE BEING COMBATED

Just before the World War, when Prof. Sarkar paid his first visit to England, his views about modern economic life had not assumed any pronounced form. On the one hand, the prosperity of the European countries, their marvellous powers of organization, their might and splendour extorted his admiration. On the other hand, the various evils of modern economic life appeared before his eyes very prominently. His then impressions are embodied in his Bengali work, *Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II. In numerous places of that volume he mentions the various evils of modern economic life which drew his special attention at that time. These are: (1) That the labourers suffer from ill-health; (2) that the lives of the labourers are very monotonous because they have to attend to the machineries for hours together and have to work like living machines by the side of the lifeless ones; (3) that the sense of beauty is being destroyed; (4) that the life of the labourers is full of anxiety and trouble; (5) that fresh air is difficult to get in the cities; (6) that family life is being destroyed because many of the duties (education, cooking, etc.) usually discharged by the family are now discharged by the society;⁶ and (7) that poverty is not disappearing in spite of increase in wealth. (*Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II, p. 612).⁷

⁶ The sum and substance of Prof. Sarkar's remarks on the differences between Hindu and English families is that a Hindu family is a society in miniature, while in England the individuals are but mere units forming parts of a bigger family, viz., the society or the nation.

⁷ But note the following passage written at almost the same time and appearing at p. 212 of *Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II: "I have passed from the southern to the northern end of France. But I do not remember to have seen anywhere any sign of misery or

Though he was an admirer of the modern world at that time, yet his mind was full of the idea that the Hindu ideal of life is superior to that of the West. Hence, he was predisposed to interpret the British movement for small industries, revival of agriculture, etc. as but a progress towards the Hindu ideal of life.

In spite of that state of his mind, we find him deeply appreciating the heroic efforts of the Westerners in solving their own economic and social problems.

He enumerates the following as specimens of such efforts:

(1) That the rich are aware that they have obligations towards the poor. New ideals of social duty are being preached among the rich. The rich are founding charitable institutions and spending money for town-planning, housing, betterment of health, etc.;

(2) Taxation on the rich for the amelioration of the poor;

(3) The establishment of social service organizations such as the Boy Scouts movement, the Fresh Air movement, etc.;

(4) The establishment of Trade-Unions to enable the poor to combat with the capitalist class;

(5) The starting of Co-operative Societies as a solution of the poverty problem and as a means for the democratic control of business in place of the oligarchic control represented by the joint-stock firms.

In *Vartaman Jagat* (Volume on the U. S. A.), Prof. Sarkar points out that the conditions of modern life are such that the existence of the family as it has existed in the world till now, on the basis of the inferiority of the female to the male, is being destroyed and is bound to be destroyed and that the modern tendency is towards the establishment of friendly relations only between the male and the female. He does not approve or disapprove of the tendency. He is simply content with

poverty Even the poor men of France appear to be happier than middle-class people in our country."

pointing his finger towards the direction in which the relations between the male and the female are gradually tending. And he also points out that the same loosening of the family bond and the establishment of the relationship between the male and the female on a basis of equality, will make their appearance in every country which will adopt the forms and processes of modern economic life.

His present attitude towards the evils of modern economic life is shortly this. He does not deny that there are evils. He is conscious especially of the following: (1) the bitterness of relations between the labourers and the capitalists; (2) the problem of alternate industrial booms and depressions;⁸ (3) the unpopularity of agriculture and the growing exodus from the village into the town; (4) the evils of trustification, etc.

But he forcefully points out that the moderns are doing their best to combat them and have been considerably successful in that direction. He also points out that it does not befit those who occupy a lower level of economic life to stick to it with tenacity and to refuse to advance to the higher level simply because of a magnified conception of the evils of that life without considering the advantages attendant thereon.

FUTURE OF MAN'S ECONOMIC LIFE

Prof Sarkar points out two important factors that will become important elements in the future economic life of mankind:

⁸ The institution of systematic researches into the problem of industrial crises, e.g., by the Crises Institutes of Berlin, Harvard, Vienna, etc.; the undertaking of development works by the states in times of industrial depression; and the administration of all the economic activities of the country by a central body of economists, statisticians and technical experts—are referred to as some of the remedies tried in order to meet the problem of industrial crises. (*Political Philosophies since 1905*, pp. 232, 241 and 248).

1. SOCIALISM

Modern economic life is organized on a capitalistic basis. Private initiative due to the incentive of profits appropriable by private individuals provide the main stimulus for modern economic activities. The working classes however demand that the agents of production, distribution and exchange should cease to be private properties and should become properties of the community, so that profits, rent and interest would not remain appropriable by private individuals but would go to the community.

Till now, practical experimentation in socialism on a national scale has taken place in one country only and that too has found it necessary to partially revert to capitalism and also has been attended with many unhappy features. Nevertheless, Prof. Sarkar points out that socialism is the end towards which modern economic organization is gradually tending. The activities of modern Governments to-day are more or less socialistic. The principles of modern taxation have become tinged with socialism. Economics is no longer a science for the accumulation of wealth—it is a science for the advance of the material welfare of all classes of people.⁹ Labourers are growing in power and capitalists are becoming more reasonable and in many cases are gracefully yielding. The world thus is making slow but steady advance to a state of things in which the productive and distributive activities would be carried on not for the profits of a few private individuals but for the benefit of society at large.

2. ECONOMIC OPERATIONS ON A WORLD BASIS

To-day modern countries are organized on a nationalistic basis. Efforts on the part of modern states for the develop-

⁹ The Preface to Prof. Sarkar's *Economic Development and Greetings to Young India*, p. 45.

ment of agriculture and industries have but one principal motive, *viz.*, to strengthen the nation and each unit of the nation. Political nationalism provides a good deal of the energism that compels the participation of the modern state in economic activities. The wide prevalence of Protectionism is the best illustration of this fact. Whatever of international co-operation there is, exists not because of any solicitude for the welfare of mankind, but because the co-operating nations (or organizations) find combined action necessary for their own development.

Prof. Sarkar, however, expects that the day would soon dawn when economic problems would be studied and economic activities carried on, not with a view to advancing the material interests of a particular section of mankind but those of mankind at large. This was

made clear in a speech delivered at the Grand Hotel, Calcutta, on 21st July, 1926. We quote the last para from that speech :

“In the *near future* the legal, economic, and political relations between nations are *going to lose much of their traditional significance*. International intercourse bids fair to assume the character of a *round-table study* of the raw materials, human agencies, and financial resources of the world with a view to the *fullest utilization of each* in the *interest of the happiness of mankind*. The patriots and nationalists of the different sections of the world *must have to reshape their philosophies and policies en rapport* with the demands of this *new era of interdependence, mutual exploitation and world economy*.” (*Greetings to Young India*, p. 76; also see p. 117).

(Concluded)

EARLY HELLENIC-CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM AND ITS RELATION TO HINDU MYSTICISM*

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

V

The keystone of the edifice—and the whole edifice itself—the *alpha* and *omega* of the work—is “Super-eminent Unity”—“Unity the mother of all other unity.” And the grandeur of his definitions and negations which seek, less to attain than to invoke It, is equal and parallel to Vedântic language. . . . “Without reason, without understanding, without name. . . . Author of all things, nevertheless It is not, because It surpasses all that is. . . .” “Itself not being,” but “the cause of being to all,” and that which is included in the same title as the Non-Being.

Everything is reduced to this unique object, which is at the same time the

unique subject. It is an intoxication of unity, wherein intelligence without ever losing its clarity gives itself to the torrential flood of immense Love and its “circular” river :

“Divine love (which is the smooth flowing of the ineffable Unity) indicates distinctly Its own unending and unbeginning, as it were a sort of ever-lasting circle, whirling round in unerring combination, by reason of the Good . . . and ever advancing and remaining and returning in the same and throughout the same.”

The whole world then is subject to divine gravitation, and the movement of all beings is a march towards God. The sole aim of all conscious spirits is to “find their perfection in being carried to the Divine imitation . . . and what is more Divine than all, in becoming a fellow-worker with God.”

And the “imitation” may be done in an infinite number of ways, for “each

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... find their perfection in being carried to the Divine imitation in their own proper degree;" and he will become most like Him "who have participated in It in many forms."

But there are three principal ways of approach to Him. And each of the three may be followed in two ways, by *Affirmation* and *Negation*.

The two affirmative ways are :

1. By a knowledge of the qualities and attributes of God, attained by the symbols of the Divine Names, which "the divine oracles" (that is to say, the Scriptures) have provided for our infirmity of spirit.

2. By the method of all that exists—the created worlds: for God is in all creatures, and the imprint of His seal may be found on all matter, although the mark of the seal varies according to the different kinds of matter. All the worlds are united in one river. The laws of the physical world correspond to the laws of the higher world. It is then lawful to seek God under the veil of the most humble forms, for "all the streams" of love—even animal love, which therein finds its justification) participate in holy Love, their unique source.

But all these means that we possess,—thanks to the tenderness of God, who proportions His light to the weak eyes of humanity and places forms and shapes around the formless and shapeless, and under the manifold and the complex conceals Unity—are imperfect. And the other path, that of negation, is higher, and more worthy, it is more certain, and goes further.

Few there are, "even in the sacred ranks," who attain to the One, and yet some exist. "There are spirits among us called to a like grace, as far as it is possible for man. . . . They are those who, by the suspension of all intellectual operation enter into intimate union with the ineffable light. And they speak of God only through negations. . . ."

The great path of Negation is the object of a special treatise, famous from

medieval to modern times: *The Treatise of Mystic Theology*.

In it Denis instructed an initiate, Timotheus, although he told him to keep these mysteries a strict secret (for their knowledge is dangerous to unprepared minds). He taught him the entry into what he calls "Divine Gloom," and which he explained in his letters as "unapproachable light," and also that "mystic ignorance," which being very different from ordinary ignorance, "in its superior sense, is a knowledge of Him, who is above all known things. . . . This absolute and happy ignorance constitutes knowledge of Him who surpasses all the objects of human knowledge."

Man must "abandon moderate negations for stronger and stronger ones. . . . And we may venture to deny everything about God in order to penetrate into this sublime ignorance," which is in verity sovereign knowledge. He uses the beautiful simile of the sculptor's chisel removing the covering of stone, "and bringing forth the inner form to view, freeing the hidden beauty by the sole process of curtailment."

The first task is to tear the veil of "sensible things."

The second task is to remove the last garments: the trappings of "intelligible things."

The actual words deserve to be quoted:

"It is neither soul nor mind, nor has imagination or opinion, or reason, or conception; neither is expressed nor conceived; neither is number nor order; nor greatness nor littleness; nor equality nor inequality; nor similarity nor dissimilarity; neither is standing nor moving; nor at rest; neither has power, nor is power nor light; neither lives nor is life; neither is essence nor eternity nor time; neither is Its touch intelligible, neither is It science, nor truth, nor kingdom, nor wisdom; neither one, nor oneness; neither Deity, nor Goodness, nor is It spirit according to our understanding; neither Sonship nor Paternity; nor any other thing of

those known to us or to any other existing being; neither is It any of non-existing or of existing things, nor do things existing know It, as It is; nor does It know existing things *qua* existing; neither is there expression of It, nor name nor knowledge; neither is It darkness, nor light; nor error nor truth; neither is there any definition at all of It, nor any abstraction. But when making the predications and abstractions of things after It, we neither predicate nor abstract from It; since the all-perfect and uniform cause of all is both above every definition and the pre-eminence of Him, who is absolutely freed from all, and beyond the whole, is also above every abstraction."

Is there any religious Hindu who will not recognise in the intellectual intoxication of this total Negation the Advaitic teachings of absolute Jnâna Yoga after it has arrived at the fact of realisation?

At this point in the conquest of the Divine, the achievement of the "Unreasonable, the cause of all reason," the liberated and enlightened soul enters into the Peace and Silence of Unity. It does not see God, it does not know Him: "it rests there." It is deified. It no longer speaks of God; it is God Himself:

"But you will find that the Word of God calls gods, both the Heavenly Beings above us, and the most beloved of God, and holy men amongst us, although the Divine Hiddenness is transcendently elevated and established above all, and no created Being can properly and wholly be said to be like unto It, except those intellectual and rational Beings, who are entirely and wholly turned to Its Oneness as far as possible, and who elevate themselves incessantly to Its Divine illuminations, as far as attainable, by their imitation of God, if I may so speak, according to their power, and are deemed worthy of the same Divine name."

From that moment the "deified"—the saint who is united to God—having drunk from the source of the Divine

sun, becomes in his turn a sun to those below. "Through the imitation of God and by His decrees, each superior nature is in a way a source of illumination for inferior natures, for, like a canal, it allows the flow of divine light to reach the latter."

And gradually the light spreads through all the ranks of the double Hierarchy of the celestial and the human, in an unbroken chain linking the humblest to the highest. Moreover, this hierarchy is reflected in each individual. "In every human intelligence there are faculties of the first, second, or third order, corresponding to the three kinds of illumination appropriate to each hierarchy. . . . For nothing shuts out the possibility of ulterior perfecting, except for the topmost pinnacle of primitive and infinite perfection."

This perfecting is the object of initiation, whereby souls are made to pass through three stages: (1) purification; (2) illumination; (3) consummation in the perfect knowledge of the splendours.

To the first rank of the initiated belong those religious monastics, who like the Sannyâsins of India are under the vow of complete purification. They "remove their mind from the distraction of multiple things, and precipitate themselves towards Divine unity and the perfection of holy love." Their perfect philosophy "is trained to the knowledge of the commandments whose aim is the union of man and God."

But it is not necessary to belong to a privileged order to attain this knowledge of the Divine Unity. For It is inscribed in each one. "The Divine light is always unfolded beneficently to the intellectual visions," even to those who reject it. If it is not seen, it is because a man cannot see it. And the proper business of initiation is to teach him to see it. "God being the principle of that holy institution which teaches souls to know themselves, whoever wishes to consider his own nature must first know what it is." He has only

to contemplate himself with "un-biassed eyes." Purification, symbolised by ritual ablutions, does not only concern the body and the senses, but the spirit as well. The unalterable condition of realising communion (in the sense of the eucharistic sacrifice) is to be "purified even to the remotest illusions of the soul."

This word "illusions" used in such a sense is like an echo of the Hindu *Mâyâ*. I often thought of the latter when I saw the long and beautiful explanation of Evil in the system of the Areopagite; for they use the same terms to deny both being and non-being :

"Evil is neither being, for then it would not be absolutely evil, nor non-being, for this transcendental appellation can only belong to that contained in the sovereign good in a sovereign fashion."

"Evil has neither fixity, nor identity, it is varied, indefinite, as if floating in subjects which do not possess immutability in themselves. . . . Evil, as evil, is not a reality. It is not a being. . . . Evil as evil is nowhere . . ."

Everything exists only in and through the Good, which is the "Super-eminent Unity."

At every moment there is the feeling that the links with the East are still intact and it is difficult to disentangle them. When he describes the ceremonies to be rendered to the dead, Denis thinks of the "loud laugh" or disdainful smile of some profane persons, when faced with rites implying a belief that seems to them absurd. And he alludes to the opposite belief in Reincarnation. But he does not oppose it with the pitying scorn that he expects from his adversaries. He says with admirable forbearance that in his opinion it is wrong :

"Some of them imagine that the souls go away into other bodies; but this seems to me unjust to the bodies who have shared the works of holy souls, since they are unworthily deprived of

the divine rewards awaiting them at the end of the way . . ."

VI

The Areopagite in his religious construction uses many materials that are to be found in the construction of Indian thought. And if there is nothing to justify the view that the one has borrowed from the other, it must be granted that they both of them come from a common quarry. I have neither the means nor the desire to find out what it is. My simple knowledge of the human spirit leads me to discover it in the unity of thought and laws that govern the spirit. The primordial instinct, the desire for mystic union with the Absolute, that is embedded in each individual and that urges each man towards It, has very limited means of expression; and its great paths have been traced once and for all by the exigencies and limitations of nature itself. Different races merely take with them over the same roads their different temperaments, habits and preferences.

In my opinion the following is what distinguishes a Christian mystic imbued with the Hellenic spirit from the Indian Vedântist :

It is quite obvious that the former contains the genius of imperial order which demands good government. A harmonious and strict "Hierarchy" controls the whole edifice of the Areopagite. The associated elements cohere and are ordered with justice, prudence, and lucidity. And in that union each one keeps its own place and its own identity. The vital instinct of the European is to cling to the smallest portions of his individuality and to desire to perpetuate them, and this instinct is curiously wedded to the elementary force of mystic gravitation which tends to lose the multiplicity of beings and forms in the incandescent gulf of Unity. "The Divine Peace," described by Denis in one of his most beautiful hymns, is that perfect peace which ought to reign over the entire universe and in each individual, and

which both unites and distinguishes all the elements that constitute the general harmony. It "reconciles" the diverse substances with each other and reunites them without altering them, so that in their alliance there is neither separation nor distance, but they keep the integrity of their own proper sphere and do not lose their own nature by an admixture of contrary elements; nothing disturbs either their unanimous concert or the purity of their own particular essence.

This desire to safeguard the integrity and the continuance of individuals even in the bosom of the absolute Being, is so powerful in Denis' case that he justifies not only natural inequality, but (within Divine Peace itself) the fighting instinct that drives each individual to defend the preservation of its essence, and even the cruelties of nature, so long as they correspond to the laws of types and elements.

Another dominant characteristic of Christian mysticism is the super-eminent place it gives to Goodness and Beauty. It comes from its double descent—noble on both sides—from Christ and Greece. The word Beauty appears in the very first words of Denis. Beauty is the very quality of the Infinite. It is the source and the end of humanity.

And Goodness to a still higher degree. It is the very source of Being. It is the Divine Origin. The Areopagite puts it in the place of the Gaurisankar of the Divine Himalayas, at the zenith of the Attributes of God. It is as the sun, but infinitely more powerful. From it issues everything else that is: light, intelligence, love, union, order, harmony, eternal life. Even Being, "the first of all the gifts of God," is the offspring of Goodness. It is the first-born.

This point of view is apparently very different from Hindu Mysticism, where the Absolute reigns supreme above good and evil. But it communicates to the Areopagite's whole thought a serenity, a tranquil and certain joy, without any of the tragic shades of a Vivekananda.

But we must not deceive ourselves: the word Goodness in the mouth of

Denis has little in common with Christian sentimentalism. Neither the "Divine Peace," nor Divine Goodness, passes over in its scheme of things the mass of weakness, violence, and suffering in the universe: they all go to make up its symphony; and each dissonance if it is in the right place adds to the richness of the harmony. It does not even forbid the chastisement of error, if that error violates the laws inherent in human nature, for nature has endued every man with liberty; "and it is not a function of Providence to destroy nature." On the other hand, it must "watch" that the integrity of each individual nature is maintained, and with it the integrity of the whole universe and of each of its parts. And that is what is meant by "universal salvation."

It is clear that all these different names: Providence, Salvation, Goodness and Peace express no shallow optimism. Their conception arises from an uncompromising and disillusioned view of nature. They demand an intrepidity of heart and mind, not far removed from the heroism of a Vivekananda, but it was better able to keep command of the immovable serenity of a great soul that is one with the Sovereign Unity and wedded to its eternal designs.

The atmosphere in which Denis' ideas are steeped is less moral, in the ordinary sense, than cosmic, and its temperature is closer to that of Indian Mysticism than to simple Christian thought, which rallies round the Crucified nameless multitudes of the humble and oppressed. The energies are maintained by the impersonal command of nature's laws, which combine and unite the elements in all their multiplicity. But the order of the Areopagite has this advantage over the Indian, that it partakes of the harmony of Greek reason and the Roman genius of imperial organisation. Denis, we feel strongly, is obliged to satisfy the double exigencies of the Hellenic mind nourished on Eastern thought and the evangelistic heart filled

with the dream of the crucified Saviour. He has encircled the Christ with a rich halo of Alexandrine speculation, and as a result the fascination of the halo has in a measure eclipsed the Christ. The first who approached its circle of light like John Scot Erigene was blinded by it. He was the only man of his century to come into contact with them, and to live in long and secret communion with this mysterious work; for he was almost the only living man of his age who understood the language in which it was written. He drank of the mystic draught, and from it he imbibed the secret, so dangerous to orthodoxy, of the freedom of the mind that is intoxicated by symbols, wherein the letter of the Christian faith is little by little drowned in the limitless and unfathomable ocean of the One. By way of Denis, Plotinus, Philo, the Infinite of Asia filtered through him into the religious soul of the West. The Church condemned him in vain in the thirteenth century. He flourished openly in the enchanted philtre of the great mystics of the fourteenth century, the most intoxicated of them, Meister Eckhart, being condemned by the Avignon Papacy.

That is why it is easy to understand the prudence wherewith the Church today cancels even though it honours "the Pseudo-Denis"—"that old, equivocal, obscure, uncertain and dangerous master," as he was called by the French historian best qualified to write of Western mysticism. Nobody can deny that the judgment was correct from the orthodox point of view,—although ten centuries of orthodoxy had been nourished upon Denis; and were none the worse for it! But we, who do not trouble ourselves about orthodoxy, who are guided by the attraction of the great sources of intelligence and a common love of humanity, have rejoiced to discover and to show in the work of the Areopagite—to use again Rama-krishna's ingenious parable)—one of the flights of steps leading to the reservoir with several ghâts. There from one of the ghâts Hindus fetch the water which

they call Brahman. And from another Christians draw the water which they call Christ. But it is always the same water.

VII

To sum up: the following in my opinion are the three chief lessons that Hindu religious thought should be interested to learn, and to take from European Mysticism:

1. The architectural sense of Christian metaphysicians. I have just described it in the work of Denis; and his sovereign art is to be found throughout the Middle Ages. The men who raised the cathedrals, carried into the construction of the mind the same genius of intelligent order and harmonious balance that made them the master builders of the arches linking the Infinite to the finite.

2. The psychological science of the Christian explorers of the "Dark Night" of the Infinite. In it they expended a genius, at least equal—(sometimes superior)—to that which has since been deviated into profane literature, through the theatre and the novel. The psychology of the mystic masters of the sixteenth century in Spain and the seventeenth century in France foreshadowed that of the classical poets: and modern thinkers who imagine that they have discovered the Subconscious have scarcely reached the same level. It goes without saying that their interpretations differ. But the essential point is not the interpretation, the name given by the mind to what it sees—but *what it sees*. The eyes of Western mysticism reached to the limits of the inaccessible.

3. The formidable energies that Western mysticism uses to achieve Divine Union, in particular the passionate violence of the European accustomed to battle and action. It devoured Ruysbroeck, so that his Bhakti (Love) sometimes took on the guise of the Seven Deadly Sins: "Implacable Desire," the fury of mortal "Combat," the "torrent of delights" and the embrace of carnal possession,

and the colossal hunger of the Epicurean. Similarly the "Irascibilis" of Eckhart whose Soul being identical to God's, "cannot bear anything above it, even God Himself," and so seizes Him by force.

In these three directions I believe that Indian Mysticism might find sources of enrichment. And further, I believe that it is part of Vivekananda's own spirit to point them out to it. His great Advaitism was continually pre-occupied in enlarging and completing his conception of Unity. He sought to annex all the energies that other races and other religions had used in the service of this heroic conquest. And his faith in the "God-Man" was so disinterested that, in order to serve it, he lowered his high Indian pride and his ardent patriotism before any people whoever they might be, if they seemed to him to be striving more effectively for the common cause. Without really realising the depths hidden in the mystic

soul of the West, he had an intuition that the East might find abundant spiritual resources in the West, and that together they might realise complete Advaitism—that is to say, the religious Unity of the whole human family. It is then under his aegis that I present to India this short summary of Christian Advaitism, from its Attic cradle of Alexandria. Over that cradle, as over the Manger, the star of the East rested.*

*We regret we do not find it possible to agree with the conclusions of the learned writer. We hope to be able to state our reasons in a future issue. For the present it is enough to mention that his characterisation of Hindu thought does not appear to us to be quite true, that what he considers to be the excellences of Denis' thought, appear to us as philosophic deficiencies, and that we are not aware that Swami Vivekananda ever believed that the East might find abundant spiritual resources in the West. This is not however to say that the East has nothing to learn from the West, or that the object which the great author is trying to realise,—the union of the East and the West—is not eminently desirable.

ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

BY SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

विरक्तो विषयद्वेषा रागी विषयलोलुपः ।

ग्रहमोक्षविहीनस्तु न विरक्तो न रागवान् ॥ ६ ॥

विषयद्वेषा One who abhors the objects of the senses विरक्तः unattached (भवति is)
विषयलोलुपः one who covets sense-objects रागी attached (भवति is) ग्रहमोक्षविहीनः one
without acceptance or renunciation तु but विरक्तः unattached न not रागवान् attached न
not (भवति is).

6. One who abhors the sense-objects, avoids¹ them, and one who covets them, becomes attached to them. But he² who does not accept or reject, is neither unattached nor attached.

[¹ Avoids—lit. gets disgusted with and therefore renounces. This attempt at avoiding shows that one has not realised all as the Self.

² He etc.—A higher state is that in which all is realised as Self and therefore there is no thought of accepting or rejecting anything.]

हेयोपादेयता तावत् संसारविटपांकुरः ।

स्पृहा जीवति यावद् निर्विचारदशास्पदम् ॥ ७ ॥

यावत् As long as निर्विचारदशास्पद' the abode of the state of indiscrimination स्पृहा desire जीवति lives तावत् so long वै indeed संसारविटपांकुरः the branch and the sprout of the world हेयोपादेयता the sense of the acceptable and the rejectable (जीवति lives).

7. As long as desire which¹ is the abode of the state of indiscrimination continues, there will verily be the sense of attachment² and aversion, which is the branch³ and sprout of the (tree of) *Samsāra*.

[¹ Which etc.—Desire robs us of the power of understanding the true nature of the world. It makes us consider the unreal to be real and the real to be unreal. When desire goes, all things appear to us as they really are.

² Attachment etc.—wanting certain things and rejecting others.

³ Branch etc.—The trunk and the root of the tree of *Samsāra* (the phenomenal life with all its subjective and objective implications) is ignorance. Desire which makes us want certain things and reject others, is as it were its branches and sprouts which make the tree grow more and more. One desire leads to another and thus *Karma* grows complex and leads us from birth to death and death to birth.]

प्रवृत्तौ जायते रागो निवृत्तौ द्वेष एव हि ।

निर्द्वन्दो बालवद्भीमानेवमेव व्यवस्थितः ॥ ८ ॥

प्रवृत्तौ In activity रागः attachment निवृत्तौ in abstention द्वेषः aversion एव surely हि verily जायते is born भीमान् the man of wisdom बालवत् like a child निर्द्वन्द्वः free from the pairs of opposites (सन् being) एवम् thus एव verily व्यवस्थितः established.

8. Activity begets attachment, abstention¹ from it aversion. The man of wisdom is free from the pairs of opposites like² a child, and he lives³ on verily as such.

[¹ Abstention etc.—The idea of abstention arises from the consideration that certain things and actions are harmful,—hence the feeling of aversion. To be above such attachment and aversion is higher.

² Like etc.—The meaning is obvious.

³ Lives etc.—Not only is he free from the pairs of opposites inwardly, but his outward life is also like that of a child,—playful without any set purpose. This is the highest spiritual state—that of a *Paramahansa*.]

हातुमिच्छति संसारं रागी दुःखजिहासया ।

वीतरागो हि निर्दुःखस्तस्मिन्नपि न खिद्यति ॥ ९ ॥

रागी One who is attached दुःखजिहासया wishing to avoid sorrow संसारं world हातुं to renounce इच्छति desires वीतरागः one who is free from attachment हि indeed निर्दुःखः free from sorrow (भवति is) (सः he) तस्मिन् there अपि even न not खिद्यति feels miserable.

9. One who is attached to the world wants to renounce it in¹ order to avoid sorrow. But one² without attachment is free from sorrow and does not feel miserable even there.³

[¹ In etc.—thinking that the cause of sorrow is in the world.

² *One etc.*—It is not the world but attachment to it that is the root of all miseries. Free from attachment, one can live as happily in the world as anywhere else.

³ *There*—in the world.]

यस्याभिमानो मोक्षेऽपि देहेऽपि ममता तथा ।

न च ज्ञानी न वा योगी केवलं दुःखभागसौ ॥ १० ॥

यस्य Whose मोक्षे in liberation अपि even अभिमानः egoistic feeling (or self-conceit) तथा so also देहे in body अपि even ममता sense of 'mine'-ness (ownership) (अस्ति is) असौ he ज्ञानी wise न not च (expletive) योगी Yogi न not वा or केवलं only दुःखभाक् sufferer of misery (भवति is).

10. He who has an egoistic¹ feeling even towards liberation and considers even the body as his own, is neither a Jnâni nor a Yogi. He only suffers² misery.

[¹ *Egoistic etc.*—The word *abhimâna* can be differently interpreted. It may mean simply a reference to egoism, or it may mean actual self-conceit. In the former sense, the verse would mean: Knowledge, *Jnâna*, is a state of complete elimination of the ego. So long as one thinks, 'I shall be free,' or 'I am free,' he holds on to the ego, and has thus neither true *Jnâna* nor *Moksha*. In the latter sense, one may become proud of his spiritual achievements. Such pride is, of course, the very antithesis of *Jnâna*. Similarly of *Yoga* and of the attachment to body.

² *Suffers etc.*—Because to think that one has *Jnâna* or *Yoga* and yet be full of egoism is a sad state of delusion and begets misery.]

हरो यदुद्यपदेष्टा ते हरिः कमलजोऽपि वा ।

तथापि न तव स्वास्थ्यं सर्वविस्मरणादृते ॥ ११ ॥

यदि If हरः Shiva हरिः Hari कमलजः Lotus-born (Brahmâ) वा or अपि even ते your उपदेष्टा instructor (भवति becomes) तथापि yet सर्वविस्मरणात् ऋते without forgetting all तव your स्वास्थ्यं establishment in Self न not (भवति is).

11. Let even¹ Hara, Hari or the lotus-born Brahmâ be your instructor, but² unless³ you forget all, you cannot be established in the Self.

[¹ *Even*—indicating that instruction by such instructors must be generally very efficacious.

² *But*—Even such potent instruction will fail if the supreme condition is not fulfilled.

³ *Unless etc.*—This is the supreme condition: One must be aware of the Self only, of nothing else. To be aware of anything else is to create a division in one's consciousness.]

CHAPTER XVII

THE TRUE KNOWER

अष्टावक्र उवाच ।

तेन ज्ञानफलं प्राप्तं योगाभ्यासफलं तथा ।

तृप्तः स्वच्छेन्द्रियो नित्यमेकाकी रमते तुयः ॥ १ ॥

अष्टावक्रः Ashtavakra उवाच said :

यः Who तु (expletive) तृप्तः contented स्वच्छेन्द्रियः with senses purified (सन् being) नित्यं ever एकाकी alone रमते enjoys तेन by him ज्ञानफलं the fruit of Knowledge तथा as well as योगाभ्यासफलं the fruit of the practice of Yoga प्राप्तं is gained.

Ashtavakra said :

1. He has gained the fruit of Knowledge as well as of the practice of Yoga, who, contented¹ and with purified² senses, ever enjoys³ in solitude.⁴

[¹ *Contented*—wanting nothing, knowing oneself as all.

² *Purified etc.*—not being attached to any object. So long as the senses are attached to their objects they are impure.

³ *Enjoys*—his own Self which is all.

⁴ *Solitude*—both in the outer and inner sense, especially the inner. A man of realisation generally likes solitude, and in the inner sense, he is absolutely solitary, because he feels his Self alone existing, and nothing else.]

न कदाचिज्जगत्यस्मिन् तत्त्वज्ञो हन्त खिद्यति ।

यत एकेन तेनेदं पूर्णं ब्रह्माण्डमण्डलम् ॥ २ ॥

हन्त Oh अस्मिन् this जगति in world तत्त्वज्ञः knower of Truth कदाचित् ever न not खिद्यति feels misery यतः for एकेन alone तेन by himself इदं this ब्रह्माण्डमण्डलम् the circular universe पूर्णं filled.

2. Oh, the knower¹ of Truth is never miserable in this world, for the whole universe is filled by himself alone.

[¹ *Knower etc.*—The sense of misery is possible only with the perception of duality. When one perceives nothing but himself in the whole universe, he cannot be touched by any sorrow.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Discourses on Jnana Yoga by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA will be concluded next month. . . . In *What India Taught Me*, M.B.C. embodies the lesson she learnt when she visited India some time back. M.B.C. is an English lady, two little pieces by whom had previously appeared in *Prabuddha Bharata*. . . . *Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar on Modern Economic Life* by SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., F.R. ECON. S. is concluded in the present issue, so also *Early Hellenic-Christian Mysticism and its Relation to Hindu Mysticism* by ROMAIN ROLLAND.

MAETERLINCK ON INDIA

Sir John Woodroffe has kindly sent us the following for publication in *Prabuddha Bharata* :

In his last book, *The Magic of the Stars* (English translation), Maurice Maeterlinck speaks of "the great days of ancient India which gave birth to the

profoundest agnostic Pantheism the world has ever known, a Pantheism whose rays suffused the Egypt of the Pharaohs," (p. 211) and says: "The ancient religion of India in the far distant ages was alone in its realisation of these vast unsolvable problems. It held the moving universe and the motionless void to be an illusion that appears and disappears in accord with the endless rhythm of the sleep and awakening of the eternal Cause. That eternal Cause exhales; worlds are born and multiply; inhales—matter returns to spirit, the worlds vanish to appear again at the next awakening, millions of years, and to go back again millions of years later at the next approach of slumber; and so, for all eternity, without pause and without term." "Has," he asks, "a grander conception ever been found of the incomprehensible, that will remain incomprehensible to the end? And is the trend of science not in this direction?" (pp. 102, 103).

He finds (p. 151) that we do not get a profounder or more satisfying conception of God from Dr. Whitehead, who is one of the leading philosopher-scientists of the day, than is found in the Vedas.

MODERN CYNICISM AND ITS REMEDY

Bertrand Russell who needs no introduction at our hands, lately contributed an article to an American magazine on Why Modern Youth is Cynical. Russell tells us that the intelligent young of the present day are cynical to a far greater extent than was the case formerly. "Not only are the young unable to believe what they are told, but they seem also unable to believe anything else." The old ideals no longer inspire the old loyalties.

Russell shows how religion, country, progress, beauty and truth have lost their old influences on men. Religion is intellectually unsound,—the God of most moderns is a little vague. Patriotism no longer attracts,—"it is obvious to all intelligent young men that patriotism is the chief curse of our age and will bring civilization to an end if it cannot be mitigated." Similarly of progress, beauty and truth. "Myself when young accepted this view (that truth was absolute, eternal and superhuman) and devoted a misspent youth to the search for truth. But a whole host of enemies have risen to slay truth: pragmatism, behaviorism, psychologism, relativity-physics. . . . It is difficult to worship a merely human and relative truth."

Not these alone. There are also other reasons for cynicism. "The effect of mass production and elementary education is that stupidity is more firmly entrenched than at any other time since the rise of civilization. . . . The work of the intellectuals is ordered and paid for by governments or rich men whose aims probably seem absurd, if not pernicious, to the intellectuals concerned. But a dash of cynicism enables them to adjust their consciences to the situa-

tion." This then is the reason: Intellectually we are fine, but by action and mode of life, gross. This conflict is at the foundation of modern life.

What is the remedy then, according to Russell? "The cure will come only when intellectuals can find a career that embodies their creative impulses. I do not see any prescription except the old one advocated by Disraeli: 'Educate our masters.'" The intellectuals are to change the tastes of the stupid rich who are now holding the stage. "How pleasant a world would be in which no man was allowed to operate on the Stock Exchange unless he could pass an examination in economics and Greek poetry, and in which politicians were obliged to have a competent knowledge of history and modern novels." "Causation in the modern world is more complex and remote in its ramifications than it ever was before, owing to the increase of large organizations, but those who control these organizations are ignorant men who do not know the hundredth part of the consequences of their actions."

We regret we do not find the remedy adequate. It is not always to the ignorance of consequences that the wicked activities of the modern financiers, politicians or industrialists are due. They often know what will happen. Yet they go on. In fact, if we closely study the activities of the Western powers in the East, we often find them actuated by a full knowledge of the possible reactions of their depredations. The root-cause, in our opinion, is that there has been a general degradation of *taste*,—knowledge or no knowledge. Suppose a modern magnate knew what effect his making a corner in wheat would produce upon German poetry, why should he care whether his action told adversely on it or not? Russell is quite right when he says that the old ideals are lost. But unless new *ideals* have been discovered, there is no hope for the moderns. For ultimately it is ideals that count. Mere knowledge and capacity are nothing without

ideals. Unfortunately, Russell has no faith in ideals.

We should not end this note without quoting his views about India, which are certainly funny. Russell does not believe that cynicism is true of the whole world. He excepts Russia, China, Japan, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Germany (partly) and India. He gives his reasons for this exception. Of India he says :

“In India the fundamental belief of the earnest young is in the wickedness of England : from this premise, as from the existence of Descartes, it is possible to deduce a whole philosophy. From the fact that England is Christian, it follows that Hinduism or Mohammedanism, as the case may be, is the only true religion. From the fact that England is capitalistic and industrial, it follows, according to the temperament of the logician concerned, either that everybody ought to spin with a spinning wheel, or that protective duties ought to be imposed to develop native industrialism and capitalism as the only weapons with which to combat those of the British. From the fact that the British hold India by physical force, it follows that only moral force is admirable. The persecution of nationalist activities in India is just sufficient to make them heroic, and not sufficient to make them futile. In this way the Anglo-Indians save the intelligent youth of India from the blight of cynicism.”

Russell's characterisation of India does not require any refutation, it is so false and stupid. It is to the undying credit of Mahatma Gandhi that he has made the political movement in India, not a crusade of hate, but a struggle to achieve ideal manhood. Apart from the ostensible purpose of the movement, the gaining of *Swarâj*, it is making of us better men, more brave, patient, heroic and fearless. We need not hold any political opinion to appreciate the qualities of mind that our men and women, young and old, thousands and thousands of them, are showing in course of the present struggle. To many

these have been a surprise and a happy augury. The hatred of the British, as Russell thinks, could not manifest such excellence of spirit. Only a noble idealism could fill our fighters with such fearless faith and patience. We know there is still much confusion in the national mind, but we have reasons enough to hope for the ultimate vindication of our eternal ideals.

SWAMI TRIGUNATITA

Lately the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, U.S.A., observed the birthday of Swami Trigunatita. The Swami, as the readers of *Prabuddha Bharata* may know, was one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna and for many years in charge of the San Francisco Vedanta Centre. On the occasion of the anniversary, several of his students recounted their experience of the Swami. We are glad to be able to record here, from reports received, a few of the features of the Swami's great character for the edification of our readers.

The Swami was a unique character. He possessed many uncommon traits. He could go without food for days together, if he liked, and when he liked, he could consume ten men's food in one meal. He could sleep at will and remain awake for days and nights without the slightest effort. A disciple said : “When I first saw the Swami Trigunatita in his robe and turban it was across the width of a hall where he was attending a lecture. The light did not favor him and my hasty impression was : ‘What an ugly man !’ Soon after, however, I was to find that this appearance was the effect of an indomitable will combined with lion-like courage rising from a rugged and heroic character. . . Just to be in Swami's presence was to be bathed in an ocean of purity. In his presence doubts and anxieties melted away like snow before the sun. . . . ‘Live like a hermit but work like a horse,’ was one of Swami's favourite mottos.”

Another disciple also, in recounting her experience of the Swami, mentioned her disappointment at his appearance in her first view of him, for as she said, she had expected to see him endowed with the physical characteristics and regal bearing of Swami Vivekananda. But as she came to know him intimately, "the sense of his physical insignificance passed away, for he had the power of making himself seem different in stature at different times." The disciple continued: "Sometimes he seemed to tower over us like a giant, at others he seemed almost Lilliputian. In his spiritual aspects he was equally variable. On occasions he would joke and laugh like a schoolboy, again he would be the sage, as remote as the Himalayas. . . He never relaxed for a moment the strict rigidity of his monastic rules, was never once affected by the Western love of physical comfort. In this connection a story of him may be told. He was a great sufferer from rheumatism, due, in the students' opinion, to his habit of sleeping on his office floor, instead of in a bed. After much solicitation the Swami consulted a physician, went patiently through all the necessary diagnostic procedures, and when the physician advised him to give over his practice of sleeping on the floor, said: 'I am a *Sannyâsin*. What have I to do with beds?' Later the physician was heard to remark: 'Well, you cannot help respecting such sincerity, no matter how unwise the attitude it may lead him to take.' What tremendous force lay in such example!"

He was very kind and gentle to his students. But when necessary, he could be stern. To quote the disciple again: "One of the students who found the chairs in the auditorium very uncomfortable, went to him and asked to have the chairs fixed. 'Fix your mind,' he thundered, 'that is where the fault lies, not in the chairs.' He was equally ruthless with our visions and psychic experiences. He would listen gravely, and when we were finished, would say: 'I have put you on the express train for New York with no stop-over privileges.

On your way back you may stop off at Chicago, St. Louis—anywhere you wish. Your chief concern now should be to get to New York. New York is the Truth. The way-stations are the different psychic planes. If you stop off, you will never reach your goal. My train does not stop—you may get off where you please on the return trip.'

"He used to say that common sense was the divine sense, and that religion was only the development of that sense. 'Purify and intensify your common sense,' he would say, 'and you will know the Truth, sooner or later. To develop common sense, we must have strength, mental, moral and spiritual, principle, character. We must fight the world and Nature. We must be independent and help ourselves. If our own strength and will-power are not strong enough, we should seek Divine strength. In seeking Divine strength, we find a different law operating. Then we become dependent—not in a sense of subjugation or crawling humility, but in uplifting ourselves above worldly conditions and from there placing our trust in the Lord.'

"He was the humblest of men. Never did one hear him say 'I'. He was always in the background, busy with the affairs of the Master. On one occasion a student brought to him a picture of the original disciples of Sri Rama-krishna, asking him to indicate every one by name. With his usual painstaking care he numbered every figure in the picture, and at the bottom wrote the number with the corresponding name so that the student might have a permanent record. His own number was 13. Opposite this number he wrote—not Swami Trigunatita—but: 'The servant of all'. And nothing truer was ever written."

The Swami was a very great soul and left an indelible impression on whomsoever he came in contact with. His disciples have cause to congratulate themselves on having known him. To know such souls as the Swami is a special dispensation of Providence.

ASIA ON
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

We are glad to publish the following appreciation of Swami Vivekananda by the Editor of *Asia*, an excellent monthly of New York, U.S.A. :

Among the many delegates who gathered for the Parliament of Religions opened by Cardinal Gibbons during the World's Fair at Chicago thirty-seven years ago was a young Hindu monk named Vivekananda. Penniless, unknown, without credentials, he became at once the outstanding figure of the Congress. Afterward it was said of him, "He was the first Oriental since the time of Christ who came with a divine message for the people of the West."

Ramakrishna (Vivekananda's Master) was an almost illiterate Brahman priest whose wisdom was drawn solely from the depths of his own being. Vivekananda, on the other hand, possessed a brilliant, university-trained mind. He was a student of science as well as of history and languages. Yet, perceiving that the ancient Hindu outlook embraced a horizon large enough to swallow up all the truths of modern science, he made it his life work to restate and clarify, according to the need of to-day, the accumulated wisdom of the Indian sages. It is significant that though he sternly dissociated all his activities from politics, the upward swing of the Indian Nationalist movement followed the clarion call to his people to shake off their fetters of ignorance and recognize within themselves the well-spring of an unlimited power.

It is men like Ramakrishna and Vivekananda who give the key to understanding the India of to-day. Mahatma Gandhi has just focused the attention of the world on his little parade to the sea to make salt in violation of the Government monopoly. To the West, Mr. Gandhi appears enigmatic and half mad—or else exceedingly astute—preaching strange doctrines of non-violence and spinning-wheels. To the Indian villager,

he is not only understandable but a living ideal. He brings into the new field of politics the old spiritual emphasis. He talks a familiar language, the same language spoken by Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Of Ramakrishna, Gandhi himself has written, "In this age of scepticism Ramakrishna presents an example of a bright and living faith which gives solace to thousands of men and women who would otherwise have remained without spiritual light. Ramakrishna's life was an object-lesson in *Ahimsa* (non-injury)."

Vivekananda's purpose in visiting the West was twofold. He came to seek material help for India in her present state of want, and to offer in exchange the spiritual wisdom of India, garnered through thousands of years of searching. "Whenever this world of ours—on account of growth, on account of added circumstances—requires a new adjustment, a wave of power comes, and, as man is acting on two planes the spiritual and the material, waves of adjustment come on both planes," he maintained. A century or two of emphasis on science in the West had developed great material prosperity for the people of the West. But Vivekananda believed that the prosperity of half the world cannot long remain stable while the other half lives at a starvation-level. He imagined that Americans, if only they knew of the starving millions in India, would gladly give of their surplus. But he did not come as a beggar. The one-sided emphasis on materialism, he saw, was resulting in a growing, not a diminishing, dependence on matter, making the West forgetful that "Man shall not live by bread alone." It is always from Asia that this reminder has come of the reality of spirit. Vivekananda's force of conviction was dynamic.

Indian thought, it is true, was not altogether new at the time of Vivekananda's first visit to America, but it was less than a short hundred years since a first translation had appeared in Europe—in Latin—of a tiny portion of the sacred scriptures of India. This

Latin version of some of the *Upanisads* was read and commented upon by Schopenhauer, who at once prophesied that the influence of Sanskrit literature was destined to penetrate the thought of Europe not less deeply than the classical revival affected it in the fifteenth century.

Indeed, the impetus for a study of Sanskrit was already launched, and by the middle of the nineteenth century repercussions had been felt in the United States. As Romain Rolland points out, Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman were all captivated by the immensity of the Indian perspective—Emerson and Thoreau directly, Whitman indirectly. Emerson's peculiarly sensitive response to Indian philosophy, as he gathered it from the fragmentary translations of Sanskrit literature then available, made him Emerson. But when Vivekananda came toward the close of the century, he spoke with the direct personal note. Had Emerson met him, he would have been the first to acknowledge the greatness of both

the man and his message.

To his western audiences Vivekananda did not disseminate any sectarian Hindu belief—any more than to his Indian ones—but the essence of religion itself. He asked men to recognize that the various religions are only “different visions of the same Truth from different standpoints.” He laid down no creed, set up no particular God. In his first address at Chicago he quoted a passage he had learned to recite in his earliest childhood: “As the different streams, having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee.”

His gospel—as good for to-day as yesterday and for tomorrow as to-day—outlines the definite methods and technique, based on universal religious experience, by which men, through their chosen paths, can more swiftly attain the goal—whether through work, devotion, mysticism or philosophy.

REVIEW

CHRISTIANITY AND THE INDIAN RELIGION OF GRACE. *By Rudolf Otto. The Christian Literature Society for India, Madras. 59 pp. Price 8 as.*

The book is a collection of four short lectures delivered by the author at the University of Upsala in Sweden on the subject of the relation of the South Indian religion of Bhakti to Christianity. The Bhakti religion of Ramanuja is considered by the author as ‘the most serious rival with which it is possible for Christianity to enter into conflict’, as there are striking similarities between the two as regards the idea of salvation, which is the core of a religious faith. “In spite of all the similarities, the spirit of Christianity and of the Bhakti religion remains different,” observes the author. He mentions two fundamental points of difference with regard to (1) the idea of the kingdom of God and (2) the doctrine of salvation by grace. The author concludes: “This implies that in spite of the greatest external similarities between

Bhakti religion and Christianity, the former cannot be a lower form, from which it is possible to reach a higher form by way of a gradual transition.”

That there is essential difference between the Christian dogmatics and the Bhakti cult of Ramanuja we also recognise. But we are not going to point out the dissimilarities to the advantage of the one or the other. We shall only refer to the author's misrepresentation of Indian doctrines of *lila* and grace while showing the contrast. The learned professor remarks: “India does not know of a true and real *telos* of this world. It rolls continually on and on, without meaning or aim. Though it is a creation of God, it is at the same time His eternal *lila*, a sport of God.”

But *lila* does not indicate that there is no plan and purpose in the universe. It simply means that God has no motive in creation, no unfulfilled desire to fulfil. There is a divine urge behind the universe towards a definite goal. But though there

is will, there is no effort. *Lila* signifies that the entire work of creation is characterised by the ease, the spontaneity and the joyousness of sport. An idea of mysteriousness is also implied in *lila*. In Ramanuja's system, as in all other Vedantic religions, the extracosmic will and the external teleology have been replaced by the immanence of Divine spirit shaping the universe from within and guiding all created beings in a continuous march towards eternal bliss.

With regard to the second point of difference the author states: "Isvara is the God who delivers from the unblestness of *Samskara* without our own merit and co-operation, but does not deliver from the agony of sin. Isvara is the God of the earth-bound, but not the God of the conscience, nor the saviour from *terrores conscientiae*, not the atoner and redeemer from the curse of guilt." We can only say that this is a gross misconception of the Indian doctrine of grace and spiritual ideal.

IMPRISONMENT. *By Lieut-Colonel F. A. Barker, M.A., M.D., B.C., O.B.E., I.M.S. The Christian Literature Society for India. XI+191 pp. Price Re. 1-8 as.*

Jail life of the prisoners should be a reformatory and not a punitive period—that is the advanced idea with regard to imprisonment. In England also jail life was horrible sometime back. But the untiring activities of persons like John Howard and others for ameliorating the wretched condition of the prisoners have gone a great way to reform the English prisons. In India the popular idea is that in jails the criminally inclined become confirmed criminals, and the half savage who enter there return complete brutes, and the treatment also that is meted out to the prisoners does hardly indicate that they are recognised as human beings. Not being acquainted with the actual jail administration we cannot vouch for the truth of the above. But 'experiences of jail life' that are published from time to time by many political prisoners beginning with Mahatma Gandhi and others give but a gloomy idea of life within the prison bars. In India everything goes at a snail's pace and the reform of our jail administration is long overdue. Lieut-Colonel Barker, Inspector-General of Prisons, Punjab, has brought out the present volume and gives in his non-official capacity an account of Indian jails and of prevailing practice in

regard to imprisonment. In these pages he depicts the prison system in India side by side with those obtaining in England and the Continent and shows how the prison system in this country requires many improvements. The suggestions that he offers are judicious and well-intentioned. But external reforms will be of no avail, unless all connected with the jail administration can be made to feel that they are "but as trustees of erring individuals, each of whom has a life to save and character to build up." We wish that the book sets athinking both official and non-official minds as to how reform can be effected of those condemned unfortunates who if proper care is taken of them, may be turned into good citizens, at least some of them.

KRISHNA: A STUDY IN THE THEORY OF AVATARS. *By Bhagavan Das. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. 300 pp. Price board Rs. 2-12 as.*

The book is a revised and enlarged version of a paper read by the author on Krishna's life on a birthday celebration of Sri Krishna in 1919. It has attained its present form in the course of three editions. In the first few pages the author tries to explain the theory of *Avatâra* propounded by the *Purânas* in the light of modern history. The author's account of Sri Krishna is based mainly on the *Bhâgavata* and the *Mahâbhârata*. References have also been made to other *Purânas*. The *Purânas* contain in the author's view much historical, scientific and philosophical truths in a concrete form suited to popular understanding. An all-sided character like Krishna is rarely to be found in history ancient or modern. He was great in action, great in emotion, great in knowledge. The author describes these three aspects of Krishna's personality with reference to the incidents of his life.

The author does not find anything seriously wrong in the youthful loves of Sri Krishna with the milkmaids of Vraja. As mentioned in the *Bhâgavata*, he was only eleven when he left Brindaban for Mathura. His dancings and flirtings are "rather only a precocious manifestation, even in early boyhood, of another aspect of Krishna's richly artistic and vital nature." The various superphysical and mystical deeds of Krishna, though much magnified through sentimental devotion, belong to him as a superman.

As a matter of fact, the accounts of Sri Krishna's deeds have been much modified and exaggerated in course of ages, but his teachings remain to us in direct form. The author particularly mentions the *Bhagavat Gitâ* and the *Anugitâ*, but does not seem to take any notice of the *Uddhavagitâ*. His estimate of the *Gitâ* may be summed up in his own words: "It is a text-book of Spiritual Rationalism, in the first degree, and as natural issue therefrom, of Rational Practicalism, in the second degree, no doubt. But it is also a manual of Practical Devotionalism in the third degree." The *Gitâ* bases the caste-system not on 'heredity' but on 'spontaneous variation'. The author mentions certain *slokas* of the *Bhâgavata* to show how caste was formerly readjusted according to *guna* and *karma*.

The author's knowledge of science, history, religion and philosophy has found free play in the treatment of the subject. This makes the book more scholastic than impressive. It also contains traces of the author's theosophical views. The printing and the get-up are good.

HYMNS OF THE ALVARS. By J. S. M. Hooper, M.A. (Oxon). *The Association Press, 5, Russell Street, Calcutta.* XII+94 pp. Price paper Re. 1-4 as.

'Alvars' is a general word referring to the Tamil saints of the Vaisnava School. The devotional out-pourings of the hearts of the Alvars is to be found in many of their songs and hymns with which the religious life of the South is closely interwoven. As all these songs and hymns are in Tamil, they are in consequence a sealed book to all non-Tamilians who can no less enjoy and profit by them. The present author translating some of the representative hymns into English has made them accessible for a wider circle of readers, and laid many under a debt to him. For some of the hymns given in the book are exquisitely beautiful and quite likely to inspire one with devotional feelings.

In the general introduction the author has given short sketches of the lives of the Alvars he has quoted, and attempted to supply such information as will help a non-Indian in the correct understanding of the book. In this, though we find his great sympathetic attitude and power of appreciation, the author has sometimes betrayed his

inability to rightly understand the religious life of India. As for instance, in one place he says: "but aiming at the same end of giddy exhilaration is the practice of repeating the thousand names of Vishnu, and so by a kind of self-hypnotism losing oneself in the rapture." The Christian author has evidently gone here beyond his depth.

On the whole the book has been a valuable addition to the volumes already published in the Heritage of India series.

THE BUDDHA'S PATH OF VIRTUE. By F. L. Woodward, M.A. *The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras.* XXIV+105 pp. Price not mentioned.

This is a versified translation of the *Dhammapada*, an important canonical work of the Buddhists. The *Dhammapada* forms a part of one of the *Ti-pitaka*, namely *Suttapitaka* and is believed to contain the teachings which Tathagata himself preached for 45 years while wandering from place to place with a long train of followers in the mid-Ganges valley and sub-Himalayan tracts. As such the book is of much interest to all followers of the Lord, and what the Bible is to the Christians, the *Gita* to the Hindus, the *Dhammapada* is to the Buddhists. Every *Bhikshu* is expected to know the *Dhammapada* by heart, and there was a time when its verses reverberated in the Buddhist monasteries throughout the length and breadth of the country. As the book contains teachings which are universally applicable and true of all times and races, it is bound to appeal not only to the Buddhists, but to seekers of truth belonging to all faiths.

The *Dhammapada* was introduced to Europe by Dr. Fausboll through a Latin translation in 1855 A.D. and ever since the book has been translated into various European languages. There have been English translations too, one of them being that of Prof. Max Müller incorporated in the *Sacred Books of the East* series. Yet the present nice little handy volume will have an attraction of its own.

The original Pali of the *Dhammapada* is very lucid, graceful and appealing. Some of these qualities have not been altogether lost in the present translation by the able author. On the whole, we were much pleased to go through the book and trust it will be much in demand.

MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY

REPORT FOR 1929

In submitting the report of the above institution for the year 1929 we want at the outset to record our sincere gratitude to our kind-hearted donors and subscribers. The Dispensary which is under the charge of a monastic member of the Advaita Ashrama, is indeed doing great service to the hill people. With the passing of time the institution is proving of increasingly greater service to them. This can be seen from the number of patients who received medical help year after year. Patients come to the Dispensary from far and near, and

Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, men, women, children, all receive due attention, help and service.

The total number of patients relieved during the year at the Outdoor Dispensary was 7,298, of which 5,813 were new cases and 1,485 repeated cases. Of these new cases 3,256 were men, 1,195 women and 1,362 children. In the Indoor Hospital the total number treated was 343 as against 183 in the previous year. Of this number 230 were discharged cured, 109 relieved or left the Hospital and 4 died.

STATEMENT OF DISEASES

(INDOOR INCLUDED)

Dysentery	...	...	250	Ulcer	...	...	10
Fever	...	...	78	Burning	...	...	20
M. Fever	...	...	425	Injury	...	...	60
Rheumatic Fever	...	...	15	M. Diseases	...	...	525
Debility	...	...	200	F. Diseases	...	...	945
Headache	...	...	45	Worms	...	...	220
Eye Diseases	...	...	1,522	Gout	...	...	65
Ear Diseases	...	...	150	Lumbago	...	...	70
Paralysis	...	...	20	Toothache	...	...	200
Influenza	...	...	30	Operation	...	...	40
Bronchitis	...	...	100	Ozeona	...	...	25
Pneumonia	...	...	20	Phthisis	...	...	25
Asthma	...	...	24	Leprosy	...	...	5
Cough	...	...	180	Dyspepsia	...	...	35
H. Cough	...	...	2	Boil	...	...	40
Colic	...	...	40	Pain Local	...	...	40
Piles	...	...	25	Tumour	...	...	20
Spleen	...	...	15	Diarrhoea	...	...	455
Dropsy	...	...	50				
Skin Diseases	...	...	165				
				TOTAL	...	...	6,156

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS FOR 1929

RECEIPTS				EXPENDITURE					
	Rs.	A.	P.		Rs.	A.	P.		
Last Year's Balance	...	2,475	6	10	Medicines and Diet	...	671	11	9
Donations and Subscriptions	...	476	8	3	Doctor's Maintenance and				
Interest	...	94	8	0	Travelling	...	360	0	0
					Instruments and Equipments	...	228	1	9
					Lighting and Establishment	...	96	12	0
					Printing Reports and Postage	...	19	0	0
TOTAL	...	3,046	7	1	TOTAL	...	1,375	9	6
					BALANCE	...	1,670	13	7

The following chart gives an idea of the progress of the Dispensary and the Hospital during the last 3 years:

	At the Outdoor Dispensary	At the Indoor Hospital
Cases treated in—		
1927	1,509	74
1928	3,889	183
1929	7,298	343

The figures of the Indoor Hospital show an ever-increasing demand on the Dispensary. In 1927 it was 74 and in 1928 it was 183 and this year 343. We have at present two rooms to accommodate 4 patients in the Indoor Hospital, a number too small to meet the increasing demand. We are, therefore, contemplating the construction of a new ward of 8 beds with all accessories, which means an expenditure of at least Rs. 15,000/-, an amount which the Dispensary cannot afford at present. We, therefore, appeal to our kind-hearted

countrymen to come forward and help us with liberal contributions.

We also appeal to the generous public for a Permanent Fund for the maintenance of this Dispensary and its Indoor Hospital of 12 beds. An endowment of Rs. 1,500/- will meet the cost of maintaining one bed.

Donors desirous of perpetuating the memory of their departed friends or relatives may do so through this humanitarian work by bearing the cost of the above-mentioned building or a part thereof or by contributing towards the Permanent Fund for the maintenance of the Dispensary.

All contributions, however small, either for the building or the upkeep of the Dispensary, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

(Sd.) SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA
President, Advaita Ashrama,
P.O. Mayavati, Dt. Almora, U.P.

NEWS AND REPORTS

ACTIVITIES OF SWAMI AKHILANANDA IN U.S.A.

A correspondent writes:

The Vedanta Society of Providence, Rhode Island, U.S.A., opened its second season to the public with a service on September 4th, 1929. A special musical programme was given by students and friends. It was very successful and people showed their interest for the work done here by Swami Akhilananda.

In November a dinner party was given by friends and devotees at the Narragansett Hotel. Many attended and a wonderful atmosphere was created amongst the devotees. Various topics were discussed during the evening. A letter from Revered Swami Shivananda to a friend was read to all. Other entertainment was given by friends.

Swami's work here is spreading rapidly to some of the churches. A lecture on the *Scientific Basis of Religion* was given at Bell Street Church in November. A Baptist Church invited him to lecture on *Hinduism* in January, 1930.

Christmas was celebrated as usual with special services, music and refreshments. The picture of Christ was beautifully decorated with flowers and evergreens. A tastefully decorated Christmas tree, many

poinsettias and other plants completed the season's festivity.

The birthday of Swami Vivekananda was enthusiastically celebrated with special services and music. A party was given in reverence and memory of Swamiji. A Hindu menu was cooked by Swami for the students, which was appreciated by all. Rev. F. Wilmot, religious editor of the *Providence Journal*, spoke on the Message of Swami Vivekananda. Swami's subject was the *Renaissance of Swami Vivekananda*.

Sri Ramakrishna's birthday was celebrated for two days and eagerly attended. March 2nd, Sunday morning, Swami spoke on the *Life and Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*. In the evening Rev. F. Wilmot and Swami spoke on *Universal Religion*. The altar was gorgeously decorated with cut flowers, lights and incense. Many palms and other plants covered the platform. A picture of Him was draped with flowers.

A library was opened to all who wish to read and study Vedanta. The room is comfortably furnished with suitable furniture and books. Six large pictures of great teachers were donated by an artist and friend of the Centre. On Monday evening a birthday Indo-American dinner was enjoyed at the Dreyfus Hotel. Swami Bodhananda of New York was also present.

The two Swamis, Rev. Wilmot and two other prominent Providence businessmen gave brief talks during the evening.

Swami gave many interesting interviews to the representatives of the newspapers

during this season. Classes on the *Gita* and *Upanishads* are given on Tuesdays and Fridays. Regular services are held on Sundays. Many private talks are enjoyed by devotees and friends.

DACCA RIOT RELIEF

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

The public is undoubtedly aware of the atrocities recently committed by ruffians at and round about the town of Dacca. Along with other forms of lawlessness the looting of houses and shops played a most diabolical part. This it is which is responsible for the greatest amount of lasting misery to hundreds of families both in the town and in the villages, the victims in most cases being Hindus. The condition of Rohitpur, a village a few miles from Dacca, has been particularly distressing. Of 480 Hindu families living there, 191 had their houses completely sacked, and in the local bazar the 40 shops that belonged to the Hindus suffered the same fate. The following lines from our workers, sent on inspection, will give the reader an idea of the extent of the devastation caused :

“The reports you have heard about Rohitpur are nothing in comparison with the actual state of things. One has to see it with one’s own eyes to form a true idea. It is over a month since the atrocities took place, but even now the condition of the residents is such as to paralyse one’s heart. The villagers are in the grip of extreme destitution. Not only have they no food, but they have also been despoiled of every kind of utensils, so that even if food-stuffs are produced, cooking is impossible. Not a piece of furniture, no earthenware, not even a broom-stick, has been left. Many have only the cloth they are wearing as their sole possession.”

Not only are these people suffering, but others also—small traders—who have been thrown out of work owing to the entire dislocation of trade.

The relief that has hitherto been given them by the local bodies is all too insufficient for the purpose. Our workers, seeing the imperative necessity of relief, have opened a relief centre at Rohitpur, from which on the 5th instant we distributed 25 mds. 22 srs. of rice to 341 recipients belonging to 113 families, and on the 12th instant 35 mds. of rice to 400 recipients belonging to 152 families. About a maund of rice was also distributed as temporary help during these two weeks.

In view of the fact that the small traders must be set on their feet to earn a living, we are thinking of giving them some pecuniary help for this purpose. The supply of cloth and utensils is also a crying necessity, which we are trying to meet. We are thankful to Messrs. Jeewanlal, Ltd., of Calcutta for the kind gift of slightly damaged aluminium utensils worth Rs. 250/- for the sufferers.

We have started the work with the balance of our Provident Fund which is fast diminishing, and must be immediately replenished if the work is to continue. We earnestly appeal to all sympathetic hearts to help us with adequate funds without the least delay. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses: (1) The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math, Dt. Howrah. (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Muktarām Babu Street, Calcutta. (3) The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1 Mukerji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.