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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

THE MASTER SPEAKS

[FROM THE DIARY OF M.]

I

SRI RAMAKRISHNA IN COMPANY OF HIS DEVOTEES

It is 8 or 9 p.m. To-day is the day of the Dolyatra festival. Ramakrishna is surrounded by a large number of devotees—Rama, Manomohon, Rakhal, Nrityagopal and others. All are in an ecstatic mood, singing the name of God and dancing. Some devotees have gone into trance. In that state Nrityagopal's chest has become crimson. All having sat down, M. bowed down to the Master. He saw Rakhal lying down in a trance and having no consciousness of the outside world. The Master lays his hand on his chest and gently says, “Be quiet, be quiet.” This is the first time that Rakhal has gone into trance. He lives with his father at their Calcutta residence and comes to the Master now and then. During the period he went

to the Vidyasagar's School at Shyampukur for a few days.

The Master told M. at Dakshineswar that he would be coming to Balaram's house in Calcutta, and asked him to come there. So he has come to see him. Bright fortnight of the month of Phalgun; March 11, 1882; Saturday. Balaram has invited and brought the Master to his house.

Now the devotees are taking their evening meal in the verandah. Like an ordinary servant Balaram is standing; no one can guess that he is the master of the house!

M. is but a new-comer ; he is not yet acquainted with the devotees ; he had only a short conversation with Narendra at Dakshineswar.

SYNTHESIS OF ALL RELIGIONS

Shortly after this, Sri Ramakrishna is one day seated on the staircase of the Siva temples at Dakshineswar in an ecs-

tatic mood. It is 4 or 5 p.m. M. is sitting close by.

A few minutes before, the Master was taking rest on the cot in his own room. As yet none of the devotees live with the Master for his service. Since the departure of Hriday he is feeling some inconvenience. M. arrived from Calcutta, and the Master, talking with him, came and seated himself on the staircase of the Siva temples in front of the temple of Radhakanta. At the sight of the temple, he has gone into trance.

The Master is talking to the Divine Mother. He says, "Mother, all say, my watch is going all right. Christians, Brahmos, Hindus, Mussalmans—all say, my religion is true. But, Mother, nobody's watch is right. Who can understand Thee aright? But whosoever calls on Thee with genuine and intense love can reach Thee through any path, if Thou be but gracious. Mother, do show me once how Thy Christian devotees pray to Thee in their Churches. But, Mother, what will the people say if I go inside? If they make a fuss of it, if they don't allow me to enter the Kali temple,—? Then rather show me that from outside the gate of a Church."

THE MASTER SINGS TO THE DEVOTEES.
THE LOVE OF THE NEATHERDS OF
VRINDAVAN. 'THE WINE OF LOVE.'

Another day the Master was sitting on the little cot in his room—a blissful figure with a sweet smiling countenance. M. arrived with Prof. Kalikrishna Bhattacharya.*

Kalikrishna did not know where his friend was taking him to. His friend simply told him, "If you would like to

go to a grog-shop, just come with me. There is a large jar of wine there." M. bowed down to the Master and narrated what he had told his friend. The Master began to laugh.

The Master then said, "The joy that one gets by taking the name of the Lord, by realizing Him, is the true wine—the wine of love divine. The end of human life is to love God, to adore Him. This loving adoration is the only thing desirable, worth possessing. Through discursive reason it is very difficult to know Him." Saying this He sang a song to the purport :

Who knows how Mother Kali is? Philosophies are dumb here. She is everywhere, She has become this universe—so She wills to be. Her whims are the greatest laws. To know Her? It is like crossing the ocean by swimming. Yes, my mind has understood it. But this does not satisfy my heart and so it cries for the moon.

The Master says again, "To love God—this is the aim of life—to love Him as intensely as the milkmen and milkmaids and the neatherds of Vrindavan loved Sri Krishna. When Sri Krishna went to Mathura their pang of separation was so great that they went about crying and weeping." Thus saying the Master sings again with his eyes looking heavenward.

Purport of the song is : I saw a neatherd young and tender, hugging a new-born calf to his breast and saying with bitter tears, "Where are you, brother Kanai (a name of Sri Krishna)? Where have you gone?" and flooding his breast with tears. His voice was choked, and with difficulty he could utter but the first syllable 'ka' of Kanai. He cried incessantly, "Where, where are you brother?"

At this touching song of the Master, M.'s eyes became wet with tears.

* Afterwards he became the Senior Professor of Sanskrit at the Vidyasagar College.

II

AT THE HOUSE OF PRANKRISHNA,
A DEVOTEE

The Master has come to-day to Calcutta. He is seated surrounded by devotees in the sitting-room of the first floor of Prankrishna's house at Shyam-pukur. Just now he has taken his meal along with the devotees. Sunday, April 9, 1882. It is now 1 or 2 p.m. The Captain (a pet name given by the Master to Viswanath Upadhyaya) lives in this part of the city. The Master wishes to go to his house after taking rest here; and from there he will proceed to Keshab Sen's house, 'Lily Cottage.' He is now sitting in the hall mentioned above. Ram, Manomohon, Kedar, Surendra, Girindra (Surendra's brother), Rakhal, Balaram, M., and many other devotees are present. Many gentlemen of the locality and invited guests too are present. Everyone is eager to hear what the Master would speak.

The Master : 'The Lord and His Powers.' This universe is the manifestation of His Powers.

But people are deluded by seeing merely this manifestation of His powers; no one seeks Him whose manifestations these are. Everyone is eager to enjoy wealth and sex pleasure. But sufferings outweigh enjoyments. The world is just like the whirlpool of the river. Visalakshi; once caught in it, the boat is undone. It is like getting entangled in the thorny bush of a 'Shiakul'; you have hardly disentangled your cloth in one part, when another part has been entangled. Once in a maze, it is difficult to get out of it. Man gets singed in this world!

A devotee : What's the way out then?

HOLY ASSOCIATION AND PRAYER ARE
THE MEANS TO SALVATION

Sri Ramakrishna : The way out is the association with the holy and prayer.

If you want to be cured of your disease, you must go to a doctor. Association for a day or two with holy men won't do; you will have to do it always, for a long time, for it is a chronic disease. If you don't live with a doctor for a long time and accompany him always wherever he goes, you can't learn to feel the pulse—how the throbs indicate the excess of phlegm, bile, etc. in the system.

The devotee : What good do we derive from holy association?

Sri Ramakrishna : It generates love of God. Nothing avails unless you feel an intense hankering for Him. Constant association with holy men produces this hankering for God—so much so that life without Him becomes intolerable. Just as is the case with the man, a member of whose family is lying dangerously ill—he knows no peace and constantly broods over how the patient will recover. Or as is the case with the one who has lost his situation and is hunting office after office for a job; even if he is told that there is no vacancy, he will appear the next day there and ask again if any post has fallen vacant. Such intense hankering is required.

There is another means—earnest prayer. Don't you know He is our own? We are to pray to Him, "Lord, revealest Thyself to me. Why hast Thou created me, if Thou wilt not reveal Thyself to me? Reveal Thou must." Some Sikhs once told me, "God is gracious." I replied, "Why should we call Him gracious? He has created us; so what wonder is there that He will do what is good for us? Is it very kind of parents to bring up their children? They cannot but do it—it is but natural.

Likewise we must demand our birth-right in our prayers. Is it not true, He is our own father, our own mother? If the child goes on a hunger-strike, parents at once give up his due share. Again when the child importunately asks his mother for some money saying, "Mother, I beseech you, just give me some money," the mother, though annoyed, seeing the earnestness of the child, gives him the money.

There is another gain in holy association. Right discrimination comes in—discrimination between things of permanent value and fleeting tinsels. God alone is real, of eternal value, all else are transitory. Whenever the mind goes astray, this discrimination should be applied. When an elephant stretches its trunk to eat a plantain tree belonging to another, the driver strikes it with the goad.

A neighbour: Sir, why does this evil tendency come?

Sri Ramakrishna: You will find all types of men in His world. He has created good as well as bad people. It is He who gives good tendencies as well as bad ones.

SINNER'S RESPONSIBILITY AND THE FRUITS OF ACTION

The neighbour: Then we are not responsible for our sins.

Sri Ramakrishna: God's law is such that sins will have their results. If you take chillies, will they not taste hot? Mathur did many things in his youth, for which he had to suffer from various diseases before death. In younger days one does not feel so much. In the Kali temple there are heaps of fuel with which to prepare Divine Mother's food. There is a kind of wood which, though partially wet, catches fire; then one is not aware that there is so much water

inside it. But when it has burnt for some time, all the waters force their way behind and with hissing sounds extinguish the fire. So one is to be very careful against lust, anger, greed, etc. (even from younger days). Just see, a devotee like Hanuman burnt Lanka under the sway of anger, forgetting that Sita lived in the garden of Asoka trees in that very city. Afterwards, when he came to his senses, he was restless with anxiety for her safety.

The neighbour: Why then has the Lord created bad men?

Sri Ramakrishna: It is His wish,—His play. In this phenomenal existence there is both good and bad, virtue and vice. Darkness too has its utility, it heightens the grandeur of light. Lust, anger, greed—these are evils, no doubt; why then has He endowed man with them? In order to produce great personages. Man becomes great by the conquest of these passions. What is impossible for a man of self-control? Through the Lord's grace he can even realize God. Look again at the other side of the shield, through this lust His creation continues!

Evil men too have their utility. The tenants of a certain landlord turned unruly, so one Golak Chowdhury was sent there (to quell them). At his very name the people began to tremble—he ruled so strongly. Every thing is useful in some way or other. Once Sita said, "Rama, it would have been very good, if all the houses of Ayodhya were brick-built and new; many houses, I see, are old and cracked." Rama replied, "Well, Sita, were all the houses new and beautiful, what would the masons do? (All laugh.) The Lord has created all sorts of things—good trees, poisonous trees, and also the weeds. In the animal kingdom there are good and bad creatures—lions, tigers, snakes, etc.

HOUSEHOLDERS TOO CAN REALIZE GOD.

EVERYONE WILL GAIN SALVATION

The neighbour : Sir, cannot one realize God, leading a householder's life?

Sri Ramakrishna : Surely, one can, if, of course, one does what I have said just now, *viz.* keeps company with the holy and prays incessantly. One must weep for Him. When the impurities of mind are thus washed off, one is rewarded with the divine vision. Mind is just like a needle covered up with dirt; when the dirt is removed, it is attracted by a loadstone. In the same way when tears wash off the dirt of the mind, *i.e.* lust, anger, greed, tendency to sin, worldly attachment, etc., the mind is attracted by the Lord—one realizes Him. When the mind is purified, God is realized. What will quinine do, when fever continues and one feels cold? Why should not one realize God, even though one leads a householder's life? But these things are necessary—company of the holy, earnest prayers, living in solitude now and then. If the young plants on the foot-path are not hedged, cattle will destroy them.

The neighbour : Then those who are in the world—even they would get salvation?

Sri Ramakrishna : Everyone will get it. But one must act up to the instruction of one's spiritual guide. If a man takes a wrong course, it will be difficult for him to come back. Salvation will be retarded. Maybe, he does

not get that in this life; or it may come, even after many lives. Janaka and others led householder's life and worked. But they were always *in* God—they were always conscious of God overhead, just as dancing girls dance with glasswares on their heads (their mind being always on those wares, lest they should fall and break). Haven't you seen up-country women walking with pitchers full of water on their heads, and at the same time talking and laughing?

The neighbour : You talked of the instruction of the spiritual guide. How am I to get one?

Sri Ramakrishna : Anyone and everyone cannot be a spiritual guide. Very big logs of wood go floating on rivers, and they carry on them other creatures too. But if anyone tries to climb on a piece of wood that is itself floating with difficulty, both the piece of wood and the man go down. So the Lord Himself comes down in all ages to instruct mankind. He, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, alone is Guru.

What is Knowledge? And who am I? "God alone is the real agent and none else"—this is Knowledge. I am not the agent, I am but an instrument, a tool. So I say : Thou art the engineer, I am the engine; Thou art the master of the house, I am the house; I am a carriage and Thou art the driver; I go as Thou drivest, I do as Thou makest me do, I speak as Thou orderest me to speak. Lord, not I, not I; it is all Thou, it is all Thou.

PARADOXICAL?

By THE EDITOR

I

Some persons tenaciously believe that only the religion they belong to is true and leads to salvation and the others are false and meaningless. Such beliefs possess them so much that they do not hesitate to make converts by hook or by crook, or to resort to methods which are by no means creditable to them. They are blinded by their own narrow view of religion and, as such, cannot appreciate the beauty of other religions or study them dispassionately.

In this they are helped by religious priests who, except in rare cases, are bigoted in their outlook or keep up a dogmatic attitude in order to show their own importance. Taking advantage of the credulity of unsophisticated minds they spread the view that their own religion is superior to all other religions in the world and it is a sacred duty of their co-religionists as well as of themselves to get new recruits. They believe and try to make others believe that to the extent one succeeds in doing that or in helping such works one will be more religious or reap greater reward after death in heaven.

Such views can be seen not only amongst people of particular religions, but also amongst different sects within one single religion. It is occasionally seen that different sects have arisen out of the teachings of one prophet, and each sect thinks that its own interpretation of the teachings of the prophet is correct while others' are wrong, and tries to thrust its own ideas upon others. Thus there is quarrel and fight not only among different religions, but also

among different sects within one religion.

Now, if there are two or three religions or religious sects of the type mentioned above in a country, then the religious life of its people becomes full of chaos and confusion. Men living under such a state unconsciously spend all their energy in fighting with those whose views are different from theirs, instead of trying to build up their own religious life. If we read the religious history of the world we find that most inhuman acts have been perpetrated in the name of religion, and persons who have greatly prided themselves in being religious were very often most irreligious.

Those who are bigoted will say that if one religion is true, another cannot have the same claim. According to them it is paradoxical to believe that two religions can be true at the same time; if A is true, B must be false—A and B cannot be true at the same time unless they are identical. It is from such beliefs that they claim that they have a right to convert the whole world to their own faiths. This is indeed doing good to the world with a vengeance.

II

Men become narrow in their views when through self-complacency they do not care to know the whole truth. Men become bigoted in their religious beliefs, when they have not realized the truth in their personal life or religion becomes a matter only of intellectual discussion or profession with them. When one has *realized* the truths in one

religion, one is sure to appreciate the truths in other religions as well. How can one dogmatically say that only a particular religion is true and others are false, when almost all religions can lay claim to persons who were blessings not to any particular race or country but to the whole humanity and the world? Almost all religions have produced saints who compel admiration and respect not only from the people of the particular creed they belonged to but from all humanity.

And if we study and compare the teachings of the principal religions of the world, we find that they have many things common or similar. This also shows that when the Truth is realized, all differences which are visible only in a lower plane of existence, cease to exist. From creeds men go to a state beyond creeds—to a stage where they find that the Truth is one.

Men develop a tendency to criticize the religions of other people, when their own religion is not a matter of serious concern with them,—when it becomes only a matter of intellectual discussion. Those who try to establish the superiority of one religion to another naturally put their whole energy to find out arguments in favour of their own religion and also those which go against other religions. But the superiority of one religion to another can never be established this way. Religion is not a matter of intellectual assent or dissent, not a matter of belief or disbelief, but one of realization. Only those who have realized any religion can say what it really is. With others it will be only a guess-work. And a guess-work can or should hardly be relied upon. Some blind men were asked to describe the physical appearance of an elephant. As they could not see what an elephant looks like, they began to feel the different parts of the

body of the elephant with hands. And each described the elephant according to the part he touched, and each thought that he gave a correct description. Similar is the case with those who think that their own religious views are right and others' are wrong. The person who has seen the elephant will realize that the blind men who described the elephant were each correct in their own way, but none described the whole elephant. And the man who has realized the Truth, finds that different religions are but imperfect attempts to describe the Infinite—as attempts they are all right, but no religion can describe the whole of the Infinite.

It is a simple logic that the Infinite cannot be fully described by the human intellect, which is finite. Therefore all philosophical enquiry as to the nature of the Reality will be simply groping in the dark. Carlyle rightly said that the net result of all philosophical discussions since the birth of humanity had been nothing but the waste of breath—simply words and words: all philosophers confidently gave out the quotient when the very divisor and the dividend were unknown. It is not through the development of intellectual power, but through spiritual practices that one can realize Truth. The Vedanta says that religion is a matter of 'becoming' and not of knowing. For how can knowledge know the Knower?

Truth is beyond the reach of mind and speech. Even a man of realization cannot fully describe the ultimate Reality. He can prescribe methods as regards how to attain that, but cannot describe what it is. When he makes an attempt to describe the Reality, he simply gives an indication as to what it is like, and indications are bound to vary according to the power of understanding of those for whom they are

meant. This is the reason why the same teachings are interpreted in different ways, the same prophet is understood differently by different persons—and diverse fighting sects arise.

III

Some may argue, why is it that different prophets—though each has got a direct vision of the Truth—seem to contradict each other when their teachings are studied from the philosophical standpoint? Some talk of dualism, some of qualified monism—others of monism. All prophets of the world can be put under one or other of these three classes. If they were all men who had known the Truth, why is it that the teachings of one differ from those of another? This can be explained only by the fact that each prophet was born to fulfil the demand of an age, and his teaching was suited to the people of that time. The same medicine does not apply to all diseases, the same teaching is not suitable for all minds. A truly great teacher will vary his teachings—though the essentials will be the same—even with respect to his different disciples according to the power of understanding and receptivity of each. A mother prepares different dishes to suit the health of her different children, but all the while taking care that all may have perfect growth.

Sometimes the same teaching also is understood in different ways by different persons according to their respective stages of growth and development. This is why one single prophet becomes the origin of different sects, each worshipping him with unflinching devotion, but at the same time fighting among themselves. The same thing appeals to different persons in different ways, and each gives an interpretation to that according to his own temperament and mental condition. People go to a reli-

gious teacher when they are seized with a great spiritual longing, and they become satisfied when that is appeased. They do not care to know how the spiritual thirst of others has been quenched, so they think that the teaching which *they* have got from the teacher is the whole of his teachings.

From one standpoint it is good that there are different religions in the world. So long as there are different men with difference of temperaments, there will remain the need of different religions in the world. Had there been only one religion, many people would have kept away from religion altogether. Can it not be found that there are different members in the same family professing different faiths? What a pitiable condition would it have been if these different members got no opportunity for their spiritual growth because there was only one religion and that did not appeal to all! In the matter of education we find that different subjects appeal to different persons. If there was only one subject for all, many would have intellectually starved. Similar is the case with religion.

Variety is the sign of life. Men must differ in their thoughts and opinions, because there is life within them. Dead uniformity can be found only where life is extinct. Existence of different religions in the world and people's tenacious love for their own religion or their tendency to take to one which suits them, indicate that religion is not altogether dead. It would have been well, only if, without disturbing the religious views of others, each would devote his undivided attention to his own spiritual growth. When people want to become the keeper of other men's conscience, without listening to the voice of their own, danger arises. Unfortunately the world is not as yet free from such dangers.

The Hindu system of worshipping one's own Chosen Ideal is a great safeguard against religious quarrels. A man may have respect for all deities, but he has a special devotion to one particular deity whom he calls his Chosen Ideal. In one family there might be different individuals having different Chosen Ideals, but none disturbing the faith of others. Each struggles in his own way, but they all supply inspiration to one another. This kind of freedom is absolutely necessary for the building up of one's religious life. If freedom is the condition of growth in the sphere of education, it is more so in the field of religion.

IV

All religious quarrels will cease to exist if people remember that temples and churches, creeds and dogmas, forms and rituals are but secondary things. They help one in building up one's religious life, but they are not the whole of religion. If merely by going to churches or worshipping in temples one would be sure of one's spiritual growth, everybody would have been a deeply religious man. But we find that every church-goer is not a Christian and every priest worshipping in temples is not religious. The value of churches and temples lies in so far as they help one to turn one's mind to God. It may be that one kneeling down before the Cross even thousand times during the day, feels only physical exhaustion, but no religious fervour, and others without going even a single time to churches find within them an overflowing love for Christ. Similar is the case with temple priests.

The test of religion is how far one has got genuine love for God. Having genuine love for God, even if one follows a creed which is not philosophically tenable, God will come to one's

help and rescue. Does not God see the heart more than what one professes with one's lips? Then the real question is, how to get genuine religious fervour? If a man be sincere in his spiritual longing, it may be that God will lead him to Himself through a path altogether new and as yet undiscovered. Real religion is a matter between man and his Maker, others can give him indirect help but no absolute guidance.

Thinking this way, a wise man will never like to disturb the faith of other men. More harm than good is done by those who thrust their own religious ideas upon others. One deserves no credit if one desists from such thing only from a spirit of toleration. To tolerate another man's religious views is good, but there is a lurking sense of pride underlying that. All paths lead to Rome; through all religions men are marching towards the same God. So one need not think that one's religious creed is superior to that of others. In the religious world the first becomes the last and the last becomes the first. Unless one has realized the Truth, one cannot say that one's own religion is better simply because it satisfies one's intellect. Of course it is good to have the firm conviction that one is following the right method, but one should have the sense enough to think that it is good for him whereas another method is equally good for another.

So it is said that man goes not from error to truth but from truth to greater truth. And a highly developed soul finds that the Truth is one but men call it variously: as different rivers run to meet the same ocean, different creeds lead to the same Goal. And from the mute longing of an illiterate savage to reach the Unknown to the scholarly discourses of highly intellectual persons regarding God and religion—all are imperfect lispings of a child to describe

the ultimate Reality. From the standpoint of the Absolute all are in the same boat, *i.e.* all these are futile attempts. Their value lies in the fact that, if genuine, they lead us one step nearer God. So one need not laugh at or look down with contempt upon another.

It is astonishing that as early as the Rig-Vedic times India discovered that the same Truth is described by various sages and religions variously. Because such a catholic idea remains behind Hinduism, the Hindus have not persecuted any man for his religious views. On the other hand, they have offered hospitality to people who have become the victims of religious persecution in other lands. India has not objected to anybody to preach his religious doctrines. Even the Charvakas were tolerated in India. Such attitude of the Hindus has been taken advantage of, no doubt, but it unmistakably indicates their catholic spirit, broad vision and high level of culture as far as religion is concerned.

V

In the modern age some may be found who believe in the truth of all religions only from theoretical grounds. But it required to be *practically* demonstrated that all religions lead to the same goal. Fortunately for the world this was very recently done in India, the meeting place of many religions. Though an orthodox Brahmin, in his spiritual practices Sri Ramakrishna followed not only the different systems of Hinduism, but also the methods prescribed by Christianity and Islam. Sri Ramakrishna was the first to demonstrate from direct perception that all religions are true. If we look into the past history of the world we find none else who performed Sadhana in a way different from the one prescribed by the particular faith he subscribed to. No

one before Sri Ramakrishna had followed in practice different religions, to come to the conclusion that they all are true. And when we consider the fact that Sri Ramakrishna came of a most orthodox family, the above fact seems all the more amazing.

In the past, different prophets have come to the world and have established different religions, but Sri Ramakrishna was unique in this respect that without founding any new religion he taught that all the religions that the world had seen were true. Thus he literally showed that a prophet is born not to destroy but to fulfil.

Here one need not make any invidious comparison between Sri Ramakrishna and other prophets who were born earlier, but this much may be said that each prophet is born in fulfilment of the demand of a particular age and the modern age was in need of the message of Sri Ramakrishna. In modern times we find that the religious faiths of people are shaken to a great extent due to various reasons. Modern mind has got a tendency to distrust religion in general. Over and above that if there is quarrel and fight regarding the superiority of one religion to another, people will naturally think that all religions are false. Sri Ramakrishna's life is a safeguard against such a catastrophe.

Because he talked from personal experiences instead of mere intellectual conviction, no one with a little bit of imagination and religious fervour can disbelieve that all religions are true. Thus he sounded the death knell to all bigotry and fanaticism in the field of religion and made the ground clear for all to choose the respective religions they liked. Even an atheist had a place in the scheme of religion Sri Ramakrishna gave. Even if an atheist sincerely prays to God—"I do not know

whether You exist or not,—some say You exist, other say You do not—but if You really exist please let me have faith in You,” then he will realize God in time—such was the advice given by Sri Ramakrishna to those who complained of their lack of faith in God.

Similar were his views in regard to the vexed problems whether God is with or without form, whether image worship is good or bad, whether one should be a monk or remain a householder, and the like. According to him, every position was good provided one was sincere. He would take every man where he was and give him a start from that position. He had nothing but words of hope for one and all, and if he decried any one he decried only him who called himself or others sinners.

A cultured man without having liberal views is a misnomer. The test of culture is that it unfetters the mind from all prejudices, it develops in man a power and capacity to understand and sympathize with the point of view of others. Thus a man with a brilliant academic career may not be a man of

culture. In the same way the test whether one is developing spiritually is whether one can have sympathy for the religious views of others. Otherwise when feuds and discords ensue in the name of a single or different prophets, real religion flies away.

The religious history of the world has been darkened by bigotry and fanaticism of various people, it is time that they were dead and gone. Those who fight in the name of religion are its worst enemies. It is unfortunate that even in the twentieth century, when man boasts of the spread of education and the world's wealth of knowledge, religious bigotry is not altogether absent. There is jealousy, hatred, rivalry between different religions or religious sects. Even a man with liberal education becomes dogmatic when the question of religion comes in; he finds it difficult to believe that any religion other than his own can be true. He thinks it paradoxical and takes recourse to sophistry to defend his position. To such persons the life and experiences of Sri Ramakrishna should be an eye-opener.

WHAT DO GODS SIGNIFY

BY PROF. AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEE, M.A.

PHENOMENA OF DIRECT EXPERIENCE

We have direct experience of various kinds of phenomena, internal and external. Within ourselves we experience the feelings of hunger and thirst, pleasure and pain, love and hatred, anger and fear, wonder and admiration, attraction and repulsion, etc. In relation to ourselves and others around us, we have the experiences of birth and

death, growth and decay, health and disease, strength and weakness, etc. We are directly conscious of taking outside phenomena into ourselves through our knowledge and of producing changes and modifications in the external world through our will and effort. In course of our progressive acquaintance with our environments, we not only form distinct conceptions of the phenomena of

light, heat, sound, touch, smell and taste, we are also struck by the experiences of such natural phenomena, as rain and storm, mist and cloud, thunder and lightning, scorching summer and biting winter, flowing rivers and billowing seas, extensive forests and gigantic mountains. The diversities of phenomena relating to the sun and the moon, the stars and the planets, the sky and the earth, the day and the night, the dawn and the twilight, fire and water, the corn-growing fields and the barren deserts, the fruit-bearing plants and the disease-curing herbs—all these are of great interest to us. We are born with the instinct of self-preservation and self-development, and the more this instinct moves us onward in this path, the more do we become conscious of how much we have to depend upon those phenomena for the gratification of our desires and inclinations and for the preservation and development of our life. We thus experience a close relationship between ourselves and the phenomenal world in which we live and move.

In course of the development of our experience, we naturally occupy, or usurp, the central position in this phenomenal world and begin to interpret the phenomena in accordance with the felt needs of our life. We learn to conceive of some kinds of phenomena as good and beautiful since they confer benefits and pleasures upon us, and some as evil and ugly, since they inflict injuries and unpleasant sensations upon us. Some are found to be beneficial under certain conditions and injurious under others. Some are experienced to be beneficial and friendly, when we can turn them into good account by dint of our own efforts, and injurious and hostile, when we cannot properly adjust ourselves with them or employ them wisely to serve our purposes. In this way our experience of the relations between ourselves

and the internal and external phenomena expands, and we form the habit of describing them in terms of the diverse ways in which we are affected by them or have the possibility of being affected by them. Our knowledge of the phenomena, when thoroughly scrutinized, turns out to consist in the ideas, systematized or unsystematized, of the various relations, permanent or transitory, in which we stand to them and the various ways in which they affect or are expected to affect our senses and feelings. With changes in the planes of our experience and in our conceptions of benefit and injury as well as our standards of value, the characters of phenomena also are found actually to change.

DEMAND FOR EXPLANATION

If man had been merely an aggrandizing animal, with only a more complex instinct and a wider scope for experience than the other animals, he might have been contented with the experience of phenomena as such, with the accompanying feelings, hankerings and ideas. But man is a rational being,—a moral and spiritual being. This rationality is not a factor which is merely added on to his animality to make him a more complex animal. But it constitutes the essence of his nature, and occupies the most central position in his life. It governs from within the course of the development of his knowing, feeling and active life. Though apparently a creature among other creatures,—though possessing animality, which at certain stages of his life's career exercises almost irresistible influence upon his outlook and activity, and claims to employ and direct reason as its servant,—man in his essential character is really a unique being on earth, and the process of development in his nature is essentially different from that in the nature

of the other animals. The development of man's life does not consist in the growth of his physical and sentient existence, but in a far greater degree in his gradual ascent to higher and higher planes of thought, sentiment and action. His rational nature demands that, at every step of the evolution of his life, he should look upon the phenomena of experience from a higher and higher point of view, he should determine the courses of his activities in accordance with higher and higher ideals of truth, beauty and goodness, he should mould his feelings and judgments by reference to higher and higher standards of value.

This process of development should continue in the individual and the race, till the highest demand of his rational, moral and spiritual nature is perfectly satisfied, the ideal immanent in the innermost essence of his being is fully realized. His unique nature, though playing its part in the world of physical and sensuous phenomena, is governed inwardly by its own laws, and it is by strict conformity to those laws of his inner nature that he can rise to higher and higher planes, can progressively get hold of the truer and truer aspects of reality, beauty, goodness and happiness, and can finally fulfil himself by the attainment of perfect knowledge, perfect love, perfect holiness and bliss, which in their ultimate character are truly one.

This inherent demand for self-realization, in the phenomenal world, of the rational nature of man is at the root of the demand of the human intellect for the explanation of the phenomena of experience. The inherent outlook of the human reason is such that the phenomena, as they are actually experienced by the external and internal senses, do not appear to be sufficiently plain and intelligible to it. They seem

to involve in their very nature a reference to something else, which must account for their being what they are and make them clear and intelligible to reason. Thus man feels the need of explaining the phenomena of actual experience in terms of something underlying them—something more real than the phenomena themselves, something more akin to reason. The phenomena as they appear to sense-experience, cannot by themselves establish, as it were, their right to existence before the court of reason. The ground of their existence, the ground of their particular modes of behaviour, the ground of their diverse relations and interactions, the ground of the uniformities and adjustments prevalent among them, must be revealed to reason, in order that reason may recognize them to be what they are. In the early stages of its development, reason tries to satisfy its demand for explanation by referring some phenomena to some other phenomena, by deducing one kind of phenomena from another kind of phenomena, by tracing the unfamiliar facts to the familiar facts, or by accounting for the phenomena and their relations by reference to some such vague and indefinite agencies as Chance, Nature, Time, Law, etc. But the inadequacy of such attempts at explanation becomes soon obvious, and impels reason to move restlessly forward. Reason fails to find any satisfactory explanation of phenomena in the phenomena themselves or in any imaginary unverifiable agency or agencies. The question arises, what should be the nature of the explanation that reason truly demands?

DEMAND FOR CAUSE AND UNITY

With the development of the self-consciousness of reason and the progress of the knowledge of the phenomenal

world, the demand which was so long felt for the explanation of phenomena is gradually comprehended to be really an inner urge for the discovery of their causes. Human reason has an inherent belief or *a priori* knowledge that no phenomenon can occur or can be what it is without a cause. The law of causality is bound up with the nature of our thought, and it is recognized by reason to be the fundamental law, governing the characters, originations, modifications, dissolutions and relations of all phenomena of our experience. Even before reason becomes distinctly conscious of this inner law of its own outlook, it is impelled by its own nature to seek for the causes or grounds of phenomena. It is in search of the causes that reason restlessly looks hither and thither and hits upon the ideas of Chance, Nature, Time, Law, etc. But when in course of development its eyes are open to its own nature, it realizes that the problem of explanation is really a problem of the discovery of the true character of the causes of the phenomena.

Reason becomes conscious of another aspect of its inherent demand,—the demand for unity. It has in its intrinsic nature an undying faith that unity underlies plurality, and the consciousness of this ideal unity is awakened by the ever-widening and ever-deepening experience of uniformity and regularity, order and adaptation, invariableness of co-existence and sequence, among the phenomena of the world. Reason gradually realizes that, in order to make the phenomena fully intelligible to itself and in order to make itself feel that it has thoroughly comprehended the true character of the phenomena, it must find out some principle of unity as the real ground and support and essence of the diversities of phenomena.

These two lines of advance of the

human reason towards self-fulfilment, though inseparably going together in all the stages of development, may be discussed somewhat separately for the sake of the convenience of study.

NATURE OF CAUSE

By thoughtful analysis of the idea of cause as demanded by reason, it becomes evident that it necessarily involves the notion of *Power* and *Priority of Existence*. A cause must exist before its effect, which it must have the capacity or potency to produce. Mere uniformity of succession or time-sequence does not imply that the invariable antecedent is the cause or sufficient ground of the invariable consequent. When the exponents of phenomenal causation attempt to make up for the defect by adding the idea of *unconditionalness*, they virtually abandon the strictly phenomenalist position; since *unconditionalness* is unintelligible except in terms of some inherent power in the causal phenomenon, capable by itself of producing the effect. It is *Power* or *Energy*, which reveals and embodies itself in phenomena, which transforms itself in time and gives rise to time-sequence among the phenomena in which it embodies itself. To human reason, causation consists in self-revelation and self-transformation of *Power* or *Energy* (*Sakti*).

Phenomenon, Power and Substance are three inter-related concepts. Every phenomenon is necessarily of the nature of an effect (*Kárya*); it must have its cause (*Kárana*) in some Power (*Sakti*); and Power is conceived as inherent in some Substance (*Vastu*). Power (*Sakti*) cannot be an object of direct sense-experience; it remains unmanifested (*Avyakta*) till it acts and embodies itself in its effect (*Káryarupena parinamate*). Reason, following the law of its thought, infers its existence

and character from the nature of its self-manifestation in the forms of phenomena, experienced by the senses. Substance, again, is known through its Power—through the exhibition of its Power in the act of producing phenomena. Substance is conceived as the storehouse of Power or Energy. Power, which does not exhibit itself in phenomena, remains unmanifested and therefore undifferentiated from Substance, and Substance, the Power of which is unmanifested, exists in itself beyond the scope of direct experience and is indefinable (*anirvachaniya*).

When such conceptions of Power and Substance (*Sakti* and *Saktimat*), existing as the causes or grounds of phenomena beyond the scope of sense-experience, evolve in the human mind, there arises a natural conflict between *sense* and *reason*. Reason strives to transcend phenomena in order to find out their explanations, while sense tends to keep it down to the level of phenomena themselves. Reason is inwardly convinced that the grounds or causes of phenomena must be Substances and Powers, which must belong to a higher order of reality than those phenomena of sensuous experience, while the influence of sense upon actual thought stands in the way of the formation of distinct and well-defined ideas about them except in the shape of objects of sense-experience. Whenever reason makes an attempt to form a definite idea of the nature of a substance, sense almost compels reason to form an image of it as an object, occupying space, moving in time and producing impressions upon senses. Whenever reason tries to think of Power, it is almost unconsciously led to think of it as a property of some such object or phenomenon, or as a product of the interaction between some objects or phenomena. Time and space are the

inevitable forms, in which phenomena must be received by the senses; but reason under the spell of sense forms the habit of thinking that whatever exists or can possibly exist must exist somewhere in space surrounded by other co-existent objects, and must have beginning, modification and end in time. It is very difficult for human reason to shake off this limitation and to be true to itself, till it ascends to a very high plane of thought and is thoroughly disciplined in what is ordinarily called abstract thinking. Before this stage is reached, the powers originating the phenomena and determining their characters are generally interpreted as physical, chemical, electrical, magnetic, etc., and they are considered to be inherent in some material bodies or evolved out of their relations and interactions. This is the plane of thought in which the sense-ridden modern science is moving.

A deeper insight into the nature of the material bodies and the powers manifested in them leads reason to discover that the former are not the true sources of the latter, but on the contrary the latter are the sources of the former. The material bodies are the phenomena of experience, and they have to be explained in terms of the Powers which produce them,—which manifest themselves in the sensuous plane in the forms of the material bodies. It is the Powers which give existence to and sustain the existence of the material bodies, and their existence therefore is presupposed by that of the latter. The world of phenomena is really constituted of Powers,—it is *Saktimaya*, the transformation of Powers. It is in a world of *Sakti*, in which we live and move and have our being. When we can reduce the phenomena of experience into the Powers which constitute their essence and determine their

characters in time and space, the demand of reason for explanation is to a great extent satisfied. The modern doctrines of Conservation of Energy and Electronic constitution of matter, rightly understood, have greatly advanced towards this kind of dynamic explanation of material phenomenon. Here matter has been actually dematerialized and resolved into *Sakti*. But what is the true nature of *Sakti* or Power? How can reason be sure of its objective reality?

DEEPER ANALYSIS OF THE NOTION OF POWER

A still deeper analysis of the notion of Power and the character of knowledge throws a new light on this dynamic conception of the phenomenal world. Power is not originally a concept of knowledge at all. Knowledge in its restricted sense cannot from within itself form any definite idea of Power. We have immediate intuition of Power in another department of our inner experience, from which knowledge borrows it. When we ourselves act voluntarily, in the very exercise of our will we become conscious of *Sakti*, power or energy exerted by ourselves from within. This consciousness of Power within us becomes still more clear and definite, when by our self-exertion we have to overcome resistance from without. In every case of voluntary activity there is the experience of an encounter between Power and Power,—Power within opposed by and struggling with Power without. In whatever form of experience we play the role of mere passive spectators, simply observing and noting phenomena as they appear, we can know only change or time-sequence, but cannot apprehend any dynamic attribute,—any indication of Power. It is in the department of will that we experience Power.

Thus the idea of Power is inalienably associated with the notion of will. The fact that the demand for causal explanation is inherent in the nature of our thought and that the idea of causality involves in our thought the idea of Power, indicates in deeper analysis the deep-seated operation of will in the process of knowledge, the demand of will inseparably associated with the demand of reason. This does not of course mean any superimposition of the demand of will upon the otherwise distinct character of knowledge-seeking reason; it really points to the ultimate unity of reason and will—the unity of the self, of which reason and will are, in their phenomenal appearance, mutually distinguishable, but related, aspects. The unshakable demand of reason for the dynamic explanation of phenomena really originates from the dynamic aspect of our self, *viz.* will. The will is the real repository of powers. This is directly experienced in the manifestations of one's own will. When one's own will in its self-exertion meets resistance from outside, it feels the operation of some other powers, and reasonably infers that those powers also must be due to self-exertions of Wills behind them. Reason generalizes this experience and concludes that all phenomena are of the nature of actions, that there can be no phenomena without powers behind them as their causes, and that there can be no powers without Wills behind them as their sources. Thus all phenomena are conceived as the products of Wills, and all cases of interaction among phenomena as the expressions of interactions among Wills behind them. As in the previous stage of development, the reason found out the cause of the *world of phenomena* in a *real world of Powers*, so in the light of the present wisdom it discovers

a *real world of Wills* as the ground of the *world of Powers*.

All chemical, mechanical, magnetic, electrical and vital powers are secondary powers; the origin of each of these kinds of powers is not in itself, but in something else. Each of them only transmits what it gets from its source. In truth these powers also are phenomena; they are called powers only to distinguish them from the grosser phenomena of sense-experience. The real powers are behind them as their grounds of sources. It is Will alone that can freely originate the powers. The powers inherent in Will are never spent up, because there is no fixed quantity of powers of a definite kind stored up in Will, as in the cases of the seats or embodiments of the secondary powers. Will is the inexhaustible spring of Power in general. It freely transforms itself into various kinds of powers and their phenomenal embodiments, without losing itself in them, without any diminution of the potentiality of its further self-transformations. Such self-transformation of Will into a variety of powers of different forms and through them into a plurality of phenomena of various kinds, without losing its identity and indefinite potentiality, is what is known as Creation. The capacity for creation belongs to Will. Will is thus the Creative Power, which may express itself in various forms of powers and phenomena. If the phenomena of experience are to be derived from Powers, they must ultimately be derived from Will or Wills, which are the free grounds of powers,—in which there are indefinite potentialities of powers. As Martineau says, "By Power we mean *Will*; neither more nor yet less; the word has no other possible signification." He further asserts, "The ultimate identity of meaning in the words Cause and

Will, and the dependence of the former on the immediate consciousness of the latter, are indirectly attested by the frequent recurrence of even the most practised scientific intellects to the springs of human action as the true key to the dynamics of outward nature."

WILL AND PERSONALITY

Now, as the notion of Power in causation leads human reason necessarily to the notion of Will behind nature, so the notion of Will is found necessarily to involve the notion of Personality. Will is experienced to be inherent only in self-conscious and self-determining Persons. As Power is the self-expression of Will, so Will is the self-expression of Personality. Will really means self-determination. Where there is Personality, *i.e.* Self, Ego or I, there and there only is found self-determination. Where Personality is absent, self-determination is absent, and therefore Will is absent, Creative Power is absent. The Substances in which Will is inherent, which is the original ground and source of Powers, must therefore be conceived as *Persons*, putting forth the creative energy from within themselves, bringing out from within themselves by acts of self-determination a variety of powers for the production of the diversities of phenomena. So long as Will does not exhibit its nature by self-transformation into powers and phenomena, it remains unmanifested in the Person, and the Person also exists as an *Impersonal Substance*—a pure Spirit.

When the idea of Personality is introduced into the idea of causation, we should be very cautious about the true significance of the idea. We should carefully remember that Personality does not essentially imply the physical body. The physical body, as a sensible object occupying space and undergoing

change in time, is itself a phenomenon of sense-experience and demands explanation in terms of Power, and hence in terms of Will and Personality. A Person is a spiritual substance, characterized by the attributes of self-consciousness and self-determination inherent in its essential nature. The physical body, gross or subtle, is a phenomenon brought into being by the creative power of Will. Thus a Person, who is essentially a spiritual entity, may embody himself with a physical body and make various expressions of his will-power in and through it. He is the ground, source, cause and essence of the body, and is therefore presupposed by the body.

In actual experience, which can grasp only sensible phenomena, we do not meet with a Person except in a physical body, we fail to recognize the presence of Will and self-consciousness anywhere except in a living human organism. But that is due to the imperfect character of our experience, and the lower plane of our knowledge. It does not necessarily mean that Will and self-consciousness are essentially dependent upon the physical organism for their very existence. Such a conclusion would involve us in a vicious circle, for Will, according to the very nature of our reason, is found to be presupposed by the phenomenal body as its cause or ground. In his essential nature, a Person is a self-conscious and self-determining spirit, and, as such, is a transcendent reality, free from the domination of the physical organism.

Thus the conclusion is reached that the causes of the existence and character of the phenomena of experience,—their origination and sustenance, modification and transformation, evolution and involution, mutual co-operation and counteraction, etc.—must ultimately

be a number of Persons or Spiritual Beings, who are free agents possessing self-consciousness and self-determination as their essential characteristics and freely manifesting themselves in and through the various kinds of Powers and the diverse departments of phenomena. The world is thus recognized to be created, sustained, governed and transformed in respect of its particular departments by the free powers of spirits.

It should be noted that this conception of the causality of the phenomenal world establishes a sort of kinship between man and nature. Man finds in nature a manifestation of thought and will, which are his own essential characteristics. Men as spiritual Beings can act and react, as a matter of right, upon those unseen spiritual Beings, that are the causes and lords of the world they inhabit. Their life and destiny are influenced and ruled by those spirits, and they also expect and claim to exert influence upon those spirits' modes of self-manifestation,—upon their wills and actions,—by dint of the proper exercise of their own thought and will. A man inspired by this conception deals with nature as one would deal with another class of rational beings. The distinction between Spirit and Matter, which was supposed to be absolute, almost vanishes in this plane of thought. It is something like humanizing of Nature.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE GODS BEHIND NATURE

The Persons or Spiritual Agencies, that are thus conceived to be the real causes of the natural forces and phenomena, are as a matter of course looked upon by men as a higher order of Beings in comparison with themselves. The self-conscious and self-determining

spirits, who by the power of their will originate and rule over the phenomena of the Sun and the Moon, the land and the sea, the sky and the earth, the rain and the storm, the thunder and the lightning, the births, growths, diseases and deaths of men and animals, who by a single stroke can frustrate the most organized efforts of the most powerful races of men and can raise the weakest and humblest of men to the highest pinnacle of glory, must be bowed down to and adored as far superior, wiser and more powerful and magnificent Beings. As they are the Lords of the phenomena upon which the preservation, development and fulfilment of our life depend, as they determine the conditions, which being favourable, our efforts can produce the desired effects, and which being unfavourable, our best efforts become fruitless, they must be conceived as possessing far more powerful wills than we do, and our relations to them must be those of the weaker to the stronger, the smaller to the greater, the dependants to the masters. Though their characters are analogous to ours, they are far higher orders of Persons in many respects.

These unseen supernatural superior Persons, who are the grounds of all powers and phenomena of the world, the recognition of whose existence is found by reason to be necessary for an adequate explanation of the phenomena of experience, are known as Gods or Deities or *Devatás*. The different departments of the phenomenal world are the products and domains of the will-powers of the different Gods. The laws of nature are the uniform modes of the self-expressions of the Gods. The variety of interrelations among the different forces of nature and the different departments of natural phenomena indicates a corresponding variety of interrelations among the Gods, think-

ing and willing and operating behind them.

The number of Gods must be as uncertain as that of the ultimate forces of nature and the ultimate divisions of the departments of nature. The scientific classifications and divisions of the self-manifestations of the Gods in natural phenomena lead to the corresponding classifications and divisions among the Gods themselves, in the same way as they lead to the classifications of the powers into physical, chemical, electrical, magnetic, vital, etc. Some Gods are more allied to each other and belong to the same general class, and some have important points of distinction from them and hence belong to a separate class. As there are departments within departments in the world of experience, some classes of phenomena being included in some other higher or wider classes, so there is a hierarchy of Gods, the domains of some being included in those of others. As some kinds of phenomena indicate exhibitions of greater powers than others, some Gods are conceived as more powerful than others. In this way a universe of Gods or Spiritual Beings is revealed to human reason as a result of a bold and unrestricted search for the ultimate explanation of the phenomena of direct sensuous experience.

In the foregoing discussion I have attempted to indicate, perhaps too briefly, the line of thinking which led the early Hindu mind step by step to the conception of a plurality of Gods determining the courses of natural phenomena. Though we have been compelled to omit many intervening steps in the evolution of the mind, as recorded in the original intellectual productions of the ancient Hindus, we have noticed here, how to satisfy the demand of reason for the adequate explanation

of the phenomena of experience, the Hindu mind arrived at the conception of the Will-powers as the true ultimate Powers that can fulfil the conditions of causality, and the conception of the Personal Gods or the self-conscious and self-determining Spiritual Agencies as the true substances possessing those Will-powers that transform themselves into the world of phenomena.

While I am going to conclude, I must confess that the conception of the Gods given above is obviously partial and incomplete, since it has been inferred from one aspect of sensuous experience. The Gods have been described here as possessing only *natural* attributes—the attributes of the different grades of thinking and willing powers. But as Personal Spiritual Beings they are characterized also by *moral* attributes, and these are inferred from the *moral* aspect of the world of experience, which we have not considered here. Secondly, we have here dealt with the world of experience as consisting merely

of a plurality of phenomena, and consequently we have stopped with the conception of a plurality of Gods as their ultimate causes. But the demand for unity, as we mentioned previously, is as fundamental to the nature of reason as the demand for causality. Metaphysical reflection upon the world of experience, impelled by this essential demand of reason, leads to the conception of *One God*, *One Absolute Spirit*, of whom the plurality of Gods are self-manifestations. This aspect of the ultimate unity of the Gods has not also been considered in this article. The inner rational significance of the struggles between the *Devas* and the *Asuras* has also been left out as beyond the scope of this discussion. The ultimate relation between Substance, Power and Phenomena has also been left out of consideration. Here we have only approached the Gods and looked at them from a considerable distance, but we have not tried to form any intimate acquaintance with them.

ASSURANCE

BY ERIC HAMMOND

Lift up your hearts! Stand unafraid
Amid the clash of hosts arrayed,
Neither vain-glorious nor dismayed.

Faith firmly holds her scale between;
By faith we rest in hope serene;
The calmer is the mightier mien.

War's harsh alarms crowd to our ears;
Fierce fights are compassed by
sad tears;
Faith's courage shrinks from
coward fears.

Though strife should circle us for long,
Right seem to be out-weighed by wrong;
Quiet, assurance, make us strong.

LUXURY

(Diary Leaves)

BY NICHOLAS ROERICH

I

The book *The Fiery World* indicates :

“It has been ordained that luxury should leave humanity. Not without reason have people made of this a special conception. It cannot be replaced by anything else. Luxury is neither beauty, nor spirituality, nor perfectioning, nor construction, nor bliss, nor mercy; not one benevolent conception can be substituted for it. Luxury is the destruction of means and possibilities. Luxury is decay, because every up-building without rhythm will be but decomposition. One may sufficiently notice, that earthly luxury is already shaken. But one must find co-ordinated co-operation in order to heal the infection of luxury. Selfhood will try to affirm that luxury is a deserved abundance. They will also say that luxury is regal. But this is slander. Luxury was the sign of downfall and obscuration of spirit. The shackles of luxury are the most terrible also for the Subtle World. There one needs progress and continuous perfectioning of thought. The exposition of encumbrances will not lead to the next gates.”

Were these words said for some hoary antiquity? Or are they needed to-day in the same measure as then? It is very deplorable if commands against the ignorance of luxury are needed also to-day. But be this as it may, who will dare to deny that luxury precisely now must be eradicated? How often has the world been told that luxury is a sign of extremely bad taste! How

often were examples of the fall of Babylon, Rome and many other empires pointed out, when instead of beauty, education and enlightenment humanity became obsessed by vulgar luxury!

Let us not forget how Chingiz-Khan, wishing to avoid the possibility of the spreading of luxury amidst his warriors, carried out in front of the whole people most instructive demonstrations. He told some of his closest friends to dress themselves in the finest Chinese silk robes and went with them through thorny bushes, dry tamarisk and other sharp prickly plants. When they arrived at the meeting-place of the people, their silk robes were naturally torn to pieces. And the leader pointed out to his people the uselessness of luxurious dresses. He also showed with the help of his friends, how luxurious food only causes illness, thus teaching them to return to milk and a simple healthy diet.

Such examples of endeavours to turn the consciousness of the people to a beautiful, sound living one may quote in plenty, from all ages. But it appears that even now a sound foundation has not been realized, and the machine, revolting against the weak human common sense, overpowers the wise distribution of forces. Just at present it is especially necessary without fearing derision and mockery, to remind again about healthy beauty and goal-fitted living. Some countries already announce premia for handicrafts and home industry, and this is not a retreat from

civilization. In this way wise leaders try again to attract attention to the necessity of high quality of workmanship and to applying one's leisure time for skilful self-perfectioning.

Even recently vulgar luxury was ascribed only to the ignorant *nouveaux riches*. Of course these new-comers to the golden calf, often complete ignoramuses, are easy prey to the dark whisperings of luxury. But let us not close our eyes that far beyond the circle of *nouveaux riches* there grows the desire for easy earnings and for vulgar forms of the luxurious perversion of life.

The book *Fiery World* wisely reminds that precisely egoistical ignoramuses will always defend luxury and the same book far-sightedly points out that there are many signs that luxury in the world has already been shaken. This means that one must very attentively watch that the next step of existence be really surrounded by truly noble creations. But this necessary condition of life must be watched not by some official inspectors, but by the population itself, in order to create as soon as possible a conscious understanding of the harmony of daily life.

II

Luxury in objects must leave humanity also for that reason, that this abhorrent conception treacherously involves people into spiritual luxury, which is still more harmful, and infectious. In self-centeredness people become careless towards the workers in the field of education. The excesses of luxury have created similar hideous excesses of enticement for outer physical strength, all sorts of races and competitions and admiration of muscular force. One abnormality always leads to another. The growth of the material side of life calls forth a doubtless downfall in spirituality in all countries and in

all creeds. More than that, every striving towards spirituality and sublime problems of "be-ness" is considered inadmissible in the daily life of materially "civilized" society.

It is true, some nations, and amongst them mainly India, keep to ethical methods of thought, but even amongst these nations there are already just complaints that the young generation loses the understanding of high foundations of life. From other countries there come the most deplorable news about the growth of militant atheism and about unhealthy idolatry before crass materialism. The real workers of spiritual education are pushed back into the back rows. People are not ashamed to state that at present there is no time altogether to speak about living ethics. And one may add many examples of similar horrors. Of course, also from ancient history we know that Confucius, the Just One, was prosecuted by unwise rulers. And Plato was sold as slave. We know also that Aristides, who was given the by-name the Righteous, was expelled by his co-citizens from his native town. Such records sometimes seem like slander upon humanity. It is too difficult to imagine that Aristides the Righteous, could have been so maltreated by bestial ignoramuses, who dared to commit such a strikingly harmful step for the state, as the expulsion of their best citizen. But during the latest excavations in the Acropolis of Athens,—what a shame—there were found keramic tablets which represented votes against Aristides. How terrible is it to witness the actual tablet with the inscription "for the expulsion of Aristides!" This corresponds to the most awful vandalism, when absurdly and as a shame for the whole of humanity were destroyed irreplaceable treasures of great beauty!

When we read about the destruction of the most remarkable libraries, when we see lists of already non-existent creations of art, will not even the most shameless heart shudder? Some Herostrats of antiquity and their followers of our days proudly announce that they want to destroy museums and temples. We see such insane statements in print. But not one of these Herostrats will realize that he follows the commandments of most ignorant luxury. If luxury is the destruction of means and possibilities, if it is decay, then every barbaric destruction of great creations will be already luxury, a vile luxury. Herostrat, when burning great monuments, of course did not understand the high meaning of creativeness. In the same way the servitor of luxury, surrounding himself by hideously pompous, guilted encumbrances, is like the same Herostrat in regard to noble true art. If we think of new forms of life, if we want the happiness of our near ones, then is it not our duty to replace ugliness by lofty noble forms of living, be this in the material or spiritual respect?

III

With great difficulty people begin to understand such axioms that friendliness opens the gates to co-operation. But when we have to fight in the days of Armageddon, against selfhood and rudeness, this may be achieved only by consonance of co-operation. In this incessant and joyful co-operation we shall cognize that the best people so beautifully understood the meaning of beauty in the whole complex of life. The great Teacher Swami Vivekananda tells us :

“Don’t you see I am above all a poet?”

“That man cannot be truly religious, who has not the faculty of feeling the beauty and grandeur of art.” “Non-appreciation of art is crass ignorance.”

Rabindranath Tagore finishes his book *What is Art* with such words : “In Art the person in us is sending its answer to the Supreme Person, who reveals Himself to us in a world of endless beauty across the lightless world of facts.”

The *Fiery World* ordains : “One should avoid prejudice as in great things so also in small. Many possibilities were interrupted because of preconceived thinking. Precisely the fiery energy is very sensitive to prejudice, but knowing such a property of energy one can counteract it by suggestion,” and “a benevolent thought is the basis of a good action. Thought is luminous before action, therefore let us count the camps of good according to the lights of thought.”

These reminders about the harm of prejudice and about the bliss of light-bringing good thought are so needed now, when the battle takes place with all dark phantoms, with ignorant luxury and with vile treason. The refined heart will permit to distinguish where is the border line between the noble searching for beauty and where is self-devouring wild luxury, which decomposed even powerful empires.

Let the Banner of Peace as a symbol of realization and construction of Beauty remind and warn where begins the dark kingdom of spiritual cannibalism.

Verily luxury must depart from humanity.

THE BHAGAVADGITA'S MESSAGE FOR THE MODERN WORLD

BY S. K. MAITRA, M.A., Ph.D.

I

The Bhagavadgita is pre-eminently a book which the world needs most at present. Of course, all great books have an eternal appeal and therefore all ages feel equally the need of them. But the Bhagavadgita is pre-eminently fitted to give us guidance at the present moment. For the Bhagavadgita deals with a moral crisis, and the modern world is faced with a gigantic moral crisis, the like of which perhaps it has never faced.

The moral crisis which was the genesis of the Bhagavadgita is well known. It occurred in the life of the Pandava prince, Arjuna. The wrongs which the sons of Dhritarashtra had done to him and to his family cried out for redress, and the only way in which this could be done was by declaring war upon the Kurus. But this meant bloodshed and the killing of a number of people who were mere relations of his. What was he to do? Which way lay his duty? He was completely puzzled and sought the advice of Lord Krishna.

This moral crisis is not peculiar to Arjuna. It occurs in every age and to every individual. The Bhagavadgita's message, therefore, has an appeal for transcending the limits of the time and place in which it was delivered.

The solution which it offers is a solution for all moral crises for all times. It is the completest solution of all moral perplexities. To solve the problem of Arjuna it is necessary to go to the root of the whole question of conduct. And

in order to answer the question of conduct, it is necessary to bring conduct into relation with knowledge and devotion. Moreover, the roots of ethics lie deep in metaphysics and the problem of conduct inevitably raises the metaphysical problem of the nature of the Self (पुरुष) and of the Supreme Self (पुरुषोत्तम).

The problem, in fact, is not so much the problem of conduct as the problem of Man. What is the essence of man? What is the true nature of a man's Self? To Arjuna's perplexities, the Gita has an answer in one sentence: Be a man. Be your real self (आत्मवान् भव). The Gita gives us a picture of the whole man, and not merely of the man of knowledge, or the man of action or the man of devotion. Be the whole man, the complete and perfect man—this is the message of the Bhagavadgita.

It is because the Gita deals with the whole man, with all the aspects of his complex personality, that it has been mistaken for an eclectic treatise. It is not an eclectic work. Its object is not simply to mix different colours but to paint a picture in which all the colours are in their due places. Eclectic works are like a professor's class notes; they serve admirably the limited purpose which they are intended to serve, but they cannot kindle any heart, they cannot fire any soul. The Gita, however, from first to last shoots out sparks which kindle and vivify whatever they touch. It is the most vitalizing and inspiring work that exists in the world.

It is never dull. It is a vitalizing message from beginning to end. "Are you down-hearted?" No. Man's greatest enemy is feebleness of spirit, weakness of heart. "नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः" You can never realize your self if you remain weak. The Gita's Message therefore is clear.

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।

Raise yourself by your self; do not let your self go down. To the weak, vacillating, willless Arjuna it gives its advice in unequivocal terms :

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व ।

What this means for the downtrodden nations of the earth, what hope it gives to those who have lost all hope, I need hardly point out.

II

मां हि पार्थ व्यपायित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥

We need not take this verse literally. Its meaning is quite clear. The lowest in the social scale have also no cause for despair. Provided they can take shelter in the Lord, they will obtain salvation equally with the others.

'Provided they can take shelter in the Lord'—in these words is expressed the whole philosophy of action of the Bhagavadgita. The Bhagavadgita looks upon the whole life of man as a Yoga. The word 'Yoga' is derived from the root 'Yuj,' to join. To what is it joined? The Gita's answer is, to God. At the end of every chapter of the Gita we find the following statement : इति श्रीगीतासु उपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे followed by the name of the chapter which also contains the word योग such as अर्जुनविषादयोग, सांख्ययोग, कर्मयोग, etc. The different Yogas are the different ways in which we are to realize our fellowship with God. The multiplicity of the Yogas indicates the complexity of human personality.

Yoga thus means a union or conjunction with God, and right conduct is that which promotes this union or conjunction. But every conjunction, as Dr. Dasgupta has pointed out,* means also a disjunction. It means disjunction from selfish ends and purposes. The Gita, therefore, enjoins complete disinterestedness (अनासक्ति).

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।

The Gita also expresses this idea by saying that actions should be done without regard for consequences :

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते ना फलेषु कदाचन ।

Here by 'consequences' the Gita means consequences for one's self, not the consequences for mankind, for the Gita equally lays stress upon the fact that actions should be performed for the sake of लोकसंग्रहः ।

लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन् कर्तुमर्हसि ।

What लोकसंग्रहः means we shall explain presently. Actions done perfectly disinterestedly can alone be called skilful actions. For this reason the Gita defines Yoga as कर्मसु कौशलम् (skill in action). And a man who is wholly free from selfish thoughts, who can always take a dispassionate and disinterested view of things can alone hold the balance even between man and man. Hence Yoga can further be characterized as समत्व (equality). Thus from the essential characteristic of Yoga as union with God, we derive all the other characteristics, namely freedom from attachment (अनासक्ति) skill in action (कर्मसु कौशलम्) and समत्व (equality). Patanjali's conception of Yoga as चित्तवृत्तिनिरोध (cessation of mental activity) does not, as Dr. Dasgupta has shown,* find favour with the Bhagavadgita, although it is quite familiar with the process of breath control through which Patanjali seeks to achieve

* Vide *History of Indian Philosophy*, Volume II, pp. 447-48.

complete stoppage of mental activity. The object of the Gita is not to stop the activity of the mind but to lead it along its proper channel to union with God.

This gives the Gita its peculiar value. This is the reason why the modern man can find as much guidance in a moral crisis from it as any man in any previous age could. If it was merely a message of total cessation of all activities, its appeal would have been only to a limited section of humanity. The course of action which it prescribes is precisely a course of action for the man of the world, not for the ascetic. No greater mistake can be made than to suppose that the teaching of the Gita is meant only for the world-renouncing ascetic.

The Gita makes it quite clear that it does not believe in the total cessation of action. It shows what due consequences would result even from a momentary stoppage of action :

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।
मम वर्तमानवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥
उत्सीदीयुरिमे लोका न कुर्यां कर्म चेदहम् ।
संकरस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥

In fact, it is impossible to remain entirely without action.

न हि कश्चित् क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।

Even the maintenance of the body becomes impossible with a complete cessation of action. शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येद कर्मणः ।

What is essential, therefore, is not the cessation of action (for that is impossible, or, even if possible, is not at all desirable), but the performance of it in the right manner. And the right manner consists in doing it in a perfectly disinterested way.

तच्चादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।

III

As the late Lokamanya Tilak in his classic work *Gitarahasya* has pointed

out, the Gita follows the ethical doctrine of the Bhagavata sect. That doctrine was an intermediate one between the Vedic doctrine of sacrifice and the ascetic doctrine of complete renunciation of all actions. The intermediate doctrine asserts that the renunciation which has ethical value is not renunciation of all actions, but renunciation of the consequences of action (फलसंन्यास). The great merit that is claimed for renunciation of action, namely that it frees one from bondage and prevents rebirth, really attaches to renunciation of the consequences of action.

योगयुक्ती विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥
ब्रह्मण्याघाय कर्माणि संज्ञं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्बसा ॥

He who acts by placing all actions in Brahman is completely unaffected by sin, even as a lotus leaf is unaffected by water. It is this condition of being, unaffected by action even while doing it, which is the thing to be aimed at.

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।
अयुक्तः कामकारिण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥

It is only when one is in a position to give up all thought of the consequences of actions that one can attain peace; so long as there is regard for the consequences, one is bound.

This philosophy of action with renunciation of consequences, which may be called the Bhagavata Dharma or the Narayaniya Dharma, is, as the late Lokamanya Tilak has shown, found in the *Mahabharata* and is described there as the doctrine of Pancasikha. It is called there the third path :

प्रहायीभयमप्येवं ज्ञानं कर्म च केवलम् ।
तृतीयं समाख्याता निष्ठा तेन महात्मना ॥

The Gita thinks that the object of those who advocate renunciation of the world will be equally achieved by self-

less action, by action, that is, in which the consequences beneficial or injurious to oneself are not taken into account at all. It should be noted, however, that when the Gita says that consequences are to be ignored, it means consequences for oneself. Consequences for the world, for humanity are certainly not to be ignored, for the Gita expressly lays down that the goal of action is the spiritual well-being of mankind. Whatever conduces to this well-being, far from being left to chance, should be striven after assiduously.

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।

लोकसंग्रहमेवापि सम्पश्यन् कर्तुमर्हसि ॥

The late Lokamanya Tilak explained this word "लोकसंग्रह" as meaning the promotion of the well-being and mutual goodwill and co-operation not only in the world of human beings but also in other worlds, such as the world of the Devas and the Pitris. Leaving out the world of the Devas and the Pitris, we may say that the goal of action according to the Bhagavadgita is the promotion of the spiritual welfare of the entire human race.

IV

The Gita enunciates the principle of "my station and its duties," as Bradley happily puts it in his "Ethical Studies." The duties belonging to a man's station are far more binding than those which are remote, however exalted the latter may be. It is far better to die doing humble duties in one's sphere than doing noble duties in spheres other than one's own :

श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥

This is a thing which we very often forget in our enthusiasm for internationalism. There can be no true in-

ternationalism without nationalism. The Gita exposes the hollowness of that kind of pseudo-morality which would advocate the sacrifice of the interests of one's country for the sake of the supposed interests of humanity. We must do the duties that lie nearest to us. If we do not do them for the sake of what we conceive to be our duty to humanity, we are only practising an exquisite form of self-deception.

The Gita shows the only method by which World Peace can be achieved. Conference after conference has been held during the last five years to settle the problem of disarmament but nothing has yet been achieved. And no wonder. For all the nations that have attended these conferences have gone there with their minds packed with hatred and jealousy. It is not with such minds that any real advance can be made towards the solution of the problem of disarmament. For the disarmament that is most necessary is the disarmament of the disruptive forces of the mind—the forces of hatred, jealousy and greed. No world peace is possible unless the nations purge their minds of these forces of disruption. Our greatest enemy is ourselves "आत्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ।" What is wanted is the conquest of our lower self by our higher Self.

The Gita's message here rings quite clear : (उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानम्) 'Raise yourself by your self.' We may have thousands of Disarmament Conferences and World-Economic Conferences, but we shall not advance a step towards world peace until we succeed in disarming the forces of evil in our minds. If we want 'war that will end war,' we must wage incessant war against all tendencies in ourselves which stand in the way of our realizing our true selves.

THE HEAD OR THE HEART ?

BY PROF. SURESH CHANDRA SEN-GUPTA, M.A.

I

Logicians say that men are different from animals because of their reason. Man ratiocinates, but the animal cannot. When I see curls of smoke on a hill, I infer that there is fire there but my dog has no such perception. Therein lies, I am told, my superiority to the animal. I do not pretend to be able to look into the mind of the animal, so I am not in a position to say whether the logician is right or wrong. But I know this much that the animals also show at times wonderful powers of discrimination. The great French philosopher Descartes thought that a dog is no better than a machine and its cries of pain at being hurt are only the creakings of the same. We have thus in our heartless vanity tried to establish our kingdom over the dumb creation and pass on as its lords.

If, however, without any bias or prejudice of our own greatness, we closely and scientifically observe the lives as led by us and also those led by the animals, we shall find that in some very important functions we are really their cousins, as the famous scientist Darwin said. The sight of good food tempts me as much as a piece of raw meat tempts a dog. I seek to ruin a prosperous neighbour as one dog bites another. I give as loose a rein to my worst passion as animals do. Ah, wherein then lies my superiority? I live in better houses and know how to protect myself from the inclemencies of the weather. I take cooked food with all sorts of rich delicacies. I clothe myself and that in all the decencies of art. I read and

write books. I fall ill and at once avail myself of the remedies which science has brought to my door. Yes, all this is wonderful, and if the animal might think and feel, it would perhaps chafe at its inferiority to see itself comparatively helpless. But let us search our hearts and then see if the real superiority which we claim over the animal world is what consists merely in our achievements of the head. Is a man really better and higher than an animal?

If God were to send down His angels to give Him a report of His creation, would they not stand aghast to see the quarrels and wars which man wages against man and also the mean diplomacy which passes as wisdom? The poet sighed to see Nature red in tooth and claw. Are we, men, really better? When the most educated and prosperous nations are found to fall out with one another like so many Kilkenny cats, what hopes may we have for our future? We have caged the ferocious animals in the zoological gardens and thereby shown our superiority to them. But if angels were to reign over the earth, they would start by shutting us in, so that we might not break the divine commandments.

I am perhaps striking too melancholy a note in this manner of comparing animals with ourselves and creating a sense of disgust in my hearers. But please bear with me and think carefully over this comparison and then tell me if our general mode of life in all its essentials—Ramakrishnas and Vivekanandas apart—is really higher than that of the animal. It is not

in mere reason, as I understand it, or in intellectual discrimination or power that the superiority of man to animal is to be seen. That superiority or greatness lies in another direction, namely, his feelings or heart, which is the seat of God in man. God dwells in our heart, not in our head. The head of man, even of a Newton or an Einstein, is too small to contain the Infinite with all Its wonders. But his heart is really without any boundary, and so may be fitly regarded as the Temple for the Limitless. My head raises my Brahminical or racial pride but my heart revolts at it—for before it there is no distinction between this man or that man. My head warns me when I run to the rescue of a drowning man but my heart impels me to it. My head tells me that I should be careful of going near a diseased man but my heart rebukes me if I do not offer him the help he needs. My head tempts me to lay my earnings by for my family but my heart sighs to see my hoardings beside the sights of poverty and suffering before me. So it is the heart which is the most valued possession of man, and he who starves it forfeits his claim to his higher heritage over the brute and is to be pitied.

II

The true food for the heart is a living faith in God. I say 'living' because faith in God is not to be understood as lying within a few dead formulae or creeds. A faith is living when it is inspired by our love of our kin and fellowmen, by our perception of all that is truly good and beautiful in Nature and man. And it is this living faith which Swami Vivekananda pined for and which ultimately poured itself into his ardent heart from the great fountain of the Sage of Dakshineswar. With Swami Vivekananda religion was

a dynamic reality, and he never believed in religion being a mere monotonous round of rites and ceremonies.

I must not be understood, while emphasizing the place of heart in religion, as being carried by merely blind impulses. The natural instincts of hunger or wrath must not be confounded with the religious sense. The former are blind but the latter is clear-sighted. A man's faith in God, if pure, will never mislead him but will help his intellectual and moral growth. It is a mistake to hold that my moral life is to supply the necessary energy to my spiritual life. The latter, if true, is the real source of all strength and in itself vitalizes one's moral life. You may as well think of developing your limbs, one by one, without reference to the whole body and its vital organs, as think of building up your moral nature without any reference to your religious life. If you really believe and live in God, your moral attributes will necessarily develop from such a belief.

Similarly one's intellectual life also may derive its mainspring from God. The pure-hearted who believe in the Almighty never find their reason clouded, and they find it easier to pursue their intellectual career than those who are only thinking of their own abilities and powers. Think of the Source of all power in the Universe, your power then will come better and fuller to yourself. If I may be excused a personal note, I may tell you how a friend of mine who was of mediocre ability as a student in his early life came to shine more and more, as he advanced every day in his spiritual life. I remember—he was my chum in the same hostel—the taunts and ridicule to which he was often subjected for his piety and his indifference to a life of thoughtless jovialities. He is now an eminent educationist serving

in an important college in Bengal. Thus will it be seen that a pure heart which cultivates love of God is not a hindrance but a help in our growth, intellectual and moral. And Swami Vivekananda's life is a monumental epic of this truth.

III

Swami Vivekananda began his career, maddened by his love of the Unseen Hand that was drawing him irresistibly on. Lo, the Master came and lifted up the veil and he was face to face with the Object of his quest. Doubts vanished and gloom gave place to the light that never more faded from his ken. With his vision illumined and his heart full of the bliss of devotion, he pressed forward and made an easy conquest of all he came in contact with, both in the East and in the West. Like the great historic figure, he went, he saw and he conquered. The sceptic West that had hitherto regarded Eastern countries as steeped, more or less, in the shadows of ignorance, rubbed its eyes in wonder to hear the Orange Monk of India thundering, prophet-like, in his unending stream of eloquence, some of the deepest truths ever revealed to man. He took the world around him as if by storm and the spirit of a Caesar or an Alexander might well envy him!

But it was a far different conquest that he made, it was a conquest of the heart of man! It was not merely the intellectual superiority of Swami Vivekananda that made its impression upon the keen Western minds but it was his devotional fervour and unerring spiritual vision, as shown in his clear and wonderful interpretation of the Vedantic cult, that had their effect. And if once the wise men of the East had gone Westward with their offerings of devotion to the holy Messenger of

the gospel of love and peace, now did the wise men of the West come to show their homage to this new prophet from the East expounding the high philosophy of the Absolute Brahman. The ties between the East and the West became renewed and more solid than ever before, and this was not surely an achievement of an idle visionary. Nor was it a mere *tour de force* of the intellect or a magical feat. The head and the heart of a man who had drunk deep of the Fountain of divine love and thought were there to bring about the miracle of transforming the love of gold into the love of God.

IV

Thus when truly understood, religion is not the mere image of a goody-goody fancy but is the highest and loftiest realization to which a man may aspire. That the Vedantic idea is not a mere empty abstraction but a reality which a man may live every moment of his daily life was announced by the Swami in unmistakable voice. The recluse who hates others and shuns society as an evil may weave out his fancies in his solitude but he is no guide to be followed. The man who priding himself on his birth or caste wants to dictate his opinions has no place in the spiritual world, which is a perfect democracy. Democracy is more difficult of fulfilment in religion than in society or politics. Was not the Harijan movement of to-day shadowed forth by the sage who had realized the presence of God in the poor masses, and is not the network of humanitarian organizations all over this country and beyond the direct effect of that realization? And could this be the work of one who had only dreamt of shadows? No, the idea of God is not a shadow but is intensely real, more real than anything we see. We shall

perish but that idea will unfold itself in its ever-expanding glory to newer and newer generations of Ramakrishnas and Vivekanandas.

Let us remember this supreme truth and try to live up to it. Let us not forget that our real superiority, if we must claim any such thing, to the

animal world lies, not in our fine intellectual powers or the achievements thereof, but in our ability to add the ethical values of life to the scientific, and, in realizing, above all, the sanctity of the heart as the Temple where dwells the Mighty Source of all that is good, beautiful and noble.

DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS SECTS IN JAVA

BY PROF. RAMESH CHANDRA MAZUMDAR, M.A., Ph.D.

I

After giving a brief description of the principal features of the two great religious systems, *viz.* Buddhism* and Pauranic form of Hinduism,† we may conclude this account with a reference to the various religious sects that flourished in Java. These religious sects are enumerated in different texts, but the lists do not always agree. Goris has drawn up a classified list of these sects by an analysis of ten different literary texts. These are—

- (1) Saiva or Siddhanta (var. sidanta, sridanta), sometimes also called Saiva-siddhanta or Sidhanta-Saiva.
- (2) Pasupata.
- (3) Bhairava.
- (4) Vaishnava.
- (5) Bauddha or Saugata.
- (6) Brahmana.
- (7) Rsi.

In addition there is reference to Alepaka or Lepaka, a Saiva sect, and Yogita which cannot be identified.

* cf. *Vedanta Kesari*, January and February, 1934.

† cf. *Prabuddha Bharata*, February and March, 1934.

The epigraphic data in general confirm the above list. The Bendosari inscription mentions Bhairava, Sora and Bauddha sects. Sora has been identified with Siddhanta, but may also stand for Saura (Sun-worshipper), which would then give us a new sect.

II

The Tanttū Panggelan, to which reference was made in our article published last month as a source of mythological stories, also tells us a great deal about the origin of the different Mandalas or Orders of religious ascetics called Viku, no doubt derived from Indian 'Bhikshu.' The first order is said to have been founded by the Great God called Guru and the lesser gods and demigods completed the task. While the stories of the foundation of the different Mandalas by different Gurus no doubt belong to the domain of mythology, the Tanttū clearly testifies to the existence of these different orders, and gives us some idea not only of the localities which formed their headquarters but also of the nature of their organization.

In connection with the Mandalas the Tanttū refers to the various religious sects (Paksa) to which they belonged.

Among these specific mention is made of Saiva, Saugata (Buddhist) and Bhairava sects, with the addition of two more, *viz.* Paksa Kasturi and Paksa Tyaga, which were offshoots of the Bhairava sect. The Tantu gives a detailed account only of the Bhairava sect, a circumstance which agrees well with what has been said above regarding its wide prevalence in Java during the last days of Hindu civilization. As the account also throws light on its relations with other sects it would be well to give a short summary of the passage.

“The Great God, Lord Guru, took the form of a Viku, a Bhujangga of the Saiva sect. He was called Mahampu Palyat or Empu Mahapalyat. He dwelt in the cemetery of Kalyasem, south-east of Paguhan and began to practise the religious performances (Tapa) in accordance with the usages of the Bhairava sect. He ate human flesh at midnight. Twelve years later he attended an assembly of the king of Galuh with a human skull (for drinking) and a pot (Kantora) for drying human flesh. The king said, “As he eats human bodies and destroys the creation of Brahma, expel him from Java and throw him into the sea.” Palyat merely uttered a wild laughter (Hahaha) and returned to the cemetery. Next morning the king’s agents threw him into the sea, but the day after he was again back at his cemetery. Then they tied him with a stone and again threw him into the sea, but he again came back. Then they burnt his body and threw the ashes into the sea, but Palyat could not be killed. Amazed at the exhibition of the magical power by the Pandita, the king’s emissaries fell at his feet when the latter said, ‘I belong to the island of Kambaugan and have a Bhujangga-mandala there. As the king is angry,

I shall go back to my own land, a piece of stone will I take as my boat.’ The bewildered servants of the king became his disciples and accompanied him. They were consecrated with the names Empu Janadhipa and Empu Narajana. When they returned to Java the king of Galuh appointed them respectively as his Guru and Purohita (priest).

“Some time later Empu Mahapalyat came back to the island of Java. He divided his body in two parts and there arose one Saugata (Buddhist), Empu Waluh-bang and one Saiva, Empu Barang.

“Empu Barang settled in mount Hyang at the cemetery of Kalyasem and a large crowd of men belonging to the Bhairava sect soon gathered round him. They collected heaps of dead bodies and ate human flesh and drank from human skulls. The king of Daha thereupon sent two brothers, both Buddhist, to kill Empu Barang. Although the two brothers were really incarnations of Brahma and Vishnu and they threw Empu Barang into sea, and burnt his body, they did not succeed in killing him. Then Empu Barang went to Jambudvipa (India), accompanied by the two brothers. There he converted, by his magic power, the Brahmanas who were worshippers of Hari-candana. He came back to Java and was welcomed by the king of Daha, and presented to him a golden image of Vishnu which he had modelled after the one which was worshipped in Jambudvipa.

“The Buddhist Waluh-bang now approached Empu Barang and requested him to found the Kasturi sect. Empu Barang founded the first Mandala of the Kasturi sect. Similarly he became the founder (Devaguru) of the Tyaga sect. Thus both Kasturi and

Tyaga sects were offshoots of the Bhairava sect."

The above account leaves no doubt about the growing importance of the Bhairava sect. It also shows that any hard and fast distinction between different sects was fast disappearing. Buddhism, Saivism and Vaishnavism are all brought into close association with the Bhairava cult, which evidently arose out of them and was now exercising supreme influence in its turn.

III

The same impression is produced by a general study of the religious literature of the period. Although different sects are named and there are treatises dealing specifically with different religions, the theoretical or practical distinction between them is not quite clear. Pigeand observes from a study of the *Tanttu*, *Koravasrama* and *Paraton*, "that the religious faiths in Java were marked by a strong influence of Tantrism, but of different sectarian dogmas or church-organizations there is little trace." There were no doubt different religious groups or orders but the characteristic differences between them are nowhere made explicit. The *Tutur*, *Mantras*, etc., in religious books are neither Saiva nor Buddhist, but applicable to both and the sectarian predilection of the author can only be gathered by the names of gods which he invokes. Most likely the different orders were distinguished only by different rites and ceremonies. This conclusion is strengthened by a passage in *Koravasrama* in which the three sects are named *Sri-danta*, *Brahmana* and *Buddha*, and distinct rituals are laid down for each. The names of sects are peculiar and the distribution of the gods among the different sects is equally so, *Buddha*, for example, being identified with *Mahadeva*. But the

climax is reached when *Brahmana* is substituted as the name of a sect, in place evidently of *Saiva*, and it is expressly laid down 'that the Brahmanas born in Java are much superior to those born in *Jambudvipa*, who indeed deserve to be called *Sudra*.'

The passage, however, lays great stress on observances and rituals, and these seem to be the hall-marks of the different religious orders. We may well imagine, therefore, that the decadent phases of Hinduism in Java were not unlike those in Bengal where Buddhism, Saivism and Vaishnavism were gradually merged together and a body of rituals and ceremonies came to be the chief characteristics of religious faiths, at least among the masses.

IV

It is refreshing to note, however, that better minds in Java, as in India, could soar above these trivial externals and catch a glimpse of the highest spiritual truth. As a specimen of this we may refer, at some length to *Caturpaksop-adesa*, a treatise dealing with sects.

It divides the orders of ascetics into five classes (*Paksas*) named after five elements (earth, water, fire, air and sky) and describes the vows, religious practices, manners of living and various usages and customs of each. The object of their *Vrata* (vow) is either to become rich, powerful, beautiful, accomplished, successful, etc., or to attain *Svarga* (heaven) or *Moksha* (liberation).

The means of attaining all these ends are enumerated as *Tapa*, *Vrata*, *Yoga*, *Samadhi* (*Samadi*), *Punya* and *Dharmma* (*Darmma*). There are five classes of ascetics, *viz.* those who live on fruits (*Phala Vasi*), roots (*Mula*), water (*Salila*), air (*Pavaka* or *Pavana*?) or nothing (*Nira*). The text then proceeds to say that *Raga* (passion) and

Dvesa (jealousy) are the two chief enemies of the ascetics, against which they should always be on guard. If the five classes of ascetics fall victims to these two, then they should, respectively be like monkey, swine, the Vadavanala (mythical submarine fire), serpent and stone. If men are only free from passion and jealousy, then it is immaterial where they live, whether in hill, wood, cave, sea-beach or island. One who is not free from passion and jealousy does not deserve the name of Pandita.

This high moral tone is in keeping with the spiritual insight of the author who realized the unity of the all-pervading soul in spite of the seeming varieties of religious faiths, beliefs and practices. He illustrates this by two homely examples. As a man puts on clothes of different colours, but still remains one and the same, so is He, the Creator, one and the same, although He appears in different garbs in different men or different sects. Again, if there are thousand pitchers full of water, men would see thousand suns reflected in them, but if they would only look up they would see only one sun whose images they are. So only one God pervades all creatures though we mistake them for many.

Speaking of the different sects with different practices the author says that they are like men who obtained different kinds of jewels or precious stones and then each claimed that his was the best of all. Each put his precious jewel in a case and left it as a legacy to his successors. Gradually, owing to neglect or want of proper care, the jewels were lost and there remained only the empty cases. So are the present religious sects or orders. They have lost the costly jewels, *i.e.* the noble spirituality of their founders, and their outward observances and ceremonials are merely like those empty cases. How did they lose the costly jewels, *i.e.* the noble spiritual truths? By passion and jealousy. Let them therefore be on guard against these two and without stressing too much on their peculiar dresses and habits, let them make an effort to get back the costly jewels, and preserve them by keeping a vigilant watch.

Passages like these furnish striking examples of the higher tone of morality and spiritual insight that continued down to the latest days of Hinduism in Java. The treatise, on the whole, confirms the picture we have drawn above of the religious sects.

AN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENT IN AMERICA

BY MRS. ELIZABETH DAVIDSON

I

In assuming the responsibility of motherhood, I hardly realized that my two small daughters, Peggy and Subala, would lead me into a serious study of the techniques of modern education. During their early childhood we lived

in the country; consequently the little three-room rural school of our district became their first centre of formal instruction.

Education is compulsory in the United States, and there are thousands of these small schools in the country dis-

tricts. Wherever the population is sparse, one room and one teacher provide all the facilities of instruction through the eight grades required in elementary education. The children are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, American history and geography.

The modern text-books used in this very simple type of public school, were a revelation to me. Particularly in the lower grades, the experimental work done in private institutions has borne fruit, and even methods of teaching have been transformed. The children's first readers are printed in large type and have simple but attractive illustrations. Stories describing familiar events in a child's world are narrated with words chosen from a vocabulary within the child's range of experience and use. Each additional reader progressively adds to this vocabulary and to the development of good taste and imagination. Arithmetic text books are equally delightful, with illustrations of objects to be counted, and a very gradual advancement from one process to another, so that the abstract method grows quite naturally from the concrete observation. In history and geography, the emphasis is on different customs and the ways in which people live; their villages, homes, food, sources of food supply, etc., are described both historically and geographically.

The real transformation in method of teaching is, I believe, in the changed view-point which considers it of greater importance to arouse the child's interest and enthusiasm by making study a pleasure, rather than overwhelming him with details at an early age. Meaningless drudgery deadens the mind, and Froebel, Montessori and countless others following their inspiration, have entered into the heart and soul of child-life to make their educational approach more real. Experience is our one great

teacher, but unless an experience is simple, vivid and related to earlier experiences, it results in lack of co-ordination and confused thinking. It has been found by the more advanced schools that the drama, or actual participation in historic scenes, leaves a far more profound and meaningful impression on children than mere reading.

II

To return to a brief view of the rural school which Peggy and Subala attended, let us follow them into the Assembly Hall where all the children gather at nine o'clock in the morning for a brief period of prayer, group-singing and salutation of the American flag, required by the State. After this, the four upper and four lower grades file into their respective class-rooms. These rooms are equipped with desks and seats, with black-boards and small book-cases. The teacher's desk faces those of the pupils, and the grades occupy parallel rows in such a way that the teacher may use the nearest black-board for an entire line, one child sitting behind the other. In this way there is the least confusion among the grades during the different class-periods led by the teacher. While one group is reciting on a particular subject, the children of the other three grades work at written assignments or reading. The atmosphere of the school-room, especially in the lower grades, is friendly and cheerful. The children learn many of the most elementary subjects, such as spelling, through games; playing store with bright sample packages from grocery dealers adds zest to their number work; and drawing pictures or modelling is an incentive to further study and observation.

Very definite efforts are made to teach the country children simple principles of nutrition and sanitation. An hour,

from twelve to one o'clock is allowed for their luncheon. On cold winter days, if there is sufficient co-operation between parents and teachers, some hot dish like soup or cocoa is served. The pupils either bring their own little jars of food to be heated in a large boiler; or else the school provides it at a minimum cost. Many of the smallest schools have wash-rooms and toilets. Outdoor playgrounds for the recess periods are considered an important factor in developing normal and alert children.

Unfortunately by the time the boys and girls enter the fifth grade, the school regulations have to be enforced more rigidly, because discipline and idealism are often lacking in the average American home of to-day. The rarely gifted teacher may still inspire the students with enough respect and loyalty to counteract the other disruptive influences, but that is rather the exception than the rule. Because of these difficulties, the upper grades of the public schools cling to old methods and less liberal text-books. This change to conservatism damped Peggy's ardour with that of the older children in our district, and we realized that the country school was no longer adequate for our needs.

We were fortunate in finding a progressive city school, and for one year Peggy, our eldest, lived with her grandparents, so that she could take advantage of a more enlightened method of instruction and a larger range of subjects. The following year we moved to New York, and I had the pleasure of delving deep into the mysteries of the most up-to-date and ideally equipped school anyone could wish for. It might be interesting to note some of their theories of education first, and then follow them by describing their practical application.

III

The underlying principle of the Dalton School is to teach a pupil to make use of his own powers. It does not disregard the 'tools' of knowledge, that body of facts organized by the traditional school, but insists that the school environment must be planned in such a way that the result of the school life, including the methods of work used, will be integrated personalities. The habits developed in school should be those habits which will be of use in the outside world, long after school subjects are forgotten. Ordinarily 'school habits' covering a period of twelve years, must be later discarded because they are inadequate for the work of the world. The Dalton School believes that habits useful to adult life are easy to build at the outset. They have tried to reorganize the social conditions under which pupils live while doing their school work, because these same conditions serve as a stimulus to shape attitudes and determine habits.

Life outside holds a definite job for every individual, therefore the Dalton plan provides a job for each pupil. The job is in the form of a 'contract' or assignment in each of the various subjects; a block of work so fashioned as to be thought provocative and stimulating. While doing his work, a pupil is 'apprenticed' to the teachers—experts who make it possible for the student to learn methods suiting his own particular needs—through contacts with experienced workers, in all the subjects he is expected to study.

The students are given freedom from rigid time schedules so that they may be free to work without interruption and learn to stick to a job until it is finished. This freedom means assuming the responsibility of 'budgeting' their time and not merely doing what they please.

Both pleasant and unpleasant details are incorporated in a job, and no job is considered finished until it is done in all particulars. Whenever possible, the work is planned in such a way that individual students are given their special share in a class enterprise, and this again brings them in close touch with each other, giving them the experience of co-operation, so important for useful living in the outside world.

IV

Let us follow our seventh grader or Junior High School daughter, through some of her daily activities. The seventh and eighth grades are divided into 'Houses' or 'laboratories,' each House having a special subject and instructor. The two grades mingle freely in their 'House meetings,' an informal assembly, presided over by the child 'class president.' Special conferences on different subjects are announced, and a few minutes of group discussion precede the day's work. There are five Houses: English, History, Science, Mathematics and French. Each House includes some fifteen to twenty children under the care of the instructor who also acts as their 'House-adviser.' As we have seen, House meetings are gatherings in which two grades with their House-adviser take up matters of general interest. Conferences are on special subjects and according to grade; all the seventh graders, for instance, who are ready to undertake an experiment in science, will meet together with the science instructor in Science House. After consulting with him in a group as to the nature of their experiment, each child will finish his job individually. Another special conference is called as soon as a sufficiently large number have completed their experiment and are ready for reports and further discussion, which in turn leads to the next new problem.

Regular conferences are held once a week on each subject, and must be attended by all the pupils. These may be compared with the classes of the traditional school, giving the outline of the subject to be studied, which is filled in according to the individual effort and planning of each pupil.

Some of the conferences take the form of a highly entertaining and altogether spontaneous dramatization of certain interesting features of a particular subject. These unpolished 'plays' are brief, but allow the students all the joy of discovering the characteristic content of some event in history, some bit of literature from the English 'laboratory,' a combination of colloquial phrases in French;—even science and mathematics have their Newton and Pythagoras!

The Creative Arts are taught in a very free and individual way. Music, painting, dancing, modelling, crafts (carpentry) and dramatics have their special teachers. The pupils select their studies in the Arts according to their talents and inclination. As the school day lasts from eight-forty-five in the morning till four-thirty in the afternoon, with an hour for lunch and another hour or two for gymnastics and organized play, it is obvious that the responsibility of time 'budgeting' is very real. A psychologist works with the staff to help the children adjust their individual difficulties, and it is astonishing to see how quickly they learn to make intelligent decisions. By the end of the school year, the pupils have acquired all the facts of knowledge taught in the traditional schools, plus constructive and courageous attitudes towards the problems before them.

V

Each section of the Dalton School has its own definite aims. The Primary

School seeks to develop co-ordination and self-control among its very young members, within their capacity, largely through organized play. In the Elementary School the so-called 'tools of knowledge,' reading, writing, etc., are begun. The emphasis, however, is placed on orienting the child in relationship to the world about him, giving him a few basic concepts on which to build his future knowledge. This work is carried on in the Junior High School. Boys, although in a minority, attend the Primary, Elementary and Junior High Schools, but the Senior High School is maintained exclusively for girls, as it has been found that adolescent boys and girls work more seriously without the added problem of mutual adjustment.

The first year of Senior High School gives the students a preliminary survey of subjects, with more advanced requirements and greater responsibility than in the lower grades. Along with their academic work, all the girls receive instruction in the care and feeding of babies. This is a unique feature of the Dalton School, and the effect of the 'nursery,' where four babies of different ages depend on their youthful guardians for their food, bathing and other bodily comforts, is excellent. Ordinarily the girl of high school age feels remote from the problems of family life, partly because of her intellectual ambitions, and partly because at this particular time her self-esteem and self-importance flourish vigorously. In the actual care of these helpless little ones, the gentler and more unselfish impulses latent in every girl's nature find expression without sentimentality and in a most spontaneous and co-operative spirit. Two girls, under the guidance of a nurse and a physician, take charge of each baby, from eight in the morning to three-thirty in the afternoon for

periods of a week, and are then replaced by their class-mates.

Another course which is thought-provocative and somewhat unusual is that of Social Science and Housing. Girls are taken to various sections of the city to study actual living conditions and to observe for themselves the different ways in which social problems are being handled to-day. They are asked to suggest and discuss their own ideas regarding the standards of living so observed. Hospitals, libraries, factories, wholesale and retail stores, public schools and churches are included in their survey.

A majority of Senior High School girls prepare for college; the others, who prefer art or a business career, are encouraged to select their studies accordingly. The Carnegie Foundation has recently provided funds for a carefully supervised experiment intended to eliminate the antiquated system of college entrance examination. Such examinations are based primarily on memory and routine academic study. The new method is to select girls that are suitable college material from a prolonged record of their general ability, intelligence, independence, originality and rate of progress. These records will extend throughout their college years, continuing for two years after graduation. Such a radical experiment in the field of higher education seemed imperative because present-day college graduates have failed to adapt themselves to positions of responsibility and initiative.

The new aim in the entire field of modern education, is to teach young people to function effectively in a changing world, a world which demands not only efficient service, but vigorous leadership and originality. How far methods of education can bring about this growth in character and ability, only the future can decide.

A WORLD COMMONWEAL ?

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

I

Life in the modern age is in many respects different from what it was in any previous age. The conquest of distance made possible through modern methods of transportation and communication, the abolition of irksome toil and the possibility of unlimited comfort and luxury made possible through modern methods of production, the prolongation of our lives in a healthy condition brought about by the advance of modern systems of medical aid, have fundamentally changed the social life of mankind. But our idea of social behaviour have not kept pace with the enormous change in the circumstances of our life. The result is that mankind to-day is far from happy, and is continually on the brink of a terrible war. Mr. H. G. Wells in his book *What are we to do with our lives?* suggests that the establishment of a World Commonweal is the way out.

He thinks that considering the past history of mankind, the relation of human beings to the world of life and matter outside it and the material conditions of modern life, mankind has been moving, and is bound to move, towards the establishment of a World Commonweal.

What are the characteristics of the World Commonweal as thought of and elaborated by him?

First, the present militant political states would cease to exist. Secondly, organizations would be established to help and direct the economic and biological affairs of mankind on a world

basis. Mr. Wells does not appear to be contemplating a control too close and minute—as that is likely to kill individual initiative and creative effort. Indeed, he is anxious that individual liberty must be protected and must further develop. He only wants a group of intelligent men to be in charge of economic affairs and another in charge of biological matters. So far as questions economic are concerned, he desires that a Bureau should be established which can provide all the necessary intelligence on any economic question which any individual or organization may require. For the sake of economic progress he thinks it desirable that the contents and extent of private property must be revised. A collective body or bodies must own the sea, the land, the raw materials of the earth, the staple commodities, etc. Besides, the systems of money and credit must be controlled by a central body. Apart from these, the people must be free to direct their lives as they think best. Wells, however, lays stress on one fundamental principle in this connection which must be emphasized here. He says that our present economic methods are extremely wasteful of human wills and potentiality and hence these must be altogether changed—we must find out as to how the need for food, clothing and shelter of every human being may be satisfied with the least compulsion and friction.

As regards the biological side he emphasized that there are no doubt certain instincts in the feminine make-up which compel a multiplication of species, but with a change in our social

and political organization and clearer knowledge and straightforward practice, it would be possible to control the birth-rate. Because of mankind's possible ability to control the population pressure, he would be able to escape the competitive pressure for sustenance prevalent among the lower animals.

Thus the pressure of population, the waste of warfare and the private monopolization of the sources of wealth being out of the way, he expects that scientific and artistic endeavour will lead to unlimited developments of men's power and activity. Our life from day to day would not be stereotyped. Change and novelty will be the order of the day. That will add greatly to our happiness. There is no happiness in a static life.

This is, in short, what Mr. Wells thinks of the World Commonweal and about the benefit he expects to ensue therefrom.

II

The question then is, how to establish it? For that he relies upon—what he calls—the Open Conspiracy. Individuals and groups aspiring for the end sketched out above and trying for its realization are termed as constituting an open conspiracy. It is termed a Conspiracy (the name does not appear to be very inviting) probably because it is conceived as aiming at the destruction or suppression of the present Government to the extent that they do not regard themselves as provisional. And the epithet 'open' is used in its connection because, as explained, in order to enlist public sympathy the movement must never go underground and must avoid all secrecy. As a movement aiming first at the dissemination of ideas, it is described as having begun already. But it is not merely a movement for the dissemination of ideas. Wells thinks that in the case of wars

between States its members should refuse military service to the States to which they belong. But, he stresses that they should learn to fight and should combat the present Governments and fight for the World Commonweal, if need be. After the World Commonweal is established, its directive force is also expected to come forth from the ranks of the members of the Open Conspiracy.

Persons prospering because of the existence of the present political system, viz. kings, princes, Government officials and their friends, relations, women, servants, etc., present-day educational institutions, such as Schools, Colleges, Universities, Churches, etc., the rich assimilated in the higher social classes connected with the political top-men and labourers led over the idea of a class war, are not, according to Wells, likely to be enamoured of the idea of a World Commonweal but, on the contrary, to resist it. He also opines that the peoples of India, China and Russia are likely to regard the attempt to establish a World Commonweal as simply an attempt to further, extend and consolidate the control of the white over the coloured peoples—hence they also are equally likely to resist it.

For the advance of the Open Conspiracy the only spot of this globe to which Wells can look hopefully is the States bordering the Atlantic. "There we have an amplitude and range of thought and discussion not possible elsewhere." The Open Conspiracy, it is stressed, can in the beginning flourish most fruitfully there and nowhere else in the world.

Even in those regions of the world, it cannot at the outset hope to convert the people in their entirety. It is pointed out that it is only the intelligent, progressive, original and active among

the functioning classes, that is, the industrialists, bankers, landowners, etc., who can be expected to take up the idea enthusiastically. It is they only who can act as the directive force of the movement.

In our schools and colleges we are taught ideas which mainly help the continuance of the present political and social systems. Hence, if the world is to be organized anew on a world basis, Wells thinks that adults must be educated afresh and ideas regarding the World Commonweal should be infused into the minds of our boys from a very early age. Thus, a new type of homes and schools is pointed out as being necessary.

The greatest enemy in the way, it is argued, is in our own selves. We are so very accustomed to thinking in the old fashion, in allowing matters to drift and in regarding the present political and economic systems of the world as permanent, that our mental attitudes and habits really constitute the greatest obstacle in the way. "Confusion of mind, and want of courage, want of curiosity and of imagination, indolence and spendthrift egotism, these are really the fundamental obstacles and these must be put down with a firm hand."

III

In the last few paragraphs we have tried to state briefly what Mr. Wells thinks on the subject under discussion. We would now offer a few criticisms.

First of all, we differ from him as regards the means whereby the proposed World Commonweal is sought to be attained. If it be thought that a World Commonweal of the type described is at all desirable, we have nothing to object so far as the necessary ideas are sought to be spread by discussion, propaganda and teaching.

But we do not believe that the exercise of force would play any great part or any part at all in the establishment of a World Commonweal in which individual liberty is expected to be protected and developed. For, whichever party or organization exercises the necessary force in order to bring it about would ultimately create not a World Commonweal but a world despotism. Besides, the facts of modern international life point to the fact that the last Great War, both because of its destructive character and because of the meagre profit it yielded to its victors, has proved a check on the tendencies for war even where they exist in a very aggressive form, and that the principle of persuasion and the force of public opinion are and have been exercising a much more powerful influence over the currents and cross-currents of modern international life than the principle of violence. Hence, we do not think that the establishment of a World Commonweal through violence is either possible or desirable. Whatever be our view as to the future economic and political constitution of the world, the best interests of the race demand that we should eschew the short-cut path of violence and resort to the more rational, and in the long run the more effective, course of teaching, discussion and propaganda.

We also differ as regards the end to be aimed at. The World Commonweal as described by him may be very attractive to many minds. It is also possible that at some time in distant future a World Commonweal somewhat on the lines conceived by him, may be a reality. But, considering the circumstances of to-day, and considering the present stage of man's development, a World Commonweal just at present would appear to be nothing but an idle dream. The Governments of the ad-

vanced nations apart, even the peoples under their care do not appear to be over-anxious for a World Commonweal or any form of a World State. Persons who have the breadth of vision and heart to regard the whole world as their country and every human being as their brother or sister, though on the increase, are still few and far between. Even among the most progressive of the world's nations the advancement of national interests seems to be a consideration, which in their eyes, would outweigh all other considerations. On the other side, the backward peoples of the earth are either living an uncultured and non-political life or are just passing through those phases of economic and political nationalism through which the advanced nations of Europe and America passed decades ago. On the one hand these backward peoples are keenly anxious to learn what they can from the advanced West but, on the other hand, they are acutely jealous of the achievements and extremely impatient of the domineering attitude of the advanced nations—the big brothers of the modern human family. These facts are not at all favourable pre-conditions for the establishment of a World Commonweal. Besides, once methods can be found, and it appears that satisfactory methods may in course of time be discovered for the pacific settlement of international disputes of all kinds, the development and sublimation of the spirit of nationalism—a no mean force in the ennoblement of the human race even in the present period—and the

establishment of nation-States the world over as the protector of national interests as also as the joint custodian of the interests of humanity at large would, at least for centuries to come, contribute to a diversity and enrichment of human life as no World State or World Commonweal possibly can in the present stage of man's development. These considerations lead us to think that modern mankind must, in the interests of the different sections as also of the entirety of the human race, concentrate on the evolution of a larger and larger number of nation-States mainly, but not entirely, of the type of the advanced nation-States of to-day. A World Commonweal can become a question of practical politics only when the advanced sections of mankind have genuine respect and love for the backward ones and that is possible only when the backward peoples have ceased to be backward, that is, when the nations of the world have, if at all, arrived at a more-or-less the same stage of development and do not differ from each in their characteristics so fundamentally as they do to-day. A World Commonweal established prematurely and forcibly by some sections over the rest can, in spite of the utmost benevolent intentions of the former, only result in the enslavement of the latter under the joint overlordship of the former. That may prove to be a blessing to the nations in the vanguard of humanity to-day, but it would prove a crushing blow and a killing dead weight for those who are yet learning the A B C of politics and economics.

APAROKSHANUBHUTI

BY SWAMI VIMUKTANANDA

त्यागः प्रपञ्चरूपस्य चिदात्मत्वावलोकनात् ।

त्यागो हि महतां पूज्यः सद्यो मोक्षमयो यतः ॥ १०६ ॥

चिदात्मत्वावलोकनात् Realizing the all-conscious Atman everywhere प्रपञ्चरूपस्य of the illusory universe त्यागः abandonment हि verily महतां पूज्यः honoured by the great त्यागः *tyāga* (renunciation) (अस्ति is) यतः because (अयं this) सद्यो मोक्षमयः of the nature of immediate liberation (अस्ति is).

106. The abandonment of the illusory universe by realizing the all-conscious Atman everywhere is the real *tyāga*¹ (renunciation) honoured by the great, since it is of the nature of immediate liberation.

[¹ *The real tyāga*—Some explain *tyāga* or renunciation as the giving up of all kinds of *karma* whether *sāstric* or mundane, and thus attaining to a state of inactivity. This, however, is far from what is really meant by *tyāga* which, in its deepest sense, is all positive. It is when one realizes the Atman everywhere and thus covets nothing, that one is said to have real renunciation. The *Sruti* also declares, “Envelope everything in this transitory world by God and thus maintain thyself by that renunciation, etc.” (*Isha. i.*.)]

यस्माद्वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।

यन्मौनं योगिभिर्गम्यं तद्भवेत् सर्वदा बुधः ॥ १०७ ॥

यस्मात् From which वाचः words (तत् that) अप्राप्य without reaching मनसा सह with the mind निवर्तन्ते turn back यत् which योगिभिः by the *yogins* गम्यं attainable तत् that मौनं *mauna* (quietude) बुधः the wise सर्वदा always (तत् that) भवेत् should abide in.

107. The wise should always abide in that *mauna*¹ wherefrom words² together with the mind turn back without reaching it, but which is attainable by the *yogins*.³

[¹ *That mauna*—It denotes here the Atman which is quiescent from the very beginning.]

[² *Wherefrom words, etc.*—It is a reference to the *Taittiriya Upanishad* (11.9).]

[³ *Attainable by the yogins*—because it is their very self.]

वाचो यस्मान्निवर्तन्ते तद्भक्तुं केन शक्यते ।

प्रपञ्चो यदि वक्तव्यः सोऽपि शब्दविवर्जितः ॥ १०८ ॥

इति वा तद्भवेन्मौनं सतां सहजसंज्ञितं ।

गिरा मौनं तु बालानां प्रयुक्तं ब्रह्मवादिभिः ॥ १०९ ॥

यस्मात् From which वाचः words निवर्तन्ते turn back केन by whom तत् that वक्तुं to speak of शक्यते is able यदि if प्रपञ्चः the phenomenal world वक्तव्यः to be spoken of सोऽपि even that शब्दविवर्जितः devoid of words वा or इति this (यत् which सतां among

the sages सहजसंज्ञितं known as *sahaja* तत् that मौनं *mauna* भवेत् is गिरा by (restraining) speech मौनं *mauna* तु on the other hand बालानां for the children ब्रह्मवादिभिः by the teachers of Brahman प्रयुक्तं 'ordained.

108-109. Who can speak of that (*i.e.* Brahman) whence words turn away? If the phenomenal world were to be spoken of, even that is beyond words.¹ This² also may be termed *mauna* known among the sages as *sahaja*.³ (The observance of) *mauna*, on the other hand, by restraining speech is ordained by the teachers of Brahman for the ignorant.

[¹ *Even that is beyond words*—Even this world, when one attempts to describe it, is found to be inexpressible, since it cannot be called either *sat* (existent) or *asat* (non-existent). If it were *sat* it would not disappear in deep sleep, and if *asat*, it would not at all appear now. Therefore this world is also *anirvachaniya*.]

[² *This*—*i.e.* the inexpressibility of Brahman and the world.]

[³ *Sahaja*—the state of perfect quiescence native to the Atman.]

आदावन्ते च मध्ये च जनो यस्मिन्न विद्यते ।

येनेदं सततं व्याप्तं स देशो विजनः स्मृतः ॥ ११० ॥

आदौ In the beginning अन्ते in the end च and मध्ये in the middle च and यस्मिन् in which जनः people (*i. e.* the universe) न not विद्यते exists येन by which इदं this (universe) सततं always व्याप्तं is pervaded सः that विजनः solitary देशः place स्मृतः is known.

110. That is known as the solitary place,¹ wherein the universe does not exist either in the beginning, the end, or in the middle, but whereby it is pervaded at all times.

[¹ *The solitary place*—Here it is Brahman that is indicated by "the solitary place," for Brahman alone is solitary since It admits of no second at any time.]

कलनात् सर्वभूतानां ब्रह्मादीनां निमेषतः ।

कालशब्देन निर्दिष्टो ह्यखण्डानन्दकोऽद्वयः ॥ १११ ॥

ब्रह्मादीनां From Brahmâ downwards सर्वभूतानां of all beings निमेषतः in the twinkling of an eye कलनात् on account of producing अखण्डानन्दकः undivided bliss अद्वयः non-dual कालशब्देन by the word *kâla* हि (expletive) निर्दिष्टः is denoted.

111. The non-dual (Brahman) that is bliss infinite is denoted by the word *kâla*, since it brings into existence,¹ in the twinkling of an eye, all beings from Brahmâ downwards.

[¹ *It brings into existence, etc.*—The whole creation is nothing but a *samkalpa* in the mind of God. When He has a desire for Creation the universe is produced in no time. A parallel case we find in our dream when the whole dream-world is brought into being in an instant by a mere wish.

Not only the power of creation but also that of preservation and destruction is meant.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

The present instalment of *The Master Speaks* is translated from the Bengali book—*Sri Ramakrishna-Kathamrita, Part V*. M. passed away while the book was in the press. Fortunately he had kept all the manuscripts ready for printing. The translation will be continued. . . . Quarrels among different religions and religious sects have often marred the peace of the world. This month's editorial is an attempt to show how all religions lead to the same goal . . . Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee is on the teaching staff of a college in Bengal. In the present article he has tried to indicate the line of thinking which led the early Hindu mind to the conception of a plurality of Gods. He does not, however, forget that the demand of reason leads to the conception of One God, of whom the plurality of Gods are self-manifestations. . . . Eric Hammond is an old contributor . . . Prof. Nicholas Roerich needs no introduction to our readers. His 'Banner of Peace' movement for the protection of treasures of art, etc., is gaining ground. . . . Dr. Maitra is head of the Department of Philosophy in the Benares Hindu University. *The Bhagavadgita's Message for the Modern World* was the subject of an address delivered at the University . . . The writer of *The Head or the Heart* is the vice-principal of a college in Assam. The article is taken from an address delivered at the Ramakrishna Mission, Sylhet, on the occasion of the birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. . . . *Different Religious Sects in Java* will form a chapter in the author's forthcoming

book—*Ancient Indian Colonies in the Far East, Vol. II*.

Mrs. Davidson is a student of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, New York. Her short article indicates how much care is taken in America for the education of children. Should one compare with that the state of affairs in India?

Our old readers may remember that Shiv Chandra Dutt has previously written many articles on the subject of economics.

RELIGION IN ASIA

Sometimes it is questioned if religion forms an essential part of life in Asia, at least if that is the indication of the past history. Rev. J. T. Sunderland in an article 'Asia's Place in World Civilization' gives a clear answer to this point. He says, ". . . our own religions, Christianity and Judaism come from Asia. When we are tempted to look down upon Asia and Asiatic peoples, it will do a little to take away our senseless arrogance and our groundless race pride if we call to mind that Moses, Isiah, David, Solomon and the other great characters of the Old Testament, and Paul and Jesus of the New Testament were Asiatics. Our Bible comes from Asia. Neither Europe nor America has produced any religion that has endured, nor any sacred book, nor any great religious prophet or teacher that the world places even in the same category with those of Asia."

The above facts, however, are only an answer to the racial pride of the Westerners; they will not help the

Asiatics in their present struggles of life except in so far as the past history of a race gives inspiration to face the present problems with courage and hope.

STRUGGLE AGAINST MORAL WEAKNESS

Many persons do not care for living a good, moral and pure life. They delight to live in the senses and never believe that there is any higher life. But the number of those also will not be small who greatly struggle to live a better life, but find the weakness of the flesh too great. They do not know what is the way out, and at times are plunged into a great despair. Some in their ignorance perform great asceticism and penances, but find them of no avail. For, simply the control of the body is of little value unless the mind is under control. And the mind will have many vagaries, unless it is lifted up to a higher plane. Many people do not understand this, and carry their zeal for asceticism to a ridiculous length. In this connection the *Universe*—a Christian weekly of London—gives some helpful suggestions. It says: "Such being the forces which lie wait for our souls, what ought we to do in the moment of temptation? St. Alphonsus, when asked by what means temptation should be fought, said: 'The first means is prayer, the second prayer, the third prayer; and if you ask me a thousand times, I should answer a thousand times the same thing.' Prayer, then, is the great weapon. . . .

"So much for supernatural weapons. We all know that we are bound to avoid all occasions of sin. In a similar way we can often avoid and escape temptation. If you are alone when it comes, then seek company; if at leisure then get busy with a book or occupation which diverts the mind. You will, of course, be tempted to do

nothing; perhaps it will be suggested to you that you should rely on prayer alone. Don't believe it! Use every natural means at your disposal; God gave you an intellect for this purpose, among others. . . .

"If you follow these counsels you will see that there is no exaggeration in St. Paul's words: God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able."

But why is it that even a man with sincere desire to improve himself is not free from trials and tribulations which at times make him helpless? With regard to this Thomas A Kempis would say, "Fire proves iron, so temptation tests a just man." Moral trials inevitably point out how much faith in God one has got. For, with perfect faith in the saving powers of God one will remain unperturbed under any circumstances.

Free from all moral weakness will be only he who has realized God. And that man also is safe who is consumed with a longing to realize Him. One who goes one step towards the East will be so much away from the West. One will be free from sense-attractions to the extent one's mind is given to God—that is what all saints and sages have declared.

UNCONSCIOUS VICTIMS OF EDUCATION

Illiteracy in India is appalling. Some are of opinion that unless there is compulsory education illiteracy in India will not be removed even in the distant future. It is true that every effort must be made to spread education among the masses. But we must make a distinction between the education that educates and the education that does not educate. Education that does more harm than good is no education at all.

But unfortunately the present system of theoretical education puts many rather to great disadvantages. The educated people suffer more from pecuniary difficulties, because their wants have greatly multiplied. And unemployment among them is greater. Similar phenomenon can be witnessed even amongst those who have received only the primary education. Very often it can be found that those who have passed even a few years in a primary school do not like to go back to their ancestral occupation—they seek some ‘service.’ And as service is difficult to secure nowadays, they pass their time idly as a burden to the family. Not that education should be stopped to avert this evil, but a great care should be taken to find out what type of education will do them real good. The purpose of education is to make one fitter for the struggle of life, but if it makes one worse, what is the use of receiving education only in name? In this connection Mahatma Gandhi gives some very useful suggestions. With respect to the education of Harijan boys he lays some plans which if carried out will be of practical help to them in life. And thereby the boys will learn in a short time much more than what the boys do in ordinary schools. He says :

“The first daily lesson, therefore, will for some time consist of applied hygiene and sanitation and simple needle-work. I should use no books probably for the whole first year . . . The teacher will not give discourses but adopt the conversational method. Through conversations he will give his pupils progressive instruction in history, geography and arithmetic. History will begin with that of our own times, and then, too, of events and persons nearest us, and geography will begin with that of the neighbourhood

of the school. Arithmetic will begin with the sums applicable to the pupils’ homes It is criminal to stunt the mental growth of a child by letting him know as much only as he can get through a book he can incoherently read in a year. We do not realize that, if a child was cut off from the home life and was merely doomed to the school, he would be a perfect dunce for several years. He picks up information and language unconsciously through his home, not in the school-room. Hence do we experience the immense difference between pupils belonging to cultured homes, and those belonging to uncouth homes, and those no homes in reality.”

We wish that at least the *principles* underlying the above scheme be followed in a wide scale.

AN AUSTRIAN ABOUT RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA

We find the following in a letter written by Mrs. N. C. Vetter of Vienna, wife of President Dr. Vetter, to Mrs. Kumudini Basu (Calcutta) :

“Through Mr. S. C. Bose we got the works of Vivekananda for our National Library. Both my husband and I have been studying them in parts, but the outstanding personalities of Vivekananda and Ramakrishna are so little known in our country that President Vetter thought it his duty to speak about them publicly. He intends giving a lecture about the lives of these extraordinary men after Christmas at the Hindusthan Academical Association of Vienna. We often meet the members of this Association, and have arranged with them for a social gathering in two days, when a lecture on India will be held with lantern slides. So you see, we have quite an active life in that

Indian Circle, and Vienna is more active to form new friendship with

India and Indians" (*The Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, February 10, 1934).

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE WORK PROMETHEAN. INTERPRETATIONS AND APPLICATION OF SHELLEY'S POETRY. By James H. Cousins, D.Litt. Published by Messrs. Ganesh and Co., Madras. 122 pp. Price Re. 1-8.

This little book is not merely or not at all a literary criticism of Shelley's poetry. It is an attempt to bring out the central theme or the underlying philosophy of the thought, will, life in general and society. As such those who would approach the book to find a fine specimen of literary criticism are sure to be disappointed. This is not because Shelley's works lack in literary beauty or Dr. Cousins is incapable of holding it before his readers, but because both the poet and the critic are dealers in more precious gems,—they are concerned with things of abiding values.

It is increasingly brought home to us that the best minds of the West—its poets, philosophers, saints and prophets—are better understood by Indians or men truly acquainted with the Indian culture than even by their countrymen, the secret being that these best minds always see synthetic visions which are represented by the Indian culture. This is the case with Shelley as with many others.

We need hardly say that Dr. Cousins has eminently succeeded in the attempt, thanks to this very synthetic vision which his own original and other writings never fail to impress upon his readers. His philosophical penetration and charmingly expressive phrases and sentences, with which the whole book is profusely strewn, are the two other contributory causes of his success. This little book may lead some to re-read Shelley.

We are not concerned with what other critics of Shelley have or have not said about him. Suffice it to say that his present critic has fully established what he means to prove, viz. that *Prometheus Unbound* is not a "romantic love affair" but is "the symbolical expression, in

terms of human relationships, of the mystery of the cosmic duality-in-unity of the two aspects, life and form, of one Being and one process" that "operate in the atom as well as in the stellar sphere"; that "Shelley's ideal for humanity" is "not a mere elevation of unregenerate life through accumulations of substance and external capacity" but the release and perfect unfoldment of his higher self which is "eternal love" working through and ultimately rising above the necessary tortures and "limitations of temporal Law"; that in religion Shelley "is transcendentalist as well as pantheist," that according to him, "the 'plastic stress' of the 'one Spirit' is felt within all nature and humanity' sweeping 'through the dull, dense world' of matter, bursting 'in its beauty and its might from trees and beasts and men' and finding its culmination in 'the heaven's light,' that his God is both 'almighty' and 'merciful'—'the Power which wields the world, wields it 'with never wearied love'—a love which 'is the very essence of universal Life.'"

Human life, individual and social, in all its varied expressions in arts, literature and philosophy, in all its psychological aspects of thinking, feeling and willing, in all its relations and dealings between nations and sexes, is but the expression of this Eternal Love working out through the limitations of time and space and hence of laws and their 'brokennesses' at last emerging into Liberty, Beauty and Power which are altogether different from what we ordinarily mean by them. This sublime theme of the poet has been ably indicated by our critic.

S. S.

COUNTER ATTACK FROM THE EAST.
By C. E. M. Joad. *George Allen and Unwin Ltd., Museum Street, London.* 269 pp. Price 7s. 6d. net.

The author in this volume tries to bring out some of the salient features of Prof.

Radhakrishnan's philosophical ideas expressed in his Hibbert Lectures, *An Idealist View of Life*, and other works like *The Hindu View of Life*, *The Religion We Need* and *Kalki*. In Radhakrishnan he has found the ancient wisdom of the East along with the vitality of the West; so the Hindu sage is a liaison officer connecting the East with the West for the good of humanity.

According to Radhakrishnan the Universe is a spiritual unity. The real is an Absolute—perfect, changeless and eternal. The cosmic process of change and evolution is not the Absolute, but an aspect of it only. It is one of the many possibilities which the Absolute has chosen to realize itself. God is a self-determining principle manifested in a temporal development which includes nature and man. Reason demands the Absolute and experience, God. A man is bound by his heredity and environment, but he is free as a spirit. Reality is known by intuition. Moral life leads to a spiritual life which brings final emancipation in harmony with the rest.

Permanence and change, intuition and intellect, freedom and determination, personality and salvation find an equal place in the system of Radhakrishnan. An Eastern mind thinks that he has put Western spirit in a Western frame-work, while a Western mind thinks that he has put Western spirit in an Eastern bottle. In fact his notions are taken from both. It is really a synthesis of what appeals to a follower of Ramanuja and an admirer of Hegel. The world and everything in the world must be true, it changes,—nay, evolves, a process by which the Absolute realizes itself.

It should be noted here that an idea that appeals to a modern mind need not be necessarily true and an eclectic effort does not prove to be a strong and sure method. Specially in a system where intuition plays such an important part, the weaving of concepts does not appear to be quite consistent.

The chapter on intuition is the special feature of the book. The analysis and treatment of the subject is lucid and illuminating. Intuition is a genuine revelation of truth and reality. It is the instrument of the philosopher and mystic for knowing the real. It is direct, and gives immediate certitude, it involves a jump to a new level of apprehension. "We invent by intuition, though we prove by logic." Intuition is not to be confused with instinct or with

the libido of the Psycho-analysts. There is no definite gap between intuitive and intellectual activity; intuition and intellect are not separate and distinct faculties. Both of them belong to the Self, but while the former involves a specialized part, the latter employs the whole Self. Their activities are interdependent.

Here we do not follow the relation between intuition and intellect. If it is the view of Radhakrishnan himself we have nothing to say, but if it is represented as the Hindu view, we beg to differ. Intellect is purely material, mind is a subtle form of matter, while intuition is supra-mental, it begins where the material or mental plane ends. They are quite different in nature. Does it then destroy the unity of the world? No. Spirit and matter, Self and not-Self, Atma and Anatma or Purusha and Prakriti are synthesized in a higher principle called Brahma or the Absolute, the real nature of which cannot be brought under any mental category; but this much can be conceived that it can unite both the opposing elements. This notion has been developed in the principle of *Purushottama* in the Geeta. Bergson is perfectly right when he says that intellect does not give us metaphysical truth. Reality is fully distorted by mind, hence arises the necessity of intuition. They vary not in degree, but in kind. The idea that intellect gives partial truth is also wrong, for there is nothing like half-truth, a thing is either true or not-true.

Mr. Joad on page 118 tries to prove that the Absolute contains or comprises error, by a piece of argument which is quite illogical. He seems to argue this way. Things appear to be many; if they are really so, the Absolute ceases to be what it is, and if the very idea is an error, the error itself is real; therefore the Absolute contains error. Here the writer has confused a Psychological error with a metaphysical error. An error of mind cannot be superimposed on the Absolute. Errors result from a partial view, there is nothing like error or illusion from the Absolute or Eternal standpoint.

The counter-attack is made on those Western thinkers who believe that Indian philosophy should be rejected as dogmatic or superficial.

Many ideas in this book are thought-provoking. It is likely to clear much misunderstanding about Eastern thought, so it is strongly recommended for a serious study.

U. C. DATTA

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION

We are requested to announce that Swami Akhandananda has been elected President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Belur, in place of the late Swami Shivananda, and Swami Virajananda the Secretary of the Math and Mission in place of Swami Suddhananda.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MYLAPORE, MADRAS

REPORT FOR 1933

The institution is more than a mere *Students' Home*, its management conducting, over and above *the Home*, (i) a Residential High School, (ii) an Industrial School, and (iii) a Branch School at Mambalam teaching up to Form IV.

THE HOME:—*The objects of the Home* are to provide a home to poor and deserving boys giving them free board and lodging and to educate them under the Gurukula system where the school and the home are parts of one organic life. The total strength at the end of the year was 188 comprising students of Lower Secondary, High School, Industrial School, School of Arts, and College. Examination results were satisfactory. Two students of the Industrial School completed the final year course in Mechanical Engineering. Two of the old boys secured First Class First in Philosophy and Physics.

About a third of the students were in receipt of scholarships and fee concessions. A very important aspect of the life in the Home is the Tutorial Guidance. For this purpose the pupils are divided into convenient groups or wards under the guidance and control of a ward-master, care being taken to put only boys of almost the same age together. In order further to instil into them the habits of self-reliance and service, the major portion of the household work and management is vested in the hands of the boys themselves.

The pupils of the Lower Secondary and High School classes had drill and group games in the morning on alternate days. A select group of boys also practised Yoga Asana exercises and Dandals. Playing games

for an hour in the evening being compulsory, all the boys took part in one or other of the major games, hockey, football, or badminton.

All the High School boys did regular garden work for half an hour daily and maintained a flower garden and two kitchen gardens. The flower garden, besides adding to the beauty of the place, supplied flowers for daily worship.

The health of the boarders was satisfactory during the year, there being no cases of serious illness. All minor ailments and seasonal colds and fevers were treated by the visiting doctor in charge.

The reading room with a number of current journals, and the large and well-furnished library provided ample scope for intellectual recreation. 282 books were added to the general library during the year, bringing up the total to 6,780 volumes. There were 1,350 issues, indicating a fairly good use of the library. The High School and the Industrial School have separate libraries of their own, which too were well used.

Religious classes are held both in the morning and in the evening, the nature of instruction varying according to the mental development of the pupils. The morning classes are mainly devoted to the chanting and memorizing of the Gita and the Upanishads. The presentation of high ideals of life with apt illustrations from the Puranas and the Epics forms the subject-matter of the evening classes for the juniors. The course of instruction for the senior boys comprises the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, the Gita and a comparative study of religions.

Boys with an innate taste for music were selected for music classes which were regularly held twice a week. There were 7 students in the senior class and 11 in the junior.

Some of the senior students were members or associates of the "Thondar Sangam" organized by Swami Rudrananda to carry on work in slums, conducting night schools, organizing thrift societies, delivering lantern lectures, etc.

The boys who stayed in the Home for the summer vacation, in addition to their usual duties, whitewashed the whole buildings and

repainted the doors and windows in a neat and careful manner.

The Home Day celebration served to discover the talents of each student through the School Exhibition, sports and competitions. All the Hindu festivals including the Navaratri and the birthdays of saints and sages were celebrated in a fitting manner through the co-operation of friends and sympathizers.

THE RESIDENTIAL HIGH SCHOOL:—The Departmental syllabuses were mainly followed and the optional subjects open to the boys of V & VI Forms were History, Mathematics and Physics. Tamil continued to be the medium of instruction in History, Geography and Elementary Mathematics, and the students answered these papers in Tamil at the Public Examination. *The Literary Society* of the boys continued to do useful work by holding frequent discussions, reading essays and arranging for talks by outsiders. In connection with *the Education Week celebrations* the boys won prizes in English elocution and Tamil oratory. *The manuscript magazines* in English, Tamil and Arts, conducted by the boys, continued to appear quarterly. *The Boys' Court* did its work to the entire satisfaction of the students and the management, settling all matters of petty dispute and indiscipline amongst the boys. In the *manual training classes* the subjects taught were carpentry, weaving and rattan work. Every Form devoted two afternoons a week for manual training.

THE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL:—The strength of the School was 24 in December, 1933. Five students appeared for the Government Technical Examination in Drawing and four came out successful. Technological certificates countersigned by the Inspector of Industrial Schools were issued to all the six students who completed successfully their five years' course. The school manufactured all the steel structural work needed for an aerodrome and also had them erected at Chettinad. A polishing lathe for the School of Arts was made and supplied to them on their order. The workshop machinery is being overhauled and renovated wherever necessary. All the necessary materials needed for the above were fabricated in the workshop itself. A half-ton capacity cupola has been designed and erected in the workshop. In anticipation of Government sanction, the syllabus for the *automobile engineering* course has been put in operation

from the beginning of the school year. Necessary arrangements are being made to equip the new automobile workshop, the structural portion of which was completed last year.

THE MAMBALAM BRANCH SCHOOL:—The Branch School at Mambalam has completed the first year of its existence. It was started at the earnest request of the residents of the locality who subscribed towards the initial expenses and also helped towards the equipment of the School. The number on the rolls which was under 200 in the beginning rose to nearly 300. With the permission of the Department, the management opened Form IV which now contains more than 40 pupils. Last year's total receipts of this Branch School amounted to Rs. 5,984-4-7 and the expenses to Rs. 5,565-8-10, leaving a balance of Rs. 418-11-9. The Branch keeps a separate account of its own.

FINANCE OF THE HOME:—The Home's financial position is however far from being satisfactory. Its total receipts for the year were Rs. 36,578-13-0 and the expenditure Rs. 38,305-13-10, resulting in a deficit of Rs. 1,727-0-10. We hope the public will appreciate the value of the institution and remove its financial difficulties.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION IN NEW YORK

In celebration of the seventy-second birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, a special service was held in the chapel of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York, on Sunday, January 14, 1934. The altar was covered with a large number of flowers brought by the students and friends of the Center, and a large portrait of the Swami was decorated with a beautiful garland made by several of the devotees. A violinist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, playing under Leopold Stokowski, came from that city specially for this occasion to furnish the music. The hall was filled to capacity. Swami Nikhilananda, leader of the Center, addressed the congregation on, "Swami Vivekananda and Modern Problems." Pandit Shyama Shankar, father of Mr. Uday Shankar, the famous dancer, also gave a few words of greeting after the sermon. At the close of the service, Hindu sweets were served to all present.

The following Sunday, a dinner was held in further celebration of the Swami's birthday, at which eighty guests were present. Dr. William Norman Guthrie, Rector of St.

Mark's-in-the-Bouwerie, Dr. Arthur Christy of Columbia University, Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukherji, the Hindu author, and Swami Nikhilananda addressed the guests. A spirit of peace and harmony prevailed on both these occasions.

EARTHQUAKE RELIEF IN BIHAR

The Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission, writes on 15-3-34:—

We have already informed the public that the Ramkrishna Mission is conducting Earthquake Relief work in four districts of Bihar, viz., Monghyr, Muzaffarpur, Champaran (Motihari) and Darbhanga (Laheria Sarai). The work is not confined to towns but has been extended to rural areas.

Up till now our activities lay in the direction of

- (1) Distribution of food-stuffs.
- (2) Medical aid.
- (3) Distribution of cloth, blankets, utensils etc.
- (4) Construction of temporary huts and supply of materials.
- (5) Clearing of wells.
- (6) Purchase of housing materials.

So far we have spent about Rs. 40,000 for the various items of relief mentioned above, and we are now short of funds. Efficiency with economy is our motto. How far we have succeeded in carrying this in practice, may be already known to all those who have seen our work in the affected areas.

The main task before us is the construction of semi-permanent houses in urban areas with roofs of corrugated iron or country tiles (Khapra) according to circumstances. This work has already been taken up and will require over Rs. 50,000 at the least computation.

Arrangements are being made at Monghyr, Muzaffarpur, Sitamarhi, Motihari, Laheria Sarai and Samastipur for constructing semi-permanent houses for those who do not possess land of their own. Suitable sites have been made available through the government and the local people for this

purpose. During the period under report 30 such houses have been constructed for those who have their own plots of land and some more are under construction.

From this month distribution of food-stuffs, etc., has been restricted to the suffering middle-class families only.

At Gangeya relief activities extended over 15 villages. During this period 57 mds. 38 srs. of rice were distributed among 967 persons belonging to 390 families. 350 blankets, 58 rugs, 710 new cloths, 400 old cloths, 21 carpets, 215 new dress, 10 old dress, 132 utensils, 6 lanterns, 610 yds. hessian were distributed and 5 wells were cleared. Bamboos and straw for hut construction were supplied to 207 families.

The activities of the Pupri centre covers 30 villages. From the 5th March to the 12th March 72 mds. 20 srs. of rice, 11 mds. 35 srs. of dal were given to 977 persons of 368 families. 60 blankets, 55 rugs, 219 new cloths, 129 old cloths, 148 new dress, 278 old dress, 97 utensils were distributed. Pecuniary help for constructing 145 huts was given.

The activities of the Tetaria centre extend over 23 villages. From the 4th March to the 11th March 97 mds. 34 srs. 8 ch. of rice were given to 822 people of 253 families, 215 blankets, 268 new cloths, 200 old cloths and 595 yds. of hessian were distributed.

The activities of the Jaynagar centre covered 10 villages. So far 4 wells were cleared and materials for hut construction were given to 142 families.

The need for relief is considerably more than what we can afford with the limited resources at our disposal. Contributions in aid of the sufferers will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses:—

- (1) The President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O., Dt. Howrah.
- (2) Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.
- (3) The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Calcutta.