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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF SISTER NIVEDITA

HOUSE OF RETREAT OF THE SISTERS OF BETHANY, LONDON

October 3, 1901.

Miss—

The inscription which heads this letter will sufficiently explain to you where I am, for a week's retreat.

This is an Anglican, not a Roman, sisterhood and so everything is in English instead of Latin, and there is a certain reserve and self-restraint from great emotion, which is most beautiful to me. And yet the whole life is like a great office of prayer, so that the very stones of the walls seem full of the beautiful influence of peace and the thought of God.

The Guest Mistress tells me that the Community is one of the strictest in the matter of devotion and it greatly delights me to find that it by no means exceeds the Holy Mother's round of devotions. They begin at 6 o'clock and the last service of the day ends at half past nine, and when all the services are counted up it makes about 4½ hours of public worship daily, besides, of course, private prayer.

Then I find that in the matter of food they are a great deal more practical than one would have dreamt of as desirable. They say work and meditation cannot be done on nothing and I dare not send a meal away, for one is immediately hunted down for not eating enough ! I do not imagine that they are as wise as the East on this point. Still it is most interesting.

And then if I could only show you the cleanliness and order ! It is marvellous ! Floors, china, walls, windows, all *shine* as if the very soul of

enthusiasm had been at work on them. How do they achieve this? There seems to be nine to twelve young servants in the house. So there is abundance of help, but they are apparently different from any servants that one ever knew. Neither palaces nor workhouses have I ever seen that could compare with this.

Do you think that I do not know that the great message of Swami is unique? That I could never forget, but beyond that I do not understand. For all this year I have been going through experiences that lie far outside his course for me.

I have held so hard to Sri Ramakrishna that while that if at any point I have been wrong, I can only count it His fault, not mine. And yet it may well be that the place it is all to take in my future life is to be that of warning or even sorrow. . . . I cannot tell. It is not necessary to understand. It is only necessary to be faithful and I have done my best.

It has seemed to me a part of all this that I have had these new views of India and that I could not otherwise have reached them, though, again, how they are to be made widely available I cannot even guess, nor indeed if they are ever to be of any consequence at all.

And I am dying down into a feeling of greater quiet than I have ever had. Is this a part of the preparation? It may be that it marks the decline of efficiency beyond the climax but again, if so, it is Mother's fault. I did my best: she takes what she will.

Only your friend is not right about India's requiring foreign rule. Does the history of India bear the statement out? Of course not. Even as written by her enemies it shows that India, as large as Western Europe, never suffered from such disorder. Think of the wars between France and England alone, between England and Spain, between Germany and France, of the French Revolution; of the wars of Succession in every country: of the brigand raids of large communities into small! Nothing is so extraordinary in India as the combination of intense religious conviction with marvellous political peacefulness, when one takes a large enough view of the situation, to get the facts at a true focus. The only thing that never is written is good *history*, at least about India, that I do understand.

Mr. Tata told me that when Swami was in Japan everyone who saw him was immediately struck by his likeness to Buddha.

Have you thought what that great legend of the Dalai-Lama really means? How it means that one cannot pass onward to the Altar while one child stands begging for bread with tears in the way? And have you realized how that *looks* like turning from God, when you are really only turning from your own salvation and holiness? And have you thought how the world only imagined that it cried for *daily* bread and only the great soul of the Buddha knew that it was the bread of *Life*?

Oh I see that child always in the way, and his need is dearer to me than any realization. I will not go onwards till he goes before me, but do not think for one moment that I forget that what he really wants is the Sacramental Presence.

As I watch this marvellous round of brooding love here, I feel what would I not give to establish such an engine of intensest force and dedicate it to the Freedom of Man. I see no details yet, but someday I hope it may come to me to write another little book like *Kâli* and call it Freedom.

I say nothing of plans, because as yet they seem so doubtful. I want to get to Swami and the Holy Mother. All my wishes are summed up in that one longing. So meanwhile, as I cannot settle, but must wait to be shown, I do my best to write and write and thus accomplish the immediate duty. Love.

INDIAN INDIVIDUALISM AND THE MODERN AGE

BY THE EDITOR

I

Individualism is as a rule associated with the theory of government according to which the welfare of the State consists in the well-being and free initiative of the constituent members. It is often contrasted with collectivism and various forms of socialism which subordinate the individual to the community. It originated from the doctrine of *laissez faire* that arose in the eighteenth century. The doctrine was based on both economic and political propositions. In the political field, it assumed the garb of individualism under its powerful exponent, Jeremy Bentham whose philosophy supported by other thinkers practically swayed the political institutions of the West in the nineteenth century. His arguments were: "Since every person is the best judge of his own happiness, the more free he is left in his search for its attainment, the more certain he is to reach it; and since each man is equally entitled to happiness, all artificial barriers imposed by government in the way of its realization are necessarily evil." The philosophy reached its climax and exerted its influence till about 1870 A. D.

The principle based as it was on economic and political grounds afforded facilities for unrestricted competition to individuals. It made an individual vigorous in the struggle for existence and also highly efficient in conducting affairs of the world. The

individual initiative and enterprise were left unhampered to the extent of the security of the State. But on the other hand, the individual instincts of self-preservation, acquisitiveness, combativeness, and desire for power and adulation grew so much unrestrained that they became extremely selfish and dominant. The destructive instincts of individuals reigned supreme and people more or less lost the qualities of altruistic and constructive character. A huge number of inequalities, tyrannies, dominations, and injustices made the vast majority of mankind unhappy and miserable. As events went on, terrible reactions set in. They gave birth to a number of social philosophies to counteract the evils of individualism. The value of individualism as giving stimulation to production and invention was ruthlessly criticized because of its wastes and failures in bringing about an equitable distribution of the product. The comforts and luxuries of a handful of individuals at the expense of the teeming millions could not be tolerated any longer. Thus, the rightfulness of individualism could not rest on economic considerations. It lost its ground in the political sphere also, because of the inequalities in the distribution of the sacrifices of war and those in matters of justice, liberty, and opportunity to the overwhelming majority. So, it is obvious that individualism had to die a natural death

even in the spheres in which it was born. It might have proved a safe avenue to human progress, had it possessed a tempering principle behind. A tempering principle is possible only where it admits of a wide philosophy of life and a broad understanding of the spiritual unity of every man. Herbert Hoover, a writer on *American Individualism*, observes while dwelling upon the spiritual phases on which a higher kind of individualism should depend as great motive forces behind the principle: "Our social and economic system cannot march toward better days unless it is inspired by things of the spirit. It is here that the higher purposes of individualism must find their sustenance. Men do not live by bread alone. Nor is individualism merely a stimulus to production and the road to liberty; it alone admits the universal inspiration of every human soul. I may repeat that the divine spark does not lie in agreements, in organizations, in institutions, in masses or in groups. Spirituality with its faith, its hope, its charity, can be increased by each individual's own effort. And in proportion as each individual increases his own store of spirituality, in that proportion increases the idealism of democracy." Thus it is clear that the doctrine of individualism if it be taken not in its restricted sense but in the sense of an all-round development of human personality can add to the progress of man, both individual and collective.

In India, we do not find the type of individualism that is rampant in the West but a type which is distinctly Indian and in which an individualist could be an altruist with a cosmopolitan outlook in heart and mind. The social and religious organizations of India always discourage and prevent the growth of individualism of the type of the West. We shall now trace the deve-

lopment of Indian individualism in and through the social and religious institutions of India.

II

The cardinal doctrine of Indian philosophy is that all men are not only equal in essence but divine at the same time. It has so much permeated the consciousness of the Indian masses that in spite of various distinctions of caste, creed, and colour they never give up the philosophical basis of their outlook. The unity of the Self so much stressed in the *Upanishads*, the highest of the Indian scriptures, has made a permanent impression on Indian character, manners, and institutions. This has really laid the foundation of Hindu ethics, which consists in the development of human personality. The manifestation of the Self is regarded as the only criterion of a man's moral perfection. The ideal of ethical pursuits is to transcend the limits of ethics and to lead the soul from an ego-centric sphere to a vast, cosmopolitan realm of thought and activity. The moral sense of the Hindu law-givers is keen to point out its limitations and in their books we find many passages and instances in which a smaller good has been condemned in place of a greater and legitimate one, and emphasis has always been laid on the principle of self-manifestation more than on conformity to rigid and artificial injunctions. In the *Mâhâbhârata* we find passages like the following:

"If by slaying a single individual a family may be saved, or if by slaying a single family the whole kingdom may be saved, such an act of slaughter is no transgression. Sin, O King, sometimes assumes the form of virtue, and virtue sometimes assumes the form of sin. They, however, that are learned, know which is which." Again, "The friends of humanity, by doing even acts of

cruelty, have attained to high heaven. Righteous Kshatriyas, by doing even sinful acts, have attained to blissful ends. The Brâhmana, by taking up arms on three occasions, does not incur sin, namely, for defending himself, for compelling men of other castes to do their duties, and for chastizing robbers." The idea is very popular among the Hindus that one has to sacrifice the individual for the family, the family for the community, the community for the country, and the whole world for the soul. The Hindu ethics is thus made subservient to the demands of the spirit.

In practical religion, the Hindus do not enforce joint worship either at home or in the temples and monasteries. Every man must practise religion according to his beliefs, temperament, and inclinations. Here also the expansion of the individual self has been stressed more than the mechanical observance of forms and dogmas. This is why we find in Hinduism an apparent medley of ceremonies, rituals, images, scriptures, doctrines, and modes of worship or contemplation of the Divine. Sir S. Radhakrishnan rightly points out in his *Hindu View of Life*: "Hinduism requires every man to think steadily on the life's mystery until he reaches the highest revelation. While the lesser forms are tolerated in the interests of those who cannot suddenly transcend them, there is all through an insistence on the larger idea and purer worship. Hinduism does not believe in forcing up the pace of development. When we give our higher experiences to those who cannot understand them we are in the position of those who can see and who impart the visual impressions to those born blind. Unless we open their spiritual eyes, they cannot see what the seers relate. So while Hinduism does not interfere with one's natural way of

thinking, which depends on his moral and intellectual gifts, education and environment, it furthers his spiritual growth by lending a sympathetic and helping hand wherever he stands. While Hinduism hates the compulsory conscription of men into the house of truth, it insists on the development of one's intellectual conscience and sensibility to truth." Here we find the necessity of individualism in religion, although we appreciate much the need of congregational worship, some forms of which are often seen in Hindu Kirtans, Kathakatâs, Pujâs, and various religious festivals of India.

Then again, Indian charity is not organized and much criticism is levelled against it on that ground. The principle behind Indian charity is to elevate one's soul by coming face to face with actual sufferings and trying to alleviate them. The giver in this case wants to be benefited by not looking at the needy in the eyes of mercy but in the spirit of feeling oneness with them. This is the reason why we find in India the dearth of alms-houses, and we find few people directing banks to pay monthly sums to the poor and the destitute. It is said that Sir N. G. Chandavarkar once asked a band of Sannyâsins in India why they do not take to work and have their wages, and the significant reply the former received was that their duty was to keep alive the sentiments of charity in the country. This is, of course, no plea for increasing the number of beggars in India. This is only to point out the spirit of charity as prevalent in India. Nor do we depreciate the work and need of charitable institutions either in India or in the West. Everybody knows that in Western countries there is no dearth of private charity side by side with their

big charitable institutions. The fact is that charity as a principle of widening one's own self should be a sacred and religious affair, as such the more it is done in actual contact with the living truth, the better for the individual and society too. This is why in Hindu households men and women like to feed and serve the poor personally instead of donating a sum for the purpose and thus depriving themselves of worshipping God in those forms or realizing the Self that pervades all, by means of that service.

III

The Hindu systems of caste and the joint family appear at the first sight to have suppressed the natural growth of an individual. But the principles behind the *original plan* were sober and sound, they minimized the dangers of competition in society and family, and prevented the growth of economic individualism as found in the West. The reflections on caste as made by A. H. Benton, I.C.S. in his recent writing on the subject give us an idea of what an English officer thinks of the services rendered by the caste system: "It undoubtedly gives great stability not only to the Hindu population but to the country as a whole, which must be affected by the staid character of the principal mass. It adds greatly to the general contentment. Every one is pleased with and proud of his caste; no one would part with it on any account. It may well be said that no man in any country has more friends in need than Indian castemen. All the men of the caste, it may be considered, are their brothers' keepers. This is a most important matter in a country so widely extended and with such an immense population as India. . . . Caste rules generally pay fair regard to good morals and some are specially

designed to promote morality." The exclusive claims and privileges reigning in the subsequent period of the original caste system have divided the Hindus, one group from another and the system has ceased to function properly. But if the system can be restored on its original plan, India may save herself from the cramping influences of the present-day economic organizations. The original plan was to raise the lower classes up to the level of the higher. Therefore the system was at the very beginning intended for helping the different members of the social organism. Unfortunately for India, the system has now degenerated into a hotbed of quarrelling castes.

The joint family system was also conceived to aid and support old and infirm persons, orphans, widows, and other dependants of similar nature. The aim was to develop the honour and prestige of a family by individual character and resources. As a result of the system, many good families flourished and they elevated the community to which they belonged. But now the system has dwindled in recent times due to modern competition.

Then there is the conception of the four stages of life, namely, the life of a student aspiring after character by means of discipline under an expert guide; secondly, the period of work under a regulated, married life with all the duties of a householder; thirdly, the period of retreat in a forest with contemplation of the Divine and relaxation of the social bonds; fourthly, the period of renunciation solely devoted to individual freedom and service of man. These were considered to be so many path-ways leading an individual to the ultimate goal of life. The pursuits of Dharma or duty, Artha or wealth, Kâma or desire for material

happiness were recognized as legitimate human endeavours. So we see that no aspect of individual life was set at naught, although the aim of all was to secure collective good through personal and altruistic motives.

IV

The course open to India at the critical period of the conflicting tendencies of the modern times is to keep close to her age-long traditions of individualism peculiar to the genius and talents of the Indian people. At the same time she must adapt herself to the new environments by assimilating the good points of the Western nations. The good points are concerted action for a noble cause, the co-ordination of wills for the same, and the power of organized efforts for the freedom of individuals, both secular and spiritual. The Indians need badly to imbibe the spirit of collaboration in these days when nothing big on a large scale can be done without it.

The spirit of acting concertedly for the common good of all was not absent even in the hoary past of India. In the *Rigveda*, X. 191—3, 4 we come across some lines of a memorable verse which bear out the statement: "Common be your prayer; common be your end; common be your purpose; common be your deliberation. Common be your desires; unified be your hearts; united be your intentions; perfect be the union amongst you." We have mentioned before that the principle behind Indian individualism always aims at the good of the world side by side with the attainment of one's ultimate goal of life. To carry out the principle in these days, the Indians must learn to combine in all organized efforts that are directed towards the well-being of society.

The ancient institutions of caste, village community, and joint family

were based on the substitution of co-operation for competition. They have now been seriously affected by the competitive principle of the modern age and so they have ceased to serve the useful purposes that they did before. It is now the duty of the Indians to reform and adapt them to their present-day needs. The reformation of the institutions is only possible if the people of India can give up their age-long attitude of drift and despair and seriously organize themselves in the work of regenerating their good and noble institutions. Social and national drawbacks can hardly be removed by the efforts of a few individuals. It is foolish to think that things will right themselves without concerted action and adventure. "Therefore to make a great future India", said Swami Vivekananda, "the whole secret lies in organization, accumulation of power, co-ordination of wills. Already before my mind rises one of the marvellous verses of the Atharva Veda Samhita which says, 'Be thou all of one mind, be thou all of one thought, for in the days of yore, the gods being of one mind were enabled to receive oblations. That the gods can be worshipped by men is because they are of one mind.' Being of one mind is the secret of society. And the more you go on fighting and quarrelling about all trivialities such as 'Dravidian' and 'Aryan', and the question of Brâhmans and non-Brâhmans and all that, the further you are off from that accumulation of energy and power which is going to make the future India. For mark you, the future India depends entirely upon that. This is the secret, accumulation of will-power, co-ordination, bringing them all, as it were, into one focus."

India can stand on her own legs, if she can organize her own institutions after adapting them to the needs of the modern age. The principle of Indian

individualism must be combined with the modern spirit of organized motive and action to the ultimate good and all-

round development of individual life and at the same time to the progress of human society as a whole.

KNOWLEDGE AND LIBERATION

BY PROF. NALINI KANTA BRAHMA, M.A., P.R.S., PH.D.

According to the Vedânta, Knowledge dispels Ignorance and removes the three-fold miseries of life that have their source in Ignorance. Such Knowledge results from the hearing of the sacred texts and from ratiocination and meditation on those texts. It is seen, however, that many learned men who have committed to memory the sacred texts through constant practice and have spent their entire lives in acquiring the meaning and significance of those texts through reasoning and argumentation fail to attain that Knowledge which emancipates man from the clutches of misery. A serious problem now arises : How can it be held that knowledge resulting from the hearing of the sacred texts removes Ignorance and bestows Liberation in the face of the fact mentioned above—viz. that Ignorance and Bondage persist even after the knowledge of the sacred texts with their meaning and significance?

In order to answer the difficulty, we have to consider fully the nature of the false Superimposition (Adhyâsa) that is caused by Ignorance or Nescience and also the real character of the process of correction (Bâdha) of the error. When a piece of rope is taken to be a snake, the snake is felt to be perceived directly as an immediate presentation in front of the subject, and although there is no contact of the sense-organ with the snake, still what is known as the snake is felt as something *given* or presented and not as something which is merely remembered. The illusory perception

of the snake is as direct and immediate as any correct perception of the snake, and as a process of perception it has all the characteristics of correct perception and does not in any way differ from it.

It is sometimes said that illusion differs from correct perception in one important respect, viz. that whereas the object is absent in illusion, it is present in perception. But this cannot be maintained. So long as the illusion lasts, the object is perceived to be present and there is no consciousness of the absence of the object. The existence of the object is inferred from the consciousness of it and as in the state of the illusory appearance, there is the consciousness of the snake, the existence of the snake is also known. So long as the illusion lasts, there is no knowledge of the absence of the object and hence the illusion cannot be distinguished from correct perception by means of that criterion, viz. the absence of the object.

It may of course be held that although the absence of the object cannot be determined during the persistence of the illusion, still when the illusion is corrected by the opposing experience, it is known that the object is non-existent. So long as the snake is illusorily perceived, it is true that it is not known to be an illusion. But as soon as the rope is perceived, the illusory character of the snake that previously appeared to be real is clearly recognized. But this contention also is not true. From the mere fact that

now the rope is perceived in place of the snake, it cannot be held that the snake is unreal and that the rope is real. It is true that previously there was the perception of the snake and now there is the perception of the rope. The two experiences contradict each other. The object before me cannot both be a snake and a rope. But that both the snake and the rope were presented and experienced as given facts cannot also be denied. As presentations both have got the same characteristics, and there is no reason why reality should be ascribed to one of them and it should be denied to the other. There is no means of determining which of them is real. As the subsequent experience contradicts the previous one, so also the previous experience contradicts the subsequent one. If contradiction or opposition is the only reason for the rejection of the previous experience, then the subsequent experience may also be rejected on the same ground. Priority or posteriority again cannot determine the reason for the rejection. The illusory experience may precede as well as succeed the correct perception. Dreams may succeed the experiences of the waking state, but the mere fact that they come *after* the experiences of the waking state cannot prove that they are real while the waking experiences which are contradictory to them are unreal. Again, as the two experiences, viz. one of the snake and the other of the rope, happen in two different points of time and not simultaneously, both of them might also be taken to be real. It may be supposed that while the subject perceived a snake, really a snake was there. But now the snake has disappeared and the subject is perceiving a piece of rope before him. So it cannot be held that merely from the present perception of the rope in place of the previous per-

ception of the snake it can be inferred that the snake was non-existent and false or unreal.

To realize that the perception of the snake is illusory, the subsequent perception of the rope is not enough. Something else is needed for the genuine correction of the error. I see a snake before me in dim light; I become terrified and run away. Then a person comes to me and says that what I saw was not a snake but a piece of rope. But this does not remove my fear. I *saw* a snake but now I *hear* that it was not a snake. Knowledge that is derived from direct perception cannot be superseded by knowledge derived indirectly from testimony or authority. It is for this reason that although we learn from Sruti or the *Vedas* that our self is identical with the Absolute or Brahman and is thus absolutely free from all sorts of misery, still our misery and bondage which we directly perceive are not removed through the knowledge gained from the Vedic texts. The error that creeps in through direct perception cannot be removed by anything short of another direct perception. But even a mere contradictory percept i.e. an opposing perceptual experience is not sufficient to correct the previous perceptual error or illusion. Even when a lamp is brought to the place where I perceived the snake and in clear light I now see that there is nothing but a rope, still my fear may not be removed. I still may think that there *was* really a snake but now it has disappeared. I am not sure that what previously appeared as a snake is really this piece of rope before me; but so long as this identity and continuity between the object of illusion and the object of correct perception cannot be established, the illusion cannot be understood to be an illusion and there cannot be any correction of it. In

order that such identity and continuity may be established, it is necessary that I should have not only two such contradictory percepts as those of the snake and the rope on two different occasions, but I should also have to see how the piece of rope looks like the snake that I actually saw, when presented in dim light. I have to see the object before me in clear light and perceive that it is a piece of rope; I have to see it again immediately after in the absence of clear light and perceive that now it looks like a snake. I may again see it in clear light and perceive it as a piece of rope. This process may be repeated several times or rather as many times as are necessary. When I have been convinced that the very same object which is perceived as a piece of rope in clear light looks like a snake when seen in dim light or in darkness, I clearly realize that my previous perception of the object as a snake was an illusion. It is only when the identity and continuity are fully established that the illusion is corrected. Two contradictory percepts so long as they remain discontinuous fail to establish the truth or falsity of the one or the other; but when one of them is seen to lead to and be merged in the other, then the persisting experience establishes itself by the negation or sublation of the other.

Here lies the reason why our illusion persists even when we have acquired knowledge of the self through the Vedic texts. The self about which we learn from the *Upanishads*, the self which is identical with Brahman and is eternally free, is not found to be continuous with the self which we perceive in our everyday life. We do not find any connection or rather any continuity between the self with which we are acquainted

and the self which we establish by means of ratiocination and inference or about which we learn from the scriptural texts. Hence the knowledge of self as acquired through *Sravana* (hearing) and *Manana* (ratiocination) is not competent to negate or sublimate our experience of the empirical self which is perceived to be in bondage. What is needed for the purpose is a course of discipline which gradually shows us higher and higher stages of the self beginning from the empirical self with which we are directly acquainted and which ultimately leads us to the knowledge of the self which is Absolute. It is this course of discipline or practical training that establishes the continuity between the empirical self, the 'I' consciousness or the limited finite self on the one hand and the transcendental Self, the Infinite Self or the Brahman on the other. When it is seen that the limited self gradually expands itself and become merged in the Absolute, so to speak, or rather when it is seen that what was previously perceived as limited and thus supposed to be finite is really infinite and absolute, when, in other words, the illusory knowledge of the self is removed and the real character of the self as absolute becomes revealed, then only the primal ignorance disappears and liberation or freedom of the self is clearly recognized. This *Pratyabhijnâ* or clear recognition that this limited self is the Absolute or that what is now revealed as the Absolute previously appeared as the limited and finite self, establishes the continuity and identity and securely corrects the error or the illusion. This course of discipline that is essential to this *Pratyabhijnâ* or which alone can yield it is thus indispensable to Liberation.

THE PROBLEM OF SORROW IN HUMAN LIFE

BY PROF. AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEA, M.A.

I. THE UNIVERSAL PROBLEM OF HUMAN LIFE

Sorrow is the hardest fact of universal experience in the animal world. It is through sorrow that all animals, including men, are born. The cries of sorrow are the first expressions of animal life. It is sorrow that goads the living beings to activity. It is through efforts for emancipation from sorrow that there is development in the animal creation. Life begins with sorrow, passes through sorrow and in most cases ends with sorrow. It is as great a fact in the animal world, as motion is in the physical world. Nobody can deny its existence. It is a fact which everybody experiences, but nobody likes to experience.

Philosophers have made various attempts to account for the presence of this unpalatable fact in this universe and to reconcile it with the religious conception of its ultimate ground and cause. But as it is a hopeless task to ascertain why there is the presence of motion or inertia or gravity in the physical world, so it is an equally hopeless task to determine why there is the presence of sorrow in the animal creation. On the other hand, as it is impossible to conceive of a physical cosmos, in which motion, gravity and inertia are altogether absent, so it is impossible to conceive of an animal world, from which sorrow is altogether eliminated. The idea of sorrow is inseparably associated with the very possibility of sensuous life. It is the source of all motives and impulses, all movements and activities, all deve-

lopment and progress in the animal world.

In the normal course of human life, whatever actions men perform, whatever knowledge they seek to attain, whatever wealth, fame and distinction they long for acquiring, whatever relationships they establish and maintain with one another, whatever feelings and emotions they cherish and culture within their heart,—all these owe their origin to the impetus given by sorrow. Every man experiences sorrows on account of his mental and physical constitution and his position in the world system; he naturally seeks and exerts himself for emancipation from all actual and probable sorrows; and as a result of this spontaneous desire and exertion, the powers latent in him are gradually awakened and developed. In search for the means of getting rid of sorrows, he becomes more and more acquainted with the phenomena, the forces and the laws of the world as well as with his own powers and potentialities. The experience of the failure of the earthly resources at his command to cope with the sorrows leads him to seek for some unearthly means, and thereby develops a religious attitude in him. The problem of the absolute emancipation from all possible sorrows gives rise to metaphysical speculation. Thus it is sorrow which is at the root of all the achievements, of which man feels proud.

But it should be remembered that it is not the meek submission to sorrow as an inevitable fact, but the deter-

mined refusal to submit to it and definite resolution to be emancipated from it, which is the foundation of all human progress. Hence the problem of sorrow is not the theoretical problem of how it finds a place in the scheme of the universe, but the practical problem of how we can get rid of it. Sorrow is there to rouse our slumbering powers and faculties, and the awakenment of these powers and faculties must end in the killing of sorrow. So long as sorrow is not killed, efforts must continue. The universal problem of human life is how to kill sorrow and attain happiness. Without solving this problem, human life cannot fulfil itself.

II. AN INQUIRY INTO THE SOURCES OF SORROW

It is to discover some unerring means of emancipation from all actual and possible sorrows that the different systems of religion and philosophy originally got their birth. This attempt to find out a solution of the problem of sorrow led them to an inquiry about the ultimate realities behind and beyond experience and the ultimate plan of the world system. This inquiry created problems after problems, raised doubts after doubts, faced difficulties after difficulties. But no such conclusion with regard to any of the ultimate objects of metaphysical inquiry could be arrived at, that might be accepted as completely free from logical difficulties and that might appeal to the reason of all sections of the human race as the most satisfactory solution of the vital problems of human life. The mysteries of the universe have remained as mysterious as ever. There is no indication that the controversies among the metaphysicians will ever cease.

But emancipation from sorrow is a matter of practical necessity. Attempts

in this direction cannot wait for the solution of the metaphysical problems. Man's religion consists in the systematic endeavour for the solution of this practical problem of sorrow. It is a course of actual self-discipline, a culture of some outlook on life and the world and a cultivation of some feelings and emotions, that may be of practical efficacy for cutting the root of sorrow and making life enjoyable. It is from this pragmatic standpoint that religion is practised by men in general.

Now, in order to find out a sure remedy for sorrow, it is of great practical importance to discover the sources of sorrow on the basis of our general experience. The main cause of our inability to eradicate sorrow is that we make futile attempts to drive away the particular sorrows as they appear, but make no definite attack upon the sources of sorrows in general. What is necessary for solving this practical problem of life is first to make an inquiry into the nature and the sources of the sorrows from which we suffer and then to make systematic efforts to remove them. This inquiry need not, however, lead us into any bewildering metaphysical complications.

III. THE SOURCES OF SORROWS, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL

It is evident to all that sorrow as well as happiness is a condition of the mind. Happiness is the agreeable and desirable condition of the mind, while sorrow is the disagreeable and undesirable condition of the mind. It is also a matter of general experience that these conditions of the mind are mostly created and nourished by the circumstances to which the mind is related. As the attention of men is generally directed outwards, they naturally conclude that the favourable and unfavourable circumstances are the sole sources of their happiness and

misery. Herein is a fundamental mistake, and this mistaken view that our happiness and misery are wholly dependent upon the external circumstances is to a considerable extent responsible for many of our sufferings. We shall come to the point afterwards.

The different kinds of circumstances that are found to affect our mind and produce enjoyment or suffering may first be classified into *Internal* and *External*. The internal circumstances are constituted of the particular capacities and propensities, temperaments and dispositions, passions and prejudices, impulses and inclinations, of the mind itself. What is the amount of contribution which these mental circumstances make to the production of happiness and misery, is not adequately estimated by ordinary men for want of proper self-observation and self-judgment.

The external circumstances, again, may be classified into those pertaining to the *bodily system* and those pertaining to *environments*. The bodily constitution, its strength and weakness, health and disease, beauty and deformity, etc., contribute greatly to our pleasure and pain, enjoyment and suffering. The environments may be further divided into *human* and *physical*. The human environments consist of the family, the community, the nation and the mankind in general. The physical environments are constituted of the fauna and the flora, the forces and the phenomena of nature, the conditions of the land and water and air, etc. It is a matter of universal experience that our enjoyments and sufferings greatly depend upon and are produced by the economic, political, cultural and moral conditions of the family, the community, the nation and the human race, to which our life is essentially related, and also the physical conditions like the productivity or sterility of the soil, the sufficiency or

scarcity of food and water, the natural resources of the country, favourable or unfavourable climate, droughts and floods, cyclones, earthquakes, etc.

IV. OUR DEPENDENCE UPON THESE CIRCUMSTANCES

Among these different kinds of circumstances, there are some over which we have the power to exercise effective control, there are many over which we feel to have the capacity of exercising different degrees of partial control, and there are many others over which we feel to have no control whatsoever. With regard to those circumstances which we feel to have the power of controlling, fully or partially, we try to adjust them to our requirements for the attainment of happiness and destruction of sorrow. With regard to the others, over which we feel to have no control, we have to adapt ourselves to them and to submit to the unavoidable sufferings, that they produce, with as much calmness and as little murmur as possible. This is how we have to live in this world.

The circumstances in respect of which we feel ourselves helpless are so many and they become sources of suffering so often, that the human life seems destined to suffer much more than to enjoy. It is also to be noted that the minds of men are ordinarily very often haunted and troubled by the thoughts about their sorrows, past, present, and future, about the objects of desire which they do not possess and the undesirable objects which force themselves upon them. Sometimes they imagine, as a result of their previous painful experiences, many sources of sorrows even at times and under circumstances in which there is no actual suffering and no valid ground for apprehending any. This habit of thinking about sorrows, actual and possible, real and imaginary, renders them incapable of undisturbed

enjoyment of the sources of happiness, even when they are present. Thus thoughts and imaginations about sorrows widen the fields of sorrow, create newer and newer occasions for suffering, and make life bitter. The eager and anxious thoughts for getting rid of actual and possible sorrows become themselves fresh sources of sorrow. The problem of sorrow thus becomes more and more acute and insoluble. This is the case with men of the world in general, whether they are outwardly rich and poor, educated or uneducated, holding high positions of power and prestige in the society or holding no such position at all. Men are generally unhappy; how to be relieved of this unhappiness is the crying problem of life.

V. DEEPER ANALYSIS OF THE SOURCES OF SORROW

A systematic endeavour for the solution of this problem must be based upon a deeper analysis of the sources of joys and sorrows. It is the general experience that joys and sorrows are produced by what have been called the internal and external circumstances. But this is not quite an accurate statement of what really happens. A deeper reflection convinces us that it is not truly the circumstances, but the ways in which our thought and will react upon the circumstances, that become the real sources of our happiness and misery.

It is found that circumstances, which are outwardly of the same nature, become sources of happiness to some men and of misery to others. One man placed in one set of circumstances thinks himself most fortunate; another man placed in exactly the same set of circumstances thinks himself most unfortunate. Even in the case of the same man, it is found that in different states

of his mind and in different conditions of his thought and will, the same circumstances affect him differently. Hence wider and closer observation and reflection convincingly point out that the powers and directions of our thought and will, our conscious and subconscious dispositions to react upon the circumstances in particular ways, and what we have called the internal circumstances are mainly responsible for our joys and sorrows. It is also obvious that it is over these that we, as rational beings, have got the capacity to exercise the most effective control, and that this capacity can be immensely increased by the practice of systematic self-discipline. In order to emancipate oneself from sorrow, the most pointed attention should be directed to these sources. If we can properly discipline our thought and will, and can form the habit of looking upon and dealing with the circumstances from a suitable point of view, we can make life enjoyable, whatever the outward nature of the circumstances may be.

VI. HOW TO MAKE HUMAN ENVIRONMENTS ENJOYABLE

Take the case of the human environments, upon which our happiness and misery so much depend. If a man can create a harmonious relationship between himself and those around him, —whether they are members of his family or of his community or of other communities within the nation, or of other nationalities,—his chances of sorrow will be gradually diminished and those of happiness increased. It is the conflicts of men with their environments, the divergences of tastes and interests among men, their inability or unwillingness to tolerate one another's views, behaviours and modes of life, that become the sources of all kinds of miseries

in the human society. We can attempt to remove this discord and establish harmony in three different ways;—first, by having recourse to all possible means at our disposal in the direction of forcing our own views and tastes and interests upon others and demanding that others should mould their views, tastes and behaviours in accordance with what we regard as right and proper; secondly, by moulding our own views and tastes and behaviours in harmony with those of others around us; and thirdly, by the suitable combination of these two methods.

We can adopt the first method only with regard to those who are near about us, who have confidence in us and over whom we can exercise control, whether physical or moral. But in our practical and intellectual life we have to come across innumerable other individuals and societies, whose views, tastes and modes of life produce impressions upon our mind, but who are beyond the reach of our physical or moral powers. Now, if we feel unhappy whenever their views or temperaments or actions are not in accordance with what we have a liking for, occasions for sorrow will rise every now and then. But we have the power to control our own likes and dislikes and to regulate them in such a way that no kinds of differences on the part of others may produce any disagreeable impressions upon our mind. Not only that; we can form such an outlook in our thought and such a disposition in our mind, that what might otherwise be a source of sorrow may become a source of positive joy. The formation of an attitude to like what others like and to feel happy in what gives happiness to others becomes a source of immense happiness and reduces the occasions for sorrow to a minimum.

This does not of course mean that a man should surrender his freedom of

judgment to others, or that he should not protect himself from the attacks of others or even that he should not preach what he knows to be true and point out the real mistakes of his fellow-men. What is meant is this, that he should have a sincere regard for the similar freedom of judgment of others, that even in exercising his right of self-defence he should not bear any grudge or ill will towards others, and that in preaching the truth he should be inspired by a sincere feeling of love and sympathy for his fellow-beings and should not cherish any feeling of hatred or aversion to anybody. If he remembers that this world is a world of diversities, and that in this world the diversities of views and tastes and modes of life are by nature inevitable, the cultivation of this attitude of thought and will does not become so very difficult as it apparently seems to be. A systematic discipline of thought and will and feeling in this direction and a sincere attempt at the sympathetic understanding of the view-points and positions and requirements of others gradually reveal that many of the conflicts and discords from which we suffer are without any real foundation and originate from misunderstanding due to the wrong attitude of mind. The right frame of mind can cure most of the evils in the human society and remove many of the sources of sorrow without any positive efforts for removing them, inasmuch as many of these will be found out to be imaginary and will vanish as soon as true understanding will appear.

VII. GET RID OF THE EGOISTIC ATTITUDE AND MANY SOURCES OF SORROW WILL DISAPPEAR

The individualistic and egoistic mentality of the people with regard to happiness and misery is the source of a good deal of misery to them. When

every man is earnest about his own enjoyments, there must necessarily be a conflict of interests, and instead of a harmonious relationship among men there arise competition, antagonism, suspiciousness, maliciousness, vindictiveness, etc., which become sources of much mental suffering to all, without contributing any stable happiness to any. If a man can get rid of this individualistic and egoistic outlook and can form the habit of looking upon things from the wider socialistic and altruistic point of view, his relations with the environments become harmonious, sweet and pleasant. If this socialistic and altruistic outlook becomes through the teachings of the master-minds the prevailing ideal in the human society, and if through sound education and inspiring examples people are taught to value this outlook and trained in the path of the realization of this ideal, the spirit of mutual service and co-operation takes the place of the spirit of competition and antagonism, mutual faith and sincerity take the place of suspiciousness and duplicity, the feelings of sympathy, benevolence, and forgiveness take the place of the feelings of hatred, maliciousness, and vindictiveness. The culture of these virtues, which become more and more spontaneous with the progressive subordination of the egoistic and individualistic mode of thought and will to the socialistic and altruistic viewpoint, is a very practical method of solving the problem of sorrow in human life.

The most effective way of making this viewpoint deep-rooted and almost natural in the mind is to remember constantly and to contemplate deeply that a man is born not of himself nor for himself, that he cannot sustain his existence for a single day without the co-operation and service of others, that he is indebted to the society for whatever he possesses

and whatever he thinks valuable in himself, and that he has really no independent existence apart from the existence of the society. He is to form the habit of bearing in mind that his ego is organically related to the ego of the society, that his self is a particularized manifestation of the social self, and that this is the case with all men, with whom he comes into any kind of relation. He is to imagine that there is one Self immanent in and pervading all the members of the society, to which he belongs. (It is to be noted that the terms Self, Ego, Existence, etc. are not here used in any metaphysical sense and they do not refer to any metaphysical theory or religious dogma.) Such thought produces a sense of unity among all, and a systematic culture of this thought gradually deepens this sense of unity and find spontaneous expressions in the altruistic virtues.

VIII. CONTEMPLATION OF UNITY TO BE EMBODIED IN ACTIVE SERVICE

In order that this sense of unity may become a real part of life and may not remain merely in the theoretical region of thought, the contemplation must be supplemented by active service to the members of the society. If thought is not embodied in actual service, it does not become real in life, and hence it cannot give that amount of internal happiness which is expected from the sense of unity and cannot kill the sorrow which is born of the sense of difference and conflict. Mere contemplation of unity becomes to a man of the world merely a matter of fancy and may give a momentary poetic delight. Practical life has to be regulated in accordance with the idealistic thought. If thought and action are disciplined in accordance with the ideal for some time, many sources of sorrow almost unknow-

ingly disappear and many sprigs of joy shoot forth.

Service should necessarily be in such form and to such extent as may be within the capacity of the individual. But in order to gain the desired end from it, viz. to raise the mind higher and higher above the pangs of sorrow and to widen the range of its enjoyment, the *spirit* or attitude of service,—the altruistic or socialistic mode of thought and will—must inspire and guide the mind. With the development of this spirit, to give becomes more pleasurable than to take, to court physical suffering and economic loss for the sake of others becomes a source of far greater, deeper, and more permanent happiness than to make anybody else suffer or incur loss for the sake of any amount of physical comforts of his own. Being such a great source of happiness and effective means of the destruction of sorrow, the cultivation of this sense of unity and this spirit of service is not a cult of sacrifice; it is a cult of higher and deeper and wider enjoyment. By sacrificing the painful narrow egoistic outlook, a man attains a higher and wider joyful ego in its unity with other egos; by sacrificing his petty transitory interests for the good of others, he attains a state of mind in which he gets rid of his own sorrows and enjoys more stable happiness.

IX. EGOISTIC FEELINGS AND ACTIONS ARE THE ENEMIES OF HAPPINESS

The feelings of lust and anger, greed and malice, vanity and hatred, suspiciousness and censoriousness, ambition and fear and the like, are generally spoken of as internal enemies. By enemies are meant the enemies of happiness and sources of sorrow. An insight into the nature of these feelings reveals that they are nothing but the egoistic

sensuous propensities, the cravings for their gratification even at the expense of others, and a distrustful and pessimistic attitude of mind concomitant with frustrations and disappointments. These egoistic tendencies create sorrows in all stages. When they get hold of the mind, they create restlessness and disquietude, and thus become sources of sorrow. They find expression in actions, which not unoften consist in struggling and wrestling with obstacles and resisting forces, and thus produce sufferings.

The human and physical environments are in most cases not quite favourable for the satisfaction of these propensities; they generally offer resistance and create obstacles in the way. These obstacles and resistances become strong and formidable in proportion as the egoistic propensities of the one come in conflict with the similar egoistic propensities of others. In many cases, therefore, frustrations and disappointments are inevitable, and these are always sources of acute sufferings. Such experiences, again, produce feelings of apprehensions and uncertainties with regard to the future. The continuity of such feelings naturally creates a distrustful and pessimistic attitude towards all the environments as well as towards human destiny in general. Such an attitude makes the mind unhappy, and not unoften gives rise to the permanently painful idea that the world is really constituted of sorrows and misfortunes,—a 'dreary dungeon' designed for the sufferings of the creatures; the people around as well as the animal and physical surroundings appear to be hostile to our peace and happiness. Thus a spirit of hostility is aroused not only against those who directly come in the way of our self-gratification; but this spirit, having captured the mind, is extended to men in general and to the

world at large. This spirit finds expression in the feelings of anger and antipathy, hatred and fear, malice and vindictiveness, suspiciousness and censoriousness, etc., which always make the mind unhappy and create newer and newer fields and occasions for sufferings.

Even when particular propensities are satisfied, the pleasures arising out of their satisfaction being in most cases transitory and flitting, the passing away of these pleasures again becomes a fresh source of sorrow. The tastes and experiences of the objects and events that give such pleasures, create an attachment to, and strengthen the yearning for, them, and weaken the powers of thought and will to keep this yearning under control. Such attachment, yearning and weakness make life still more unhappy. The net result of the pursuit of the egoistic impulses and the cherishing of the egoistic outlook is weakness, bitterness, fear and despair. This may appear paradoxical, but nevertheless it is a fact, which every man of insight and experience will corroborate. Those who, hoarding wealth, occupying positions of authority and honour, attaining name and fame, become objects of terror and envy to others, are no exceptions to this rule.

X. FOR EMANCIPATION FROM SORROW, THOUGHT AND WILL MUST RISE TO HIGHER PLANES

Any attempt at the solution of the problem of sorrow must, therefore, be based upon rising above the egoistic plane of thought and will and exercising restraint upon the egoistic propensities of the mind. In fact these propensities,—these internal enemies of happiness and sources of sorrow,—in the nature of a man are not so very formidable as they appear to be. A man, as a ration-

al being, has an inherent capacity to keep them under control. To the power of earnest and disciplined thought and will they are always found to submit. What is necessary is that thought and will should be inspired by a higher ideal. Thought must look upon things from a higher standpoint, with a wider outlook and an enlightened idea of self-interest; and will must regulate the mental functions and the physical actions in accordance with that thought. If thought and will, being themselves self-disciplined, apply their power earnestly to the discipline of the mind and the body, all those impulses and tendencies, which appear to be part and parcel of human nature, meekly yield to them and obey their dictates.

For the establishment of this legitimate and inherent right of thought and will to control and regulate the egoistic propensities, the conception of the social ego has to be strengthened and placed over the head of the individual sensuous ego, the sense of unity with fellow-beings has to be emphasized and given a greater importance than the sense of difference from them, and the true and permanent interest of the self has to be contemplated as really identical with the good of the society. To be imbued with this ideology, thought will of course have to struggle hard for some time with the egoistic outlook, which is already in possession of it. But without struggle nothing is attainable,—not even the little momentary pain-mixed pleasures, which the lower ego seeks for. The struggle to beat down this egoistic outlook is worth while, inasmuch as every stage of the success, and even of the pursuit, of this struggle is followed by relative emancipation from restlessness, bitterness, weakness and sorrow, and inner enjoyment of calmness, sweetness, strength and happiness.

XI. THOUGHT AND ACTION MUST GO TOGETHER

But as has been said before, will and action must sincerely follow this thought. Without the co-operation of will and action, thought and emotion cannot permeate the human nature. If will and action go on following the egoistic impulses, and thought alone contemplates this higher ideal and is accompanied by some passing emotions, this ideal can never be real in life. On the other hand, if action only mechanically pursues a course approved and enjoined by the higher ideal under propulsion from a superior authority,—whether social, political or religious,—the mind cannot get rid of restlessness, bitterness, weakness and sorrow, and enjoy the longed-for serenity, sweetness, strength and happiness within. Contemplation and action must go hand in hand in cases of all social beings, to enable them to achieve their end.

When thought, will, and emotion are imbued with the sense of unity with fellow-beings, and actions are performed in the sincere spirit of service to the society, the altruistic feelings of love and friendliness, sympathy and benevolence, charity and forgiveness, modesty and reverence, etc. naturally become stronger and stronger in the mind, and the egoistic propensities and their concomitants almost unconsciously go to the background. The growth of those altruistic feelings makes a man more and more indifferent to and forgetful of even the ordinary necessities of his sensuous life, not to speak of its luxuries and imaginary wants. Thus with the subordination and weakening of the egoistic disposition and outlook, the sources of sorrow gradually diminish, and with the development of the sense of unity with others and the strengthening of the

altruistic attitude of mind, the sources of happiness gradually increase.

XII. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTION OF SOCIETY

It is to be borne in mind that the term 'society' has no fixed denotation. The entire range of human environments comes within its scope. In the mind of every individual the idea of the denotation of society varies in proportion to the development of his capacity of thought and will. The family is the smallest unit of society. In the lowest stage of human culture, a man feels the unity of his individual ego with the ego of the family, identifies his interests with the interests of his family, and feels happiness in the employment of his time and energy and in the sacrifice of his physical comforts for the happiness of the members of his family. The domestic life is the primary training ground for the culture of the altruistic feelings and the spirit of service. A man has to control many of his sensuous egoistic impulses and to sacrifice voluntarily many of his individual physical pleasures for the sake of the advancement of the interests of the family. But such self-control and self-sacrifice are generally prompted by natural affections for those with whom there are ties of blood. These natural affections are found almost inseparably mixed up with sensuous appetites and egoistic impulses, and generally supply food and nourishment to the latter. Hence this self-identification with the family, though it teaches some amount of self-control and self-sacrifice and supplies us with some sources of non-sensuous enjoyment, does not lead us far in the path of the solution of the problem of sorrow.

Further, the family being a small unit, the conflicts of the interests of different families and the consequent rivalry, hostility, hatred, suspiciousness,

vindictiveness, maliciousness and all other sources of disharmony and restlessness and sorrow, must inevitably infect the life of the individual, who confines his sense of unity with fellow-beings within his family circle and devotes his thought and will to the exclusive service of the family. In order to find a path to greater enjoyment and less suffering, a man's attachment to the family circle must be subordinated to his sense of unity with a wider society; he must learn to look upon the family as only a small part of the bigger society, with the interests of which he has to identify his own interests and those of the family. In this way he has to train his thought in widening the conception of society and in looking upon and judging the interests of the smaller circles from the standpoint of the wider and wider circles.

XIII. TO AN ENLIGHTENED MAN SOCIETY MEANS THE ENTIRE HUMANITY

A man's conception of Society should pass from the family to the particular community to which he belongs, and from the community to the nation, and from the nation it should march on to include the entire Humanity. A man who seeks to enjoy tranquil happiness and to make his mind free from restlessness and sorrow, has to discipline his thought in the contemplation of the unity of his individual, domestic, communal and national selves with the self of the Humanity as a whole, and to discipline his active life accordingly. He has to learn to widen his outlook so far as to think that he is of the Humanity and the Humanity is his own. He has to train himself to cherish an attitude of love, regard and friendliness towards the entire human race and consequently towards all individuals, families, communities and nations included in it, and not to bear any feeling of envy, malice,

hatred or fear towards any. The play of his altruistic thoughts, emotions and activities should not meet any barrier anywhere within the human society.

Wherever there is felt a limit to the sense of unity and to the feelings of love and friendliness, a discordant note strikes the mind, and occasions for restlessness and sorrow arise. Attachment, which is a source of sorrow when limited to any individual, or family or community or even any nation, because in all such cases it is accompanied by hatred, hostility, envy, fear, etc. in relation to others outside those limits, becomes itself an inexhaustible source of happiness when extended to all, because it then takes the form of universal love, which sweetens the entire nature and beautifies the entire world.

If a man can make Humanity the real centre of his life's interest and can regulate his actions from that point of view, the spiritual value of his actions is heightened a thousandfold, whatever may be their materialistic utility. It must necessarily be a limited number of people, who will be directly affected by the service rendered by the man, and the number of people benefited and the nature of the benefit conferred on them by his actions must of course be determined by his intellectual, economic and other natural and acquired equipments. But his aim and object being the good of Humanity, the service rendered by him even to a single man of the lowest grade of the society will be from the spiritual point of view a service to the entire human society. This outlook and any work sincerely performed in accordance with it becomes a source of immense inward happiness much more enjoyable than any sensuous pleasure.

Thus the contemplation of the unity of his life with the life of Humanity, the consciousness of his being born in

and for the human society, the culture of the altruistic feelings of love, sympathy, benevolence, friendliness, etc. towards all individuals and all sections of people with the idea that they are particular manifestations of Humanity, and the cultivation of the habit of rendering services to men as men to the best of his capacities, equipments and opportunities, are sure to raise the mind to such a plane of self-enjoyment, that the vicissitudes of his individual and domestic life will scarcely be able to disturb the serenity of his enjoyment. Many of the sources of sorrow will, as it must have been evident from the foregoing discussion, disappear from him as the inevitable result of the harmony established between himself and his human environments and the suppression of the egoistic impulses, emotions and thoughts. The sources of sorrow that appear in the normal course of life, such as physical ailments, domestic bereavements, economic losses, natural catastrophes, etc. lose their sting and do not disturb the equilibrium of mind, and they do not create the impression that to suffer is the lot of man. Thus life becomes enjoyable and the problem of sorrow is greatly solved.

Here a doubt may arise in the mind of some inquirers, that though it is admissible that the widening of the outlook and the cultivation of the sense of unity with Humanity increase the sources of happiness and decrease the sources of misery in many directions, still in other directions the sources of sorrow are likely to increase; because the peoples belonging to different sections of the human race are known to suffer so many various kinds of miseries, that sympathy with them without any power to help is sure to create fresh sorrows in the mind every day. Here there is a psychological paradox. Not only mere sympathy, but even actual volun-

tary participation, in the sorrows of others, though outwardly producing some sufferings in the mind, becomes a source of intense internal joy of permanent value, which even sweetens these temporary sufferings. Moreover, attention being directed towards the sufferings of others, one's own sympathetic sorrow does not count at all at that time. Sincere sympathy is of inestimable value in solving the problem of sorrow, because it makes a man forget and creates in his mind an attitude of indifference to his own individual sorrows.

XIV. THE REALIZATION OF THE UNITY OF THE SELF AND THE UNIVERSE IS THE HIGHEST IDEAL

For emancipation from sorrow, our outlook on the physical environments also has to be so changed, that a harmonious relationship may be established between ourselves and those environments. We generally assume that the relation between ourselves and the environments is an external one; we pass judgments upon the events of the external nature from the standpoint of the demands of our sensuous life; we ponder over the cruelties of nature when we find the natural phenomena unfavourable to the satisfaction of our desires. We think that it is by hard struggle with the forces of nature that we have to live and to enjoy ourselves. The conquest of these forces becomes the chief object of civilized life. In many cases we are elated with joy and pride to find that the forces of nature meekly submit to the power of human intelligence and will. But soon we are disillusioned by the experiences of the natural catastrophes which convince us of the utter insignificance of our powers to fight them. Even the primary problem of food and drink cannot be solved without the co-operation of nature. If

we cannot befriend nature, sorrows are inevitable.

We cannot expect that nature should act according to our sensuous desires, just as we cannot expect that other men should act in accordance with our individual likings and requirements. We have to accept Nature as she is. We have to receive from her the benefits that she is ready to confer upon us, and we have undoubtedly to make what efforts we are capable of in that direction. But we should not be disappointed whenever she does not yield to our importunities.

We have to realize by contemplation that Nature also has a life of her own and that her actions are regulated by the laws of that life. The laws discovered by the physical sciences are only partial aspects of those laws. There is one life pervading the universe, one plan and purpose governing all its departments, one central ideal to the realization of which all orders of phenomena are contributing. Whether it is or is not possible to determine metaphysically the nature of that life, the nature of that plan and purpose and the nature of that ideal, it is not of much importance for the solution of our practical problem of sorrow. What is of importance in this case is to form a conception, however indetermined it may be, of one infinite self-modifying living universe, all whose activities are in accordance with some plan, purpose and ideal inmanent in her life,—all the phenomena in which are the expressions of the rhythmic movements of the joyful dance of the soul of that entire system. We also are the manifestations of the same Life. The same Life which pulsates in us is exhibiting itself through the productions and developments and destructions of the outside world. It is our ignorance or imperfect understanding of this essential unity between ourselves and the external world, looking upon the diverse

phenomena of nature as isolated from one another and as without any plan and purpose, and estimating their values from the standpoint of our individual or communal sensuous interest, that make the world appear as a place of sorrows.

The contemplation of the inner unity of the apparently diversified universe and the essential identity of one's own self with the self of the universe,—the mental discipline to view all the phenomena of the human society as well as of the physical world as the expressions of that one self and as occurring in accordance with some universal plan and purpose and ideal, which, though inscrutable to our finite understanding, is none the less real,—a systematic endeavour to feel that our own being is a particular embodiment of that one infinite and eternal all-pervading self of the universe and to look upon all others also in the same light,—this is the greatest weapon for the destruction of sorrow in human life. This outlook, once formed, changes the face of the world. The world, with all its diversities, reveals itself to this view as the type of goodness and benevolence, harmony and beauty. It is through the realization of this unity between the self and the world that the apparently refractory world-forces can be successfully conquered. Every event, whatever may be its outward appearance, is then experienced as bringing with it a message of love and blessing from the Infinite and Eternal, and produces a surprisingly agreeable impression upon the mind. All orders of phenomena appear as so many different forms of ripples and waves on the breast of the ocean of Truth, Beauty, Goodness, and Bliss. The formation of this outlook does not require the acceptance of any metaphysical theory or religious dogma. But it requires a systematic discipline of

thought, feeling and will with a view to look upon all things from the standpoint of the whole,—all particulars from the standpoint of the universal,—all

manifestations from the standpoint of the Reality. In the highest plane of thought, feeling and will, all sorrows vanish as illusory.

SAINT LORENZO GIUSTINIANI

BY WOLFRAM H. KOCH

About midway between Fusina and Venice is a small island, called San Giorgio in Alga. A white statue of the Madonna, a cluster of trees, a campanile, a church and a few houses, this is all that is to be seen when passing it in a boat. All round are the green waters of the lagoon with its banks of quietly waving seaweeds, here and there broken by the blue canals or the silvery wings of some sea-gull, and a deep, age-old silence seems to hover above and to encircle it, softening down the harsh noise of modern traffic and the loud talk of pleasure-seeking globe-trotters, drowning their pettiness and arrogant self-assertion in its great stillness. This was the setting in which the most important and formative part of the life of Lorenzo Giustiniani was spent in the company of a number of priests, following the rule of St. Augustine and bearing the name of "Canons Regular of San Giorgio", for it was to this monastery that, in the year 1400, the nineteen years old descendant of an illustrious Venetian family that had given captains and doges to the Republic turned for advice and admittance.

In one of his writings Lorenzo Giustiniani himself tells us the reasons that made him, the young patrician with magnificent worldly prospects, leave the comforts and honours of his paternal home to exchange them for the seclusion and the solitude of a life of hard

discipline and contemplative prayer in the stillness of that small, out-of-the-way island. He says:

"I sought something that would fully satisfy my desire for happiness, but I did not succeed in finding this, neither in the distractions offered by the city, nor in the satisfaction of my studies in which my talents and my natural gift of speech gave me the possibility of occupying the first place. One day, while I was meditating on my future, a luminous vision appeared to me all of a sudden, a beautiful virgin crowned with stars, who began to comfort me with sweet words, saying, 'I am she whom thou seekest: Divine Wisdom. But remember that my gifts and my grace are reserved for those who seek me in the solitude of their cell, far away from all worldly noise.'

"Scarcely had she spoken these words, than the vision disappeared, and I had the impression of awaking from a dream. But now I knew which was the life I had to follow, so as to obey the will of the Lord."

Everybody loved the young boy for his exemplary conduct and the grace and sweetness of his manners. Thus his brothers asked him in 1406 to become the prior of their monastery and later even the abbot of the community. And there was nothing that Lorenzo Giustiniani would have liked better than that, being fully satisfied

with the spiritual realizations and pleasures his life on the solitary island afforded him. But the rumour of his holiness began to spread more and more, and finally Pope Eugene IV decided to raise him to the dignity of bishop of the diocese of Castello (Olivolo). As a bishop Lorenzo Giustiniani, although being dragged against his will from the inconspicuousness and seclusion of his God-devoted life of prayer and contemplation, turned his indefatigable zeal to his new office, giving so great an example of a holy and self-sacrificing life in word and deed, that in 1451, on the death of the bishop of Rialto, Pope Nicholas V reunited the two dioceses—that of Rialto and that of Castello (Olivolo) into which the Venetian territory had been divided until then—raising them to the grade of a patriarchate and naming Giustiniani the first patriarch of Venice.

Age and bad health prevented Lorenzo Giustiniani from enjoying the honours of this high office for long. He died five years later on the 8th of January, 1456.

Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani, little known though he be to the general reader, occupies an important position in the history of Italian mysticism. The fact of all his works being originally written in Latin may have been the cause of keeping him more or less unknown down to the present day, although his writings are full of true spiritual fervour and animated by deep sincerity and feeling.

Of his life and works might be said in the beautiful words of Thiruppan Alvar:

“Eyes drunk with His beauty—will they ever wander to the transient joys and vain delusions of the earth?”

Three things were specially dear to his heart: the solitary life, prayer,

and chastity,—and to these he refers again and again in his writings, exalting their worth and significance in the life of the earnest spiritual aspirant.

The following passages are taken from different books and are in no way meant to be exhaustive:

“Virginity makes us like the angels in the purity of body and soul, and, in so far as this is granted to human weakness, it makes us participants in those gifts which we shall have in common with them in the heavenly home, according to Christ’s words:

“ ‘For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.’ In the meantime, during the life on earth, nothing equals virginity. Overcoming the forces and limitations of nature and closely following the traces of the heavenly spirits, it makes us foretaste the delights of future life and eternal happiness.”

Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani gives a very prominent place to prayer and recollection, stressing again and again the salutary effects and the importance of such practices, if done in the right spirit. So he says:

“Of all spiritual practices, of all the duties of Christian piety, none serves better than prayer in keeping up the virtuous habits of the soul, in increasing the zeal for our moral improvement. It is an act of our spirit guided by the lights of eternal wisdom, inflamed by the ardour of the Holy Ghost, which, if done in purity of heart, does not need any ornament of words, for the Divine Spirit Himself instructs us as to what we ought to do. And prayer does not consist in the movement of the lips, nor in the sound of the voice, but in an intimate thought of adoration, in firm intention and sincere affection. Many pray with the

mouth, but few, alas, pray with the heart."

"Throw off the burden of iniquity which bends thee towards the earth and earthly things, shake off the oppressing weight of thy impure passions, wash the stains of thy face and with a soul thus cleansed go onward confident, direct thy prayers to the Lord, confide in Him, think that He is thy brother, that He is blood of thy blood, flesh of thy flesh. Look attentively at His wounds, study His bleeding heart, the scars on His hands and feet, and then thou shalt understand how great ought to be thy confidence in Him. Could He, Who gave Himself wholly, refuse thee anything? Contemplate if thou canst the Word of God, and thou shalt see that thou livest in Him, for all that has been created has its life from Him."

"O vivifying Life in which live all things, vivify also me, though not with the life of the flesh, but with that of the spirit. Make that I live in Thee and Thou in me. For none truly lives who does not live for Thee. Thou hast spoken the sweet consoling words—ah, words sweeter indeed than the honey of the flowers: 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.'—Yea, Thou art the Way of those who believe, the Truth of those who contemplate, the Life of those who reign together with Thee in Bliss Eternal."

"When the Lord wished to give the Israelites that heritage, which He had intended for them, and to make them enter the promised land, irrigated by sweet waters and filled with honeycombs, He ordered them above all to make war upon the peoples inhabiting those happy regions till they had vanquished and subjected them in order that they might enjoy in peace

the possession of their fields and their cities.

"Now, these enemies are the senses. And the promised land is solitude, in which it is not possible to taste peace so long as the senses have not been subjugated. For it is they who occupy our hereditary land, who usurp our property and lay it waste, preventing it from flowering and giving fruits of goodness and justice. The senses pervert our reason with thousands and thousands of impurities by which they are made foul, and imprison it, dragging it towards darkness and death. Because of such imprisonment reason is bereft of light and guidance, remains astonished and stupefied, as it were, incapable of even listening to the most salutary warnings.

"Who could tell how many obstacles, how many impediments the senses place in the way of our morally perfecting ourselves? Through the senses the soul sucks in the pestiferous poison of sin. When we lend our ears to him who speaks badly of our neighbour or holds dishonest conversation, does it not seem as if a breath of death were passing into our heart? And have not the words we listen to the power of giving birth in us to an infinitude of visions and pictures, so that the troubled heart becomes agitated like a ship tossed hither and thither by the tempestuous waves of the sea? Who is there that does not know how prejudicial is the flattery of the eyes? How the smiles and blandishments of a woman, the lustre of jewels, the glitter of gold, the splendour of dwellings and gardens awaken our concupiscence? These pictures that dissipate the soul's concentration, that destroy it, put burning desires in the heart which disturb its peace, waste all energy of good and drag us into the mire. And even if we do not fall into sin, we are at least assailed

by an invincible languor, half-heartedness, and aversion.

“Let us, therefore, watch attentively that the enemy does not enter our house to rob it, to destroy it with the ardours of his passions or with the deadly chill of his inertia.”

And the strain and tension produced by this constant watchfulness, which is the *sine qua non* of all spiritual striving in Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani's eyes, can only be minimized and sweetened by prayer.

“In prayer the soul is cleansed of sin, charity receives food, faith is made firm, hope strengthened, the mind is gladdened; Divine emotions are kindled by prayer, the heart is purified, Truth discovered, temptations are conquered, sadness flees, feelings are renewed, weakened virtue is repaired, half-heartedness takes its leave, and the rust of vice is consumed. And in prayer are not missing living sparks of heavenly desires, amidst which burns the flame of Divine Love. Great are the glories of prayer. Great are its privileges. The heavens are open to it. All secrets are unveiled to prayer and the ears of God are always attentive to it.”

To Lorenzo Giustiniani prayer is spiritual refreshment. It is a breath of the Holy Ghost, as it were, by which the devotee's heart is strengthened and, at the same time, transformed, so that his desire for spiritual things and his disgust for all kinds of sensual pleasures and enjoyments steadily increases. He sees the proof of this in our own daily experience and in the effects we feel after really sincere and deep prayer and meditation, the moment we try to become fully conscious of them. He finds in the strengthening of all our good intentions and of the spirit of sacrifice and self-surrender to the Divine, even unto death, the best proof

of his assertion, a proof which can be easily verified by any sincere aspirant in his own life.

“There are some people who take exception to the solitary life, saying: ‘Does God perhaps belong only to the solitary and not also to the man of the world? Can one not, even while living in the world, attend to the works of compassion and charity, give food to those who are hungry and drink to those who are thirsty, clothe the naked, attend the sick, accommodate the pilgrims, comfort the prisoners, bury the dead, give advice to the erring, console the afflicted, in short, practise all the duties of brotherly love and Christian compassion? And do not the Holy Scriptures disapprove of solitude, saying: ‘Woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up?’”

“Ah, how remote from Truth are those who speak in such a strain! How is it possible, while being in the world, to attend to one's own inner edification? He who is enveloped in the affairs of the world loses the habit of inner conversation, dissipates himself wholly in outward things, is subjected to a thousand temptations, a thousand attractions, a thousand dangers of falling into sin. The world is an ocean infested by pirates, a land of robbery where the robbers despoil the wayfarers and attack the houses to steal the treasures. It is the kingdom of iniquity where the mighty oppress the poor with open violence. The cunning, with their tricks and their impostures, deceive the simple, the ambitious continuously outrun the honest. Where is equity, where holiness? Justice is banished from the world, truth is not tolerated therein; yea, everything is confusion and disorder. There is no reverence for the highest laws, no respect for friendship and for good faith between

men. The unchained passions rouse enmities, hatred, discord, wars. Men are hard-hearted and barbarous : shamelessness triumphs, adultery is a common thing, discords rise again and again unceasingly, the most shameful and dishonest passions are tolerated in the world with impunity. Ambition holds sway, pride and vanity erect a pedestal for those who deserve to be dragged into the mire and who should be despised by all.

“And you call him stupid who separates himself from this hell of miseries and sufferings, of misfortunes and disease, of hunger and cold, of poverty and pain, desperation and death? You would like to find fault with him who despises the world and tramples on it as one tramples on a faded flower, which begins to decay as soon as it is plucked? Fools, you speak of the solitary life as a blind man would speak of colours, because you have never tasted its sweetness. You ignore that the Lord particularly seeks out the solitary that they may not grow cold in this love of Him, and grants them special favours and consolations because of their having repudiated those of this world. For them says the Prophet:

‘Fleeing, I withdrew myself and remained in solitude.’ And David sang in the Psalm:

‘Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man : thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues.’ ”

Being a true devotee of the Highest, Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani knew far too well that the Lord will not dwell in the same heart that encloses worldly desires and worldly impurities and that the foremost condition for His coming and the realization of His presence are renunciation and purity of body and mind.

“In order to realize the Self, you have to scale the highest peak of renunciation.” If this is not recognized in the life of a devotee, his yearning for the higher life is not sincere, and His God is after all a verbal affair, an affair of self-seeking lip-homage and nothing more. So long as the devotee prays : —‘Give me this, give me that. Do not allow this or that to happen to me’, his prayer is nothing but the expression of his selfishness and his clinging to worldly enjoyments, gross or subtle. Renunciation and purity of body and mind, i.e. freedom from ‘all desire for enjoyment, will always be the very basis of a truly spiritual life.

Speaking of the delights of Divine communion Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani says:

“As the light of the sun conquers the light of the moon and stars, so the sweetness and the chaste delights of him who comes to possess true wisdom surpass all satisfactions, whether of the body or of the mind, that any created being can give us. For these pleasures, though they may seduce and tempt our inclinations and occupy our heart, never succeed in satisfying our desire. The very shortness of their duration is made to torment the human mind which, by a natural disposition, aspires to enjoy unceasingly that which it loves. Whatever is unstable and passing can never content a soul created for eternal bliss.

“Thus all that which is not God, being imperfect, can never entirely satisfy a person who devotes his love to it, for, owing to a principle of providence, human nature tends always to seek something more perfect, more noble, more elevated. Now, there is no thing worthier, no occupation nobler than the search after Truth which attracts us the more, the more clearly we understand It. For this reason

Jesus said to His Heavenly Father: 'And this is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and the Saviour whom thou hast sent.'

"No creature can ever suffice another: only God, being infinite, can suffice an infinitude of creatures and Himself. He who seeks to quench his thirst, should not stop at the first streamlet he meets, but he should seek that limpid, pure and perennial source, that source of which the Prophet says: 'In thee alone is found the source of life, in thy light alone can we find the light which our being needs and which must redeem us from darkness and misery.'

"This spring comes down from heaven and bedews the hearts of the faithful according to their needs. Its presence is not manifest by outward signs, but it gives the soul an inner light, a heavenly serenity and calmness. To some it gives wisdom, to others knowledge, to others again discrimination.

"The word which comes from the lips of God, the Eternal Word, germinates in the hearts so that those who begin to live in the service of God are like trees clothing themselves with flowers in the bright days of spring, whereas those who are already advanced in spiritual life, are like fruit-trees in autumn, bearing large quantities of apples, fragrant and beautiful to the eye, while the Lord's blessing rains on them the heavenly dew of His consolation and of His grace.

"To behold God, to live with God Who is all for all, to have God as the Highest Good, such shall be the reward of the Chosen. In the Highest Good there is supreme happiness, supreme joy, true freedom, perfect charity, eternal safety, eternal tranquillity. In Him is found complete joy,

perfect science, beauty and attraction, bliss without a shadow of disturbance. There reign peace, piety, goodness, light, virtue, honesty, joy, sweetness, glory, praise, rest and harmony. So shall be happy in God and with God whoever is found cleansed of sin. He shall behold God as he pleases, shall enjoy God without contrasts, shall possess Him in all eternity."

The above passages may not be sufficient for a true appreciation and valuation of Saint Lorenzo Giustiniani's work, but they may be a small contribution to show the general reader the essential unity of Divine Thought, no matter what is the garb in which It comes to us through one of Its servants. Lorenzo Giustiniani may be but one of the smaller stones in the marvellous pattern and the wealth of different shades of the Divine mosaic, but even then, the beauty and expression of the whole design can often be marred by the lack of just a few such stones and the world be made poorer thereby.

We shall end these quotations by giving part of one of Giustiniani's beautiful and touching prayers in which he pours out all his longing for the Divine.

"Love me, O Lord, for if Thou lovest me not, I shall not be able to know Thee nor to approach Thee. None can love Thee without Thy grace if his heart be not pure, serene and suffused with celestial light. Come down to me, O Serene Light, make my heart restful and calm. Give me Thy peace. O True Peace, My God, O Serene Peace, Quiet Peace, Sweetest Peace, where the eye of the mind is not dimmed nor the state of the heart, where there is rest eternal."

Coming to the Essence, we come to all, but coming to a great teacher or prophet in a spirit of exclusiveness, we come to none, not even to him, because

then he is seen as something separate and unique, and That of Which he is but one of the innumerable aspects is lost sight of. When a particular great one is seen against the unchanging and undivided background of the Divine and as one with It, there is no danger in following his words, for then the Essence is recognized as something all-inclusive, possessing a greater reality than he, but seeing him as unique and essentially separate in nature from those before him or after him, who, too, have been and will be the instruments and messengers of the Divine, leads the devotee to bigotry, self-assertion in the name of his particular creed, and to slow but certain fossilization, as has been the case again and again in the history of the message of prophets and incarnations through all the centuries.

The moment the Divine is limited or tied to one particular form and period

alone, Its spirit is hidden from our eyes and Its message distorted and misunderstood. Wherever there is the exclusiveness of the bigot, there Truth is crucified and the way is paved for spiritual death and materialism, because it is blasphemy and one of the most noxious forms of self-assertion under the cloak of religion to limit Him Who is taught to be Love and to make Him subservient to one's own petty likes and dislikes, which, in most cases, have their roots deep down in the soil of ignorance and of the desire for power.

So let us all sincerely pray to Him to give us greater discrimination and greater love for His all-comprehensive aspect, no matter what particular path we ourselves may be endeavouring to follow. Only when the ocean is recognized can the true nature and meaning of the wave be grasped.

KĀLI, THE MOTHER

BY MALLIKA ROSS

Everyone sings praises to Mothers today,*
 Gentle, indulgent, sweet-voiced Mothers.
 But I sound a trumpet-like call to Thee,
 Oh Kāli, thou terrible Goddess of Death!
 Destroyer of demons, slayer of 'self-ness',
 Make me Thy battleground. Advance on the field,
 Thy black hair swaying in rhythm
 With the brandishing of Thy bloody sword!
 But in the midst of the gory combat,
 In the fury of Thy fearless fight,
 Let not the splashing of demon's blood
 Obscure, from Thy eyes, my heart.
 For thereon flies the banner of white,
 My heart is forever at peace with Thee.
 Though besieged by fierce enemies
 It is loyal to Thee, Mother.
 Oh Empress of Existence, Power of Siva,
 My heart is Thine—my heart is Thee!

* Written on "Mother's Day", May 10, 1936.

HISTORY OF THE VEDÂNTIC THOUGHT

BY SWAMI SATSWARUPANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

Sankara's main contribution to Indian philosophy is his theory of *Mâyâ* or *Becoming*. Brahman or Being, which is also Consciousness and Bliss, is in Itself nothing but Being; nothing can be predicated of It. The Absolute cannot be expressed in language nor conceived by the mind, for to conceive or to express is to limit. No amount of accumulation of relatives, however vast that may be, can make up the Absolute; sums of finites can give us vast finites but not the infinite—vastness is not infinitude. This is Nirguna or Nirvisesha Brahman or Brahman as It is in Itself, felt in intuition transcending the limits of mind. With the Absolute there can be no creation, for creation, bound by time as it is, is limited, relative, fleeting. The Absolute has no change, no transformation, for then it will be relative. We cannot say It becomes. It simply is. And "isness" involves awareness as awareness involves "isness". Being always the unruffled same It is Bliss. Brahman is Being-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. Here Sankara stops. He is as much an Ajâtavâdin, non-creationist, as his great-Guru Gaudapâda. To say that Sankara couples Nirguna Brahman with creation is to attribute to him what that great philosopher never dreamt. Really speaking (*Paramârthatah*) there is no creation; Brahman alone is.

But where the other philosopher has fought shy or stopped short without reaching the goal, Sankara's sharp intellect has penetrated deep into it.

We individuals feel we are and so are the other things of this wondrous world. And no philosophy is worth the name which does not give a rational explanation of creation. Gaudapâda can keep silent over it, but Sankara cannot, for the simple reason that he is to give to the world a systematic philosophy. The philosophies of the two are not different, if by philosophy we mean statement of unalloyed truth. When they state the *real truth*, they say: there has never been any creation; all is Brahman, not in the sense that there is an all and there is Brahman and they are not different but identical, but in the sense, there is no all, there is only Brahman, that which appears as all is not all but Brahman. But this is a rather superhuman point of view. Man must go beyond mind to understand this real nature of truth—truth not as grasped by mind but truth as it is. Man, however, has got a mind, and to him the real is that which is certified by the mind to be so—to be real, it must be grasped by the mind and stamped as true. Here Sankara leaves his grand-preceptor on the high pedestal and descends down to the human level to be of use to humanity.

So Sankara takes creation as a matter-of-fact (*Vyavahârîka*) truth. So long as there is a mind, there is the diversity of creation. It is not idealism. The outer world is not the creation of the mind. It is as real, as independently real, as the mind itself. Here Sankara is a realist of realists. To him the material world

is as real as the mental, the distinction between the two being that while the one is finer the other is grosser. And there is no end of these grades of fineness and grossness. It is difficult, rather impossible, to say where the province of one ends and that of the other begins—in fact mind is involved in matter. The creation as a whole is both beginningless and endless; and in it both the effects and their causes are eternally existent, the effects being more transitory in particular manifested forms and the causes more permanent, but all in the process of eternal transformations, eternal becomings. What is the nature of these becomings? Are they real or not? Are they being or non-being? Sankara's answer is, they are both or logically stated, they are none of both. For whatever thing of the world we observe minutely, we find something of it abiding and something changing. Nothing is reduced to naught—names and forms are constantly changing but their "isness", that whose names and forms they are, abides. And throughout these eternal, incessant transformations this remains absolutely unchanged. Now that which remains unchanged under all conditions is truly real—this is Sankara's definition of truth. Therefore according to this definition everything is true in one sense. Again at the same time and in the same 'locus', changes go on which debar him from calling everything true. So everything is true and not-true, being and non-being at the same time, which is impossible, and yet it is a fact. Experiencing it every moment of our lives in diverse ways, we cannot say, the world is not; and seeing everything of it perishing from moment to moment, we cannot say, it is, unless we equate 'is' with 'is not', creation with destruction, thereby doing violence to language

and experience itself. This is the nature of Becoming, of Mâyâ. It is neither real nor unreal; we cannot say it exists nor can we say it does not exist. So it has been defined as something inexpressible, other than being and not-being. In the midst of changes something abides, unchanged and unchangeable—this is Being. Looked at from this standpoint there is no Mâyâ—Mâyâ is that which is not (yâ mâ, sâ Mâyâ, the meaning of Mâyâ is got by interchanging the syllables of the word). Being does not change and non-being, because it is non-entity, cannot. What then will change? So whose is this Mâyâ or becoming?—is nonsense. But when we focus our attention on the products of Mâyâ or products which are Mâyâ i.e. on the changes, we find them alone, they are to all intents and purposes the dazzling realities compared to which what the saints, seers, and philosophers call Being is but a shadowy spectre. Change alone is life, permanence may relate to death. Change alone is true; if there be anything which does not change, it must be false, unreal. From this viewpoint of Vyavahâra Mâyâ is true. And from the philosopher's standpoint of reason and experience it is Sadasat, true-and-false, or if logic intervenes, it is neither this nor that—an inexpressible category, but by no means a non-entity (Abhâvât-mikâ). This world of mind and matter in a continuous simultaneous process of creation, preservation and destruction by mutual action and reaction is Mâyâ, mere becoming. We have seen, we cannot ask whose or whence it is. It, and everything of it, comes into being, grows, decays, dies and again comes into being in another form, and again completes the round. This goes on and on from eternity to eternity. If it, we are and see facts; above it, there is nothing to explain—it is all one

without a second. Our goal, however, according to Sankara, is to be the Being, that we always have been, by transcending becomings. This goal is to be attained by the realization of the true knowledge of our self, which is Being. Here crops up a great question that is very often asked. How can self or Being, which is consciousness become unconscious of its own nature? How can Bliss itself be caught up in the meshes of sorrows? Here the answer is just as before. Being or self has never "become", consciousness has never become unconscious, Bliss never experiences sorrows. Being is Being because it does not change; if it does, it is no Being. It is the mind, and not the self, that experiences all these; and mind is a product of Becoming, it moves within it and shares all its characteristics. Within it, it is a fact in interaction with numerous other facts; beyond it, it is not. So we are again debarred from asking whence it is and how it has come to take the place of the "I". These are not ingenious logical subtleties to silence opponents, but simple, honest truths, understandable and realizable by all who care.

What relation does this Mâyâ or Becoming bear to Brahman or Being? Though this question has been answered in a way, a few words more seem to be necessary. The relation is best expressed by the famous example of the imaginary snake in a piece of rope. In a half-lighted place there is a rope; a man takes it to be a snake, shrieks out in fright, and runs for life. Now what is the cause of all these? The imaginary snake of course. And where is it? It is not in the rope nor in the mind of the man; and yet it must be somewhere to be terribly experienced by the man. But ask the man and he will point out to the rope, though it has all along been as good a rope as ever. Mâyâ has the

same relation with Brahman as this imaginary snake has with the rope. Brahman is as good a cause of this universe as the rope is of the snake and all that followed. The truth is, Mâyâ, which is neither being nor non-being, is, acts, and presents facts, Becoming becomes. Had it been purely non-being, there could not have been all these. It is due to its resemblance to Being, which has been metaphorically called its touch with or nearness to it, that becoming is made possible.

So far about the material causality of Brahman. Its efficient causality can be understood thus. When we say that the potter is the efficient cause of the pot, we mean the potter's mind which planned the pot. Now mind is within Becoming, a particular stage in its process; and as such must ultimately depend on Being, even in the same way as matter does. Whether mind or matter, apart from their changing names and forms, they are nothing but the Spirit or Being, the unchangeable something that abides. Hence the efficient cause, the planning mind, derives its semblance of reality from this Being-Consciousness-Bliss. In this sense is Being the efficient cause of the universe. The planner, the plan and the thing planned, the executor, the execution and the thing executed—all derive their ultimate reality as well as its semblance from this Being. It is to make people understand this that Brahman or Being has been called both the material and the efficient cause of the universe—not that it has actually "become" all these, but that remaining ever unchanged (*Kutastha nitya*) it makes Becoming possible. It is not the source of the world in the sense that it should be or can be traced from one point in time or space to another. It is always the same Being everywhere, that appears from one particular stage

of consciousness to be a whirlpool of infinite becomings. In fact Being is, Becoming is not; and 'is' has or can have no relation with 'is not'.

Thus the Vedic monotheism or monism intuitively grasped and expressed in the language of intuition by the Rishis, and systematized with a bias towards intuition by Vyâsa, receives a thorough rationalistic explanation at the hand of Sankara, who without adding to or improving the truth of intuition (for it admits of no improvement or addition) has given such a powerful logical expression to the solutions of the knotty problems that he might be acclaimed as the highest fulfilment of Indian philosophy. The grand attempt of the Indian thought to reach the highest synthesis is seen materialized in Sankara's commentary on Vyâsa's *Brahma-Sutras*. The history of Vedânta philosophy after Sankara is a history of attacks and counter-attacks on and by the different theories of monism, qualified monism, and dualism or pluralism, generally based on misunderstandings of some sort and provoked not unoften by sectarianism, but yielding the good result of enriching the philosophical speculations of India.

There is one important point to note in the later non-Sankarite systems of philosophy. They are all philosophies of Becoming, with perhaps the solitary exception of that of Bhâskara, who steers a middle course. Sankara's philosophy, on the other hand, is a philosophy of Being and Becoming with a bias towards Being. And he has a deeper reason for doing so. The pains, that the scriptures before Sankara since the time of the earliest *Vedas* took, was to reveal the true nature of Being. But let us forget the works of Sankara including his bringing out of

separate editions of some of the *Upanishads* and we are sure to lose our way in the wilderness of the Vedic literature—it is so vast and varied that the central theme is apt to be lost sight of. It is Sankara who holds it aloft before our eyes. His mission of life was to bring this light of Being to all intelligent human beings. In his commentaries and short original Vedântic primers, he has made the nature of Being so vividly and yet so briefly clear that it was not approached by anyone before. The philosophy of Being has reached its acme in Sankara. But he has also given the philosophy of Becoming a due share, a subordinate place no doubt. To him Being really is and Becoming has *but* a pragmatic value—he would never omit the word 'but'. Being never 'becomes', Becoming never rises to Being—Being is Being, Becoming Becoming; Being is ever free, Becoming is ever, eternally, caught in the meshes of causation. Thus did he give the philosophy of Being the finishing touch; and the later commentators on the *Brahma-Sutras* were free to give that of Becoming any shape they liked.

When we say that the later commentators on the source-book of the Vedânta philosophy have built different philosophies of Becoming, we do not mean that they admit this. All of them claim that their attempts are to reveal the true nature of Being as described in the *Vedas*, particularly in the *Upanishads*. Their reading of the scriptures gives them their own particular notions of Being; they might or might not be true. Many centuries have elapsed in quarrelling over this, everyone is sticking to his own view as ever. But rightly or wrongly we take Being in the sense of Sankara i.e. that which does not change, and not that which does not change and yet changes. Taking Being in this sense we do not find any other school of

Vedânta dealing with Being; all come within the domain of Becoming. They do not admit the reality of Sankara's Being. It is as good as void to them. Starting with the world as real, as the real constituents of Brahman, they cannot lead themselves to believe in what they call a contentless Brahman of Sankara. Their Brahman is rich with infinite diversities constantly undergoing countless real modifications and yet remaining the same eternal witness. It is the creator, preserver, and destroyer of the universe, which is its body or real modification, and yet It does nothing. It is the only real doer and yet non-doer; it is the only enjoyer and yet It does not enjoy at all. Reason would not permit it. It involves a contradiction, which the upholders are conscious of. But they take their stand on the words of the *Vedas*, whose authority is unquestionable to them as well as to Sankara and his followers. But whereas Sankara and Sankarites would dive deeper to give a rational explanation to this seeming contradiction, they would not do so, on the ground that the attempt would involve what they consider to be a very dangerous conclusion, viz. of the denial of life and experience, which, according to them, can never be truly Vedic.

The arguments are weighty on both sides. We cannot deny life and experience on which reason is based, nor can we say what 'is' becomes 'is not' and what 'is not' becomes 'is'. Whether Sankara denies life and experience or not, we leave for the present, partly because what we have said is enough for a correct understanding of him and partly because we shall have to come to him again at the end. The fact remains, however, that all his opponents, past and present, and even some of the Western admirers of his philosophy, charge him with the denial of life, which

has gained ground because his followers never denied the charge. Let us now hear the three great adversaries of Sankara—Bhâskara, Râmânuja, and Madhva. Of these the latter two are famous for their dialectics; and the other, little known to fame before, is slowly coming to his own because of the intrinsic worth of his philosophy despite his lack of logic. In spite of their differences in many points among themselves, they all agree to differ from Sankara that Being really "becomes", the Absolute has become the relative. There is no real contradiction between the Absolute and the relative, between Being and Becoming. The very nature of the Absolute, of Being, is such that it includes the relative within it, that it 'becomes'. The contradiction that we find is due to our limited vision, to the incapacity of the intellect to grasp properly a thing which does not come within the range of its normal experience. When in the analysis of every little thing of the world we find something abiding in the midst of changing names and forms and activities, why are we not justified in conceiving of Being as remaining the same Being yet undergoing infinite becomings? Why should it be necessary at all to falsify names, forms and activities, to stultify Becoming, in order to keep Being intact? Where is the proof that finite logic, the logic that has derived all its laws from the study of finite, limited, perishable things, would equally hold good in the case of a Being which is, to all intents and purposes, just the opposite in character? When in every finite thing we find a power acting from within working transformations and remaining the same in the midst of all these changes, even when the forms are dissolved, what right have we to deny reality to such an omnipresent, omnipotent principle, only to satisfy a logic

whose applicability in that sphere is questioned?

Before we come to the answers given by the Sankarites let us state the viewpoints of these three founders of non-Advaitic philosophies. Of these the Bhedâbheda-vâdins (i.e. the upholders of the theory of unity-cum-difference) come first chronologically—Bhâskara in the early part of the 9th century and Nimbârka Yâdavaprakâsa in the 11th. Their main contentions are : (1) That Brahman or the Reality is both within and without the universe of matter and individual souls, both noumenal and phenomenal, static and dynamic, always with Visesha or difference though sometimes manifested and sometimes unmanifested, and never Nirvisesha of the Sankarites. (2) That creation is real and not illusory and its relation with Brahman is one of identity-in-difference. (3) That the evils of Samsâra are due to erroneous perception of difference and that Mukti or emancipation of the individual souls consists in “the realization of the unity of the finite and the infinite”, not by the sublation of the finite but by its highest fulfilment “as the essential and eternal moment or member of the infinite.” (4) And that Mukti being so, it is impossible to attain it while living—Jivanmukti is a myth. While agreeing in these essentials they have certain minor differences among themselves. Bhâskara holds that Chit and Achit, sentient beings and insentient matter, are parallel expressions of Brahman, thus admitting qualitative distinction between them. Moreover he has a leaning towards the Abheda texts, to him difference is adventitious and unity is the ultimate truth. His individual souls, though they are distinct in the state of bondage, will be one with Brahman when released from it. But

he explains the many by the admission of real limiting adjuncts of the Absolute. Whereas Yâdava does not admit any qualitative distinction between Chit and Achit—they being but the evolved and the involved states of consciousness. But they are eternal expressions of the Absolute with no hope of perfect union with It in any condition and eternally keeping up the relation of unity-in-difference, of part and the whole. He, however, does not find any necessity in conceiving of limiting adjuncts to the Absolute for the explanation of individuation. His Brahman is endowed with an immanent Parinâma Sakti or energy of evolution and involution, which is sufficient for the explanation of all facts of creation and dissolution. The philosophy of Nimbârka is more akin to Yâdava than to Bhâskara. Some have been led to think that Bhâskara’s delimiting adjuncts of the Absolute are something extraneous and as such his philosophy has the defects of dualism. This is in fact a wrong reading of Bhâskara. When he explicitly says that the individual souls and matter are parallel expressions or manifestations of the Absolute and when the delimiting adjuncts are nothing but mind and matter in some form or other, we cannot consistently charge the Âcharya’s system with dualistic defects. If this is admitted and when it is remembered that to him difference is adventitious and unity is the ultimate truth we cannot but admit that he is an absolutist with a thin difference from Sankara, whose Mâyâvâda he controverts. Yâdava and Nimbârka on the other hand are typical Bhedâbhedists, without the defects of the dualists, one might say.

(To be continued)

ATMABODHA

BY SWAMI SIDDHATMANANDA

यत्लाभान्नापरो लाभो यत्सुखान्नापरं सुखम् ।
यज्ज्ञानान्नापरं ज्ञानं तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५४ ॥

यत् लाभात् To which acquisition अपरः superior लाभः acquisition न no (अस्ति there is) यत् सुखात् to which happiness अपरं superior सुखम् happiness न no (अस्ति there is) यत् ज्ञानात् to which knowledge अपरं superior ज्ञानं knowledge न no (अस्ति there is) तत् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

54. Know That to be Brahman superior to which there is no other knowledge, bliss or acquisition.

यत् दृष्ट्वा नापरं दृश्यं यद्भुत्वा न पुनर्भवः ।
यज्ज्ञात्वा नापरं ज्ञेयं तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५५ ॥

यत् दृष्ट्वा Having seen which अपरं any other दृश्यं what is to be seen न not (अवशिष्यते remains) यत् भूत्वा becoming which पुनर्भवः re-birth न not (विद्यते is) यत् ज्ञात्वा having known which अपरं anything else ज्ञेयं what is knowable न not (अवशिष्यते remains) तत् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

55. Seeing which there remains nothing to be seen, becoming which there is no re-birth and knowing which there remains nothing to be known—know That to be Brahman.

तिर्यग्ूर्ध्वमधः पूर्णं सच्चिदानन्दमद्वयम् ।
अनन्तं नित्यमेकं यत् तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५६ ॥

तिर्यक् On the sides ऊर्ध्वम् above अधः below यत् that पूर्णं filled with सच्चिदानन्दम् Existence, Intelligence, Bliss अद्वयम् without a second अनन्तं infinite नित्यम् eternal एकं one तद् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

56. That which pervades the space above, below and on all sides, which is Existence, Knowledge, Bliss, and which is infinite, eternal, one, and without a second—know That to be Brahman.

अतद्व्यावृत्तिरूपेण वेदान्तैर्लक्ष्यतेऽव्ययम् ।
अखण्डानन्दमेकं यत् तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ५७ ॥

अव्ययम् Imperishable अखण्डानन्दम् everlasting bliss एकं one यत् which अतद्व्यावृत्तिरूपेण by the negation of all which is not That (Brahman) वेदान्तैः by the teachings of the Vedânta लक्ष्यते is indicated तद् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

57. Which is one, imperishable, everlasting bliss, and which¹ is indicated by the Vedânta by the negation of all which is not That—know That to be Brahman.

¹ Which is not That—Due to ignorance the Self seems to be identified with the non-Self, i.e. the body etc. The Vedânta teaches the method of discrimination of the.

Real from the unreal by the process of negation (*Neti, Neti*—Atman is not this, not this, etc.—*Bri. Up. II. iii. 6 ; III. ix. 26*) of all the objects of the phenomenal world. Thus this path of discrimination leads one to the realisation of the Self which is beyond the reach of the senses.

अखण्डानन्दरूपस्य तस्यानन्दलवाश्रिताः ।

ब्रह्माद्यास्तारतम्येन भवन्त्यानन्दिनोऽखिलाः ॥ ५८ ॥

तस्य अखण्डानन्दरूपस्य Of that essence of everlasting bliss आनन्दलवाश्रिताः having obtained a particle of bliss ब्रह्माद्याः अखिलाः all beings from Brahmâ downwards तारतम्येन in different degrees आनन्दिनः blissful भवन्ति become.

58. Obtaining a particle of that everlasting bliss, all beings from Brahmâ downwards, become blissful, in different degrees.

See *Taitt. Up. II. 7* and *Bri. Up. IV. iii. 32*.

तद्युक्तमखिलं वस्तु व्यवहारश्चिदन्वितः ।

तस्मात् सर्वगतं ब्रह्म क्षीरे सर्पिरिवाखिले ॥ ५९ ॥

अखिलं वस्तु All things तद् युक्तम् permeated by That व्यवहारः (every) action चित् intelligence अन्वितः associated with तस्मात् so अखिले क्षीरे सर्पिरिव like butter permeating all milk ब्रह्म Brahman सर्वगतं is all-pervading.

59. Everything is permeated by That and every action is associated with Intelligence ; so, like butter in milk Brahman pervades everything.

अनण्वस्थूलमहस्वमदीर्घमजमव्ययम् ।

अरूपगुणवर्णाख्यं तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ६० ॥

यत् Which (is) अनण्व not small अस्थूलम् not large अह्रस्वम् not short अदीर्घम् not long अजम् unborn अव्ययम् immutable अरूपगुणवर्णाख्यं known as without any form, attribute or colour तद् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

60. Which is neither small nor large, neither short nor long, which is unborn and immutable, and which is without any form, attribute or colour—know That to be Brahman.

यद्भासा भासतेऽर्कादि भास्यैर्यत् न भास्यते ।

येन सर्वमिदं भाति तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवधारयेत् ॥ ६१ ॥

यद्भासा The light by which अर्कादि the sun and other luminous bodies भासते shine यत् तु but which भास्यैः by the illumined objects न not भास्यते is illumined येन by which सर्वमिदं everything भाति shines तद् ब्रह्म इति अवधारयेत् know That to be Brahman.

61. The light by which are illumined the sun and other luminous bodies but Which is not illumined by them, and Which shining, everything shines—know That to be Brahman.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

An Unpublished Letter of Sister Nivedita contains some interesting ideas of the writer, expressed to an intimate friend of hers. . . . How India can solve the problem of modern economic competition and at the same time meet the demands of the human spirit is the theme of the Editorial, *Indian Individualism and the Modern Age*. . . . Dr. Nalini Kanta Brahma is a well-known professor of the Presidency College, Calcutta. *Knowledge and Liberation* lucidly explains how the Vedântic knowledge can emancipate man from the clutches of misery. . . . Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee shows at length how the human life cannot fulfil itself without solving *The Problem of Sorrow*. . . . Wolfram H. Koch presents to us in this issue a highly inspiring account of Saint Lorenzo Giustini's life and teachings. . . . Swami Satswarupananda deals with Sankara's contribution to the Vedânta philosophy in this portion of his continued article, *History of the Vedântic Thought*.

IS PHILOSOPHY WORTHWHILE ?

Philosophy in the West has been chiefly an intellectual and speculative quest after reality. Its history is a series of ingenious guesses, all of which have been refuted or are in process of refutation. It is notorious that after more than two thousand years of logic-chopping and legerdemain philosophers have arrived at no agreed body of doctrine with regard to any of the main problems that they set before themselves to solve. Years have only burdened philosophical vocabulary with forbidding technicalities, and philosophers are in-

creasingly taking shelter in the profundity of obscurity which hides the mysteries of philosophy from the irreverent gaze of the uninitiated. Many have, therefore, pertinently asked in the West—of what use is philosophy to humanity? Dr. F. C. S. Schiller tries to find out some use of Philosophy in an article in the July issue of the *Hibbert Journal*. The different conceptions of philosophy prevailing in the different centres of learning in Europe are not encouraging. At Oxford the aim of philosophy is held to be 'reflection'. But reflection has so far proved abortive. At Cambridge philosophy is aspiring to the position of a pseudo-science. But the philosophical analysis on which it prides itself is a verbal and ephemeral thing groaning under the weight of horrid technicalities. It is "liable to be superseded at any moment by the discoveries of the sciences". At Moscow the aim of philosophy is to fashion out new arguments in support of the truth of the Dialectical Materialism which has been raised to the status of a State religion. Though Muscovite philosophers may chafe under these restrictions of their intellectual freedom, the system has nevertheless the saving grace of relating speculation to social good. Here is enough to show how the intellectual centres have failed to justify the pursuit of philosophy.

To rescue philosophy from this plight Dr. Schiller has some suggestions to offer. It is of course easy to go gushing about the lofty aims of philosophy, but it can never galvanize it into life. For this purpose something must be done to transform "it into meaningful activity and to bring it into relations

with the problems of life." Philosophy, he opines, can still be useful if it only restricts itself to a particular sphere and defines a common aim for its votaries. And what is to be the common aim? As all the sciences deal with only the partial aspects of reality, there is urgent "need for something more than science, namely for a comprehensive or synoptic treatment that will combine the partial views of the various sciences and will instruct us how to think of reality as a whole and how we can read a single coherent sense into the whole of our experience". The claim is modest and need not be altogether new. It remains to be seen if philosophy in the West will ever resign itself to this fate in despair.

Two comments may be offered on the above. Philosophic quest even of the speculative type has not been altogether vain. Even if no great positive results have been achieved, philosophy has at least shown beyond dispute that the commonsense view of reality, on which science bases itself, is far from a true representation of the real. This has given a well-deserved shock to the self-complacency of the common men and the scientists who rarely trouble themselves about ultimate questions. Secondly, there has all along been a wrong approach to the fundamental problems. In early days philosophy was allied with religion. Later philosophy started on its independent career relying solely on reason. Though it thus freed itself from the miasma of theological dogmatism it has become doomed to failure by accepting intellect as the only guide to truth. If philosophy is to be rescued from the charge of barrenness it has to cease to be merely speculative and to recognize other approaches which have claimed to give a truer and surer insight into reality. It has to link itself to the spiritual realizations of saints and

prophets. It is true that intellectual categories fail utterly to mirror faithfully the revelations of spirit and that silence is more expressive of Truth than words. Yet the reason of man yearns for a glimpse of Truth. And the spiritual experiences afford the intellect the only ground for reading a comprehensive and coherent meaning running through the recurring flux of phenomena. The intellect will, to be sure, continue to doubt and despair, for there will not be complete satisfaction of the entire personality unless he comes face to face with Truth in deep meditation. And let it not be supposed that such a philosophy will always remain static, for it will be ever active squaring the newer discoveries of science with the inviolable truths of spirit.

SOCIAL LEGISLATION

A number of bills affecting the Hindu Society have been introduced in the Legislative Assembly. This has occasioned widespread reactions of a mixed character in the press. Many objections have been raised as regards their general character and detailed provisions. Whether the bills, when they become acts, will serve any useful purpose or not may be left to the judgment of readers, who are well acquainted with their nature and objects. In addition to such detailed and special criticisms, however, exception has been taken by a section of the people to the general principle of enactment of any social legislation whatsoever. It is claimed that society and religion should be outside the sphere of activity of politicians and that all along her history Indian society enjoyed immunity from political interference. It is worth examining the claim. Can any society claim to lie outside political influence? It is idle to claim that

politics should have nothing to do with society. It is taking too narrow and unreal view of state to ascribe to it mere police functions only. Even in the best days of a by-gone individualism and *laissez-aller* government was much more than a police affair concerned with the maintenance of vested interests alone. It is good to say with Thoreau that the least governed are the best governed, and it is true that some of the most revolutionary political thinkers look forward to a society where there will be no government. But as long as the brute and the savage lurk in man, there will always be need of governmental action for the maintenance of justice. Indeed so far as one can see there will be ever increasing interference in social and other matters by governments in future. Everybody has a right to hold to his peculiar belief in social and religious matters, but when such beliefs seek to express and perpetuate themselves in degrading customs to the harm of many government must interfere, and it will interfere if it is not identified with the interests of the dominant class.

Looking back to the past of India also we find that it is useless to claim that society was not interfered with politically. It is true that in olden days in India as, to a more or less extent, everywhere the initiative for change in social and religious matters come from leaders of society and religion who were rarely endowed with political authority. They enjoyed a large measure of autonomy in social and other matters. But what that autonomy signified and what claim has it for a new charter of life? In days when wisdom sought poverty and privilege came to it unasked, when the spirit was not frozen up by cold custom and when the wise ruled like Plato's philosopher-kings a great measure of general weal was attained.

But in days of degradation it meant the rule of a chosen few or a class who blinded by self-interest forged all sorts of fetters for the under dog. The social rule derived its strength from the fact that the political authority was always there to enforce such social legislation by its powerful sanction. Though the social leaders did not wield political authority there was a close bond of interest between them and those who held political power. The mass had no voice. It is difficult to imagine they were content under it. Quite apart from this there was a good deal of social and religious legislation directly by the political authority which felt itself strong to dispense with such an alliance and tradition. At present the political power has changed hands, and with this the old association between leaders of society and men in political authority has been divorced. Under an alien government the long suppressed voice has to some extent become articulate. It is clamouring for change which is bound to come. When social leaders merely look on while millions groan under oppression, it is futile to cry down political agitators and demand that society should be left undisturbed. Political agitators sometimes turn out to be good social reformers. Leadership is slipping from the hands of an almost fossilized dominant class. With the opening out of equal opportunities to influence and power the top dog is going down and the influence of the multitude is being felt in all matters. Government after all is the enforcement of the will of the dominant class, and with the advent of democracy it will be the enforcement of the will of the majority. There is much in the past which has to be remembered and learnt, but it is madness to try to bring back the entire past as it was, for the past never returns.

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ON
RAMKRISHNA MISSION

While addressing the students of the Ramkrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras, on the 7th of October last Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru made the following observations on the activities of the Ramkrishna Mission :

"I have been going about travelling from place to place, from city to city, and from province to province, and one of the surprising things I came across was to find these efficient, well-organized, enormous Homes of Service run by the Ramkrishna Mission. They carry on quietly their work without much advertisement, and that is why, perhaps,

in this world of advertisements, it surprises one to find these big institutions functioning quietly, silently, and efficiently. Whenever any catastrophe occurs, such as, earthquakes and floods, many people shout about, run up there and do rescue work, and yet I have found almost always the most efficient agency doing service has been the Ramkrishna Mission. I must confess I was not even aware that in Madras City there was this great institution. I have come here and been taken round. I have been impressed more and more with not only the solid buildings that have been put up, but the whole background of this institution, which background I have found to be the common background of all these Ramkrishna Mission institutions."

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

GITA RAHASYA OR THE SCIENCE OF KARMA YOGA (IN 2 VOLS). BY BALA GANGADHAR TILAK. Translated by Bhalchandra Sitaram Sukthankar, M.A., LL.B. Published for Tilak Bros. by R. B. Tilak, Lokamanya Tilak Mandir, 568, Narayan Peth, Poona City. Pp. LXXX (Vol. I)+XLVIII (Vol. II)+1,210+123. Price Vol. I Rs. 6. (In India). Vol. II Rs. 4. (In India).

The publishers deserve warm congratulations for bringing out the English translation of Tilak's inestimable work, the *Gita Rahasya*, for the benefit of the English knowing public. The work hardly needs any introduction to the Indian readers. It has already been translated into over half a dozen vernaculars of India and has run into several editions in some. The influence the work has exerted upon the thought and lives of a numerous reading public in north India is profound, though not so apparent. This is testimony enough to the greatness and excellence of the work which has attained the position of a classic in its original Marathi. It is no exaggeration to say that it stands as a monument to not only Tilak's greatness but also to the Maratha genius.

In some respects the Marathas are the Germans of India. And the work under review shows at its best the outstanding qualities of Maratha scholarship, deep painstaking labour, and profound thoroughness which are usually associated with German learning in Europe.

Tilak tried to combine some of the noble elements of the traditional Indian culture in his person. Indian civilization has always kept Sreyas (*summum bonum*) in the forefront of all human aims and endeavours. Accordingly it has attempted to regulate the worldly activities of man in a way which would facilitate the realization of the Supreme Goal of human life. Here all activities have been based upon a metaphysical basis. Hence the greatest social and political reformers in India have been persons who made Sreyas the aim of life. The tradition remains yet unbroken. Tilak who rose to be an All-India leader on the eve of his life fell into love with the *Gita* early in his career and sought to mould his life according to his understanding of the teachings of that work. Right through his eventful career he tried to follow what he felt to be the message of the *Gita*. And after Tilak

Gandhi, upon whom has fallen Tilak's mantle in the political field, has made the *Gitâ* the ideal code of his life. The work is thus written by a man who took no mere academic interest in it but was deeply exercised over the problem of duty and non-duty and the ultimate aim of human life. One, therefore, finds in the work a spirit of devotion, a sincerity of purpose and a strength of conviction which are sure to impress the reader and fire him with inspiration. It will evoke regard for Hindu culture in doubting minds, and every Hindu is sure to derive immense benefit from its perusal.

The work embodies Tilak's mature judgment about the character, teaching and historical significance of the *Gitâ*, formed after a period of close and deep study spread over several decades. It is indeed the study of the *Gitâ* which made him dive into his far-reaching Vedic researches. Tilak's main contention is that the *Gitâ* preaches the gospel of energism (Karma Yoga) for the Enlightened as well as the unenlightened. The *Gitâ* of course refers to other paths which lead to realization such as Pâtanjala Yoga and Renunciation of works, but he maintains that the gospel of energism has been given the place of honour and that the Lord enjoins the path of action on the Enlightened for the benefit of humanity (Lokasamgraha). The *Gitâ* strikes a new note which is not to be found in the Upanishad, namely, the promulgation of the doctrine of Desireless Action on a devotional basis as a means to Realization. The germs of the new doctrine are, to be sure, found in the *Vedas*. But though we find Religion of Works in the *Vedas* we do not find the clear enunciation of the path of Desireless Action and though devotion to God is clearly found in the *Vedas* nowhere we find devotion to Parameswara in human form. The *Gitâ* also created a new synthesis between the Vedânta and the Sâmkhya system. Vedântists of earlier date all totally ignore the Samkhya, but the author of the *Gitâ* has accepted the Sâmkhya theory of the evolution of the cosmic process on the basis of the Vedânta metaphysics. It can hardly be disputed that the central teaching of the *Gitâ* is Desireless Action as a means to Realization, keeping in view not only what is found in the work but also the occasion and circumstances of its preaching. The *Gitâ* undoubtedly prescribes the path of Action for the unenlightened. But it will be difficult to concede to Tilak that the Lord compul-

sorily enjoins the ordinary (Laukika) actions even upon the Enlightened. It is easy to see, remembering the historical background, that the *Gitâ* was preached first at a time of cultural crisis when all and sundry bent towards the path of Renunciation regardless of the fact whether they were fit for it or not. Hence the *Gitâ* taught that by the selfless performance of the duties of one's station of life one could attain Salvation (Moksha). Keeping in mind also the person addressed to it will be unwise to extend the generalization to all. The *Gitâ* was not taught for the benefit of the Enlightened nor even for their guidance. The Enlightened do work for the benefit of humanity even if they only sit and stand by. The question of duty is impertinent in connection with them even as it is so in connection with the Lord (Na me parthâsti kartabyam trisu lokesu kadâchana. G. 3. 22). The Enlightened view the world from a different plane; their idea of Lokasamgraha is different from that of the unenlightened. Without helping to carry on the cosmic process in a gross way they benefit the world in a far better and more enduring manner by silently disseminating honesty, purity and knowledge by thought and word. The greatest mystics of the world were the greatest reformers. Though they renounced worldly life they did not sit idle but scattered blessings like the wind of spring all around. The all-embracing love of a Buddha or a Christ has energized thousands and hundreds of thousands for centuries and millenniums into most fruitful actions for the benefit of humanity. And thanks to their renunciation and love issuing out into finest moral sentiments and behaviour the world is a far better place to live in today than it was 3 millenniums ago.

The greater part of the work is devoted to the examination of the solution of the ethical problem as found in the *Gitâ*. The *Gitâ* is a great science of ethics. Tilak examines the grounds upon which the materialists have sought to erect an ethical structure and finds them faulty or inadequate. The only sure basis of an enduring ethics is the metaphysical doctrine of spiritual benefit. The metaphysics of the *Gitâ* and the Sâmkhya theory of cosmic evolution are fully dealt with. The precise meanings of important terms in the *Gitâ* are clearly and logically brought out. The philosophy of Devotion adumbrated in the *Gitâ* is also adequately treated. It is impossible to indicate the

comprehensive nature and the excellence of the work as a whole in a review. The reader must become acquainted with the original. Tilak's historical considerations will be found interesting and valuable. He is rightly of opinion that the *Gîtâ* forms an integral part of the original Mahâbhârata. He adduces grounds, not to be lightly dismissed, for the belief that the Bhâgavata religion was responsible for the introduction of the devotional element into Buddhism in the form of Mahâyâna Buddhism and into Judaism in the form of Christianity. His ascription of the Brahma-Sutras to the same author who composed the *Gîtâ* would, however, jar on many if only because the Brahma-Sutras refute and ignore the Samkhyan theory of cosmic evolution which is accepted in the *Gîtâ* though upon a Vedântic basis.

Finally, a word for the translation. The translator has attained a very high success in his work. The rendering is always lucid and smooth and can be followed without any effort whatever.

EVEREST: THE CHALLENGE. By Sir Francis Younghusband. *Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd. 35-36 Paternoster Row, London, E. C. 4. Pp. 240. Price 5/6 net.*

The mysterious and the unknown, the mighty and the inaccessible have always thrown a challenge to the spirit of adventure in man. They have prompted him to brave the most dreadful dangers and to wrest ever newer victories from a defiant nature. Slowly but progressively, however, nature is unfolding her secrets to the indomitable spirit of man. The Alps and the Andes have been conquered, the Poles no longer hide any mystery from him, but the most dominant physical feature on the face of the earth, the Everest in the Himalayas, has until now successfully mocked his impudent attempt to stand on its summit. It is, however, plain that it will not be able much longer to withstand successfully the persistent attack of man. Though the third expedition has failed, the climbers thrice attained to a height of over 28,000 ft. (twice in the same year during the second expedition and once during the first), that is to say, came to an altitude only a thousand feet less than that of the peak itself. Should the necessary permissions be forthcoming, the Everest will not long remain unconquered.

The work under review traces the genesis of the idea of climbing the Everest and

briefly recounts the story of the first two expeditions; it also sets out the results achieved and the future prospects. We have along with these short accounts of the German and the British expeditions to the Kamet, the Trisul peaks and the basin of the Nandâ Devi. The author is one who knows the Himalayas intimately; in fact he was born in them. He spent years in them, crossing and recrossing the chain several times. He is also one of those who actively fostered the Everest 'idea'. During the three years of his presidentship of the Royal Geographical Society he made the Everest venture the chief feature of his term of office. Though the expeditions have failed so far as their main object is concerned, a number of extremely valuable results have been obtained, quite apart from the fact that 28,000 ft. still constitutes the highest altitude attained by any man till now. Everest climbing has shown man's wonderful capacity for slow adaptation. It was supposed that man could not do without oxygen above 20,000 ft. and that he could hardly sleep there. Experience has, however, proved that if man does not rush the mountains but approaches the higher altitudes only by slow degrees he can dispense with oxygen at a much higher altitude than 20,000 ft. In fact it is believed that he will even be able to reach the summit of Everest without it. As regards sleep Smythe slept soundly for 13 hours at a height of 27,400 ft. Not the least among other results achieved are the growth of a spirit of comradeship between the climbers and the hillmen serving as porters, and the awakening of a genuine spirit of adventure among the latter.

To describe the work as a mere description of difficult mountain climbing would, however, be doing great injustice to the author. The work is more than a bare recital of facts and conclusions; it is a philosophy of the mighty Himalayas. The author writes as a mystic and philosopher. The challenge of the Himalayas is not to the heroic nature of man and his passion for adventure alone; it is an invitation to his spiritual being to rise above his surroundings and to feel the unity with nature. "And the attempt to reach the summit of the highest mountain in the world may be taken as symbolical of this striving in the heart of all living things to do something more than only adapt themselves to their surroundings: to stand superior to them. Man, as the crown of creation, in striving not merely to adapt himself to

the loftiest regions, but to rise in spirit above them, is surpassing himself and reaching upward to a higher level of being." A travel in the Himalayas is no mere expedition, it is a pilgrimage. The stupendous size of the mountains, the majesty of the peaks, the infinite beauty and variety of the rolling snow-capped chains and the flora and fauna are sure to strike the deep spiritual chords of a traveller in this holy land. And as one "has become more at ease among the Himalayan giants and been able to collect himself and sum up his experiences, he has felt something in the mountains corresponding with something within himself. The more profoundly he has meditated on this the deeper has grown the correspondence. And the deeper the correspondence has grown the more overwhelming has been the beauty which he beholds.

"The beauty on the face of the mountains is but the outward expression of the Motive Power at work in the heart of the world. And to put himself in ever increasing intimacy of communion with this Fountain Source of Things will, from that time forth, be his constant endeavour.

"The creatures' struggle for mere existence will then be over and his true life have begun. Man will begin to feel the connection and continuity of his own life with the life of Nature, and to see the real universe behind the universe of outward appearance. He will seek to deepen this sense of unity with Nature, and as he succeeds so will his joy increase: he will feel himself exalted to a higher order of being.

"Thus will he take the challenge of Everest to heart and in his own due time give a ready answer."

In this way the author feels the Himalayas will in future exercise a tremendous spiritual influence upon mankind, as they have already done upon the Hindus. The expeditions are paving a way to such an exercise. We have read the work with interest, and we are sure readers will derive great pleasure and profit from this epic story of man's physical and spiritual venture, written almost with a devout spirit. A slight inaccuracy has, however, crept into the work. "Himalaya" writes the author in the preface, "is the short for Himá-láya, snow-abode." As a matter of fact it is a combination of the words Hima+Álaya, meaning of course snow-abode. The book contains a number of excellent illustrations.

FREEDOM AND CULTURE. By Sir S. Radhakrishnan. *G. N. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pp. 158. Price Re. 1.*

The book comprises a selection from ten lectures of Sir Radhakrishnan, the majority of which are addresses delivered at various Indian Universities. They deal with a variety of subjects. It is accordingly no easy matter for the reviewer to give an idea of the book as a whole, for the sort of unity which one finds in a work dealing with a single subject is not to be expected in it. Nevertheless there are some common strands running through this variegated texture, which supply some sort of cohesion to the whole. All through his writings stands revealed the deep love which the Professor bears for his motherland. He longs for a better, freer India. The social, political and economic abuses and injustices sting him to the quick. They are an outrage on reason and sentiment. He exhorts his student audience to bring about a better state of things by the cultivation of freedom of outlook and behaviour. If he is impatient with cramping traditions and senseless iniquities he is no doctrinaire radical. He believes and glories in the past of India. But here again he is no conservative. What he pleads for is a conservatism which is constructive. He is eager that the past of India should be adequately studied not because the past has to be revived, but because the past lays down the condition of our future progress. The past, moreover, affords inspiration for reform. Before the age of scholasticism descended like a pall of gloom upon her, in the middle ages, India showed a wonderful dynamism in spirit and action, ever ready to create and accept new elements of truth. "If we study the history of Indian culture from the beginning of its career somewhere in the valley of the Indus four or five millenniums ago down till today, the one characteristic that pervades it throughout its long growth is its elasticity and ability to respond to new needs." Our present ills are of our own making. We cannot blame others for our political and economic subjection. If India wants to rise she must sweep away the abuses which have brought her to the present state of humiliation. Society must be built on equalitarian principles. He is an inveterate believer in democracy. Real democracy is not something related to government alone. It is an attitude of life expressing itself in equality

of behaviour in all walks of life. Freedom of outlook alone can save India. He is no reforming enthusiast who believes that great things can be done by paper resolutions and counting of votes. Reform must begin with the transformation of the individual. Addressing the all-India Women's Conference

in 1933 he said: "Social reform will follow if you undertake the less exacting task of individual re-making." Dr. Radhakrishnan combines facility of expression with clarity of thought, and it is an enjoyment and a profit to follow him. We, however, wish the price were a little less.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

SAN FRANCISCO AND OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

The Vedanta Society of San Francisco devoted an entire week to the celebration of the birthday centenary of Sri Ramakrishna. Two elaborate public meetings were held in San Francisco, in addition to a more informal and intimate one for those deeply interested in the Master and His message, and one meeting across the Bay in the city of Oakland. A booklet on the life of Sri Ramakrishna was published and given away, and extensive publicity was given in the various local newspapers. Attendance at the three San Francisco meetings totalled over six hundred and at the Oakland meeting, 172. In addition, the auspicious centenary day was made the occasion for the dedication of the new Library and Reading Room of the Society.

On the 24th of February last, the actual day of the Master's birthday centenary, Swami Ashokananda conducted special worship in the newly-established chapel on the second floor, which was filled with a great profusion of all varieties of flowers sent by the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna. In the evening was held a special meeting, attended by some 140 students and members personally invited. Swami Ashokananda opened the meeting with prayer, after which a Sanskrit hymn to Sri Ramakrishna was sung by Mrs. T. J. Allan. The Swami then gave a brief talk on some of the intimate details of Sri Ramakrishna's life.

After his talk, the Swami invited the guests to visit the new Library Room. A fine collection of books was arranged for the opening of the Library, covering such pertinent subjects as Indian history and culture, philosophy of various schools and ages, philosophy of science, etc., and it is hoped

that the collection will be added to by interested students and friends.

Inspection of the Library was followed by the showing of stereopticon pictures of the Temple grounds at Dakshineswar, the Monastery at Belur, and the Ganges, all interestingly described by the Swami. Refreshments were then served and the programme was concluded at about eleven o'clock. Throughout the evening the Temple auditorium in which the meeting was held was pervaded by a vibrant atmosphere of joy and peacefulness.

On the following day, at the time of his usual mid-week lecture, Swami Ashokananda took as his subject, "How Sri Ramakrishna Realized God". The Temple auditorium was beautifully decorated with large masses of flowers which were augmented by many contributions from the devotees. In addition to the flowers, incense and candles burned before the large painting of the Master. Every available seat in the auditorium was taken, people stood in the rear of the hall and on the steps inside the entrance, and some were even seated in the passageway at the back of the speaker's platform. In all, about two hundred people were present.

The evening was opened by prayer by Swami Ashokananda. Then Miss Carol Weston, accompanied by Miss Dora Blaney, gave a violin solo, and Mrs. T. J. Allan sang a hymn to Sri Ramakrishna preceding Swami Ashokananda's talk. In his talk the Swami described the life of Sri Ramakrishna up to the beginning of his ministry in 1875, giving in detail many of the various paths of spiritual practice which he followed. At the conclusion, Mrs. H. D. B. Soule sang a solo, accompanied by Miss Blaney and Miss Weston. Refreshments were again served and the guests were invited to attend the final centenary celebration the following Sunday afternoon.

The concluding reception in San Francisco was the most elaborate of all, beginning at two o'clock in the afternoon of Sunday on the 1st March last and ending shortly after five. This meeting was held in the auditorium of the Century Club, a well-known women's club in the centre of San Francisco. The usual Sunday morning lecture by Swami Ashokananda was not given on this day. About three hundred people filled the large hall before the stage, on which stood a remarkably striking photograph of Sri Ramakrishna enlarged to life size.

As at the previous meetings, Swami Ashokananda opened the programme with prayer, after which he welcomed the guests in the name of the Master. He then read a translation of the beautiful and inspiring hymn to Sri Ramakrishna which is sung each evening at the worship in the monasteries of the Ramakrishna Order, afterwards chanting it in Sanskrit. This was followed by a violin solo by Miss Marie Dudley accompanied by Miss Dora Blaney and then by a piano solo by Prof. H. D. B. Soule. Mr. Albert Wollberg then read a paper prepared by Mr. A. T. Clifton, Jr., in which the latter described his visit to India last year at the time of Sri Ramakrishna's festival. A violin solo by Miss Tawara, a Japanese girl, accompanied by Miss Blaney, preceded Swami Ashokananda's talk, "The Message of Sri Ramakrishna to the Modern World".

The Swami's talk was followed by a violin duet by Miss Carol Weston and Miss Kazue Tawara, accompanied by Miss Dora Blaney. Each guest was then presented with a handsomely-printed brochure on the life of Sri Ramakrishna by Swami Ashokananda, entitled, "Sri Ramakrishna, the God-Man of India", and the programme was closed with the serving of refreshments.

The same evening Swami Ashokananda held another meeting in Oakland, across the Bay, at which 172 guests were present to hear the Swami speak again on the Master, under the title "Sri Ramakrishna, the God-Man of India". Refreshments were also served at the conclusion of the meeting, and each guest received a copy of the brochure on Sri Ramakrishna.

COLOMBO

The citizens of Colombo celebrated the Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna on the 7th of September last. The programme of the celebration among other items, included special Puja, Homa, and devotional music.

The first sitting of the Convention of Religions held under the Chairmanship of Mr. Justice T. A. Akbar was the most outstanding function in which votaries of different faiths spoke on the sublime teachings of their prophets. Swami Avinashananda, at the very outset, gave a picturesque survey of the achievements of different people in the domain of spirituality and made a passing reference to the immense significance of the Centenary Movement.

The distinguished speakers like Bhikkhu Narada, Rev. Ivan S. Corea, Mr. H. Ototsu, Mr. H. M. Desai, Mr. N. K. Choksi represented Buddhism, Christianity, Shintoism, Jainism and Zoroastrianism respectively. The president in winding up the interesting discussion of the day incidentally paid a high encomium to the selfless services of the Ramakrishna Mission and opined that a real spiritual outlook can alone strike a death-knell to all squabbles that are proving a serious menace to world-peace.

On the following day a conference of faiths had its second sitting under the presidency of Swami Avinashananda in which Prof. C. Suntharalingam, Mr. T. B. Jayah, Mr. S. Lilaram and Dr. T. Nalainatham spoke on Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, and Theosophy respectively. Swami Asangananda spoke a few words on Sri Ramakrishna and the Harmony of Religions. A Ladies' meeting was, also, organized, which Swami Avinashananda addressed.

SURAT

The birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated on the 27th and 28th of August last. The main part of the programme was a conference of religions with Swami Vishwanandaji in the chair. There were speakers on Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Jainism. The different speakers while explaining the main principles and aspects of their own religion emphasized the underlying unity, as all religions had one aim of taking humanity towards Divinity. The next day, the Jayanti of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated when Prof. A. K. Trivedi of Baroda presided. Prominent persons like Mr. Nandnath Dixit, Principal Dabu, Principal Benson, Mr. Saiyad Munadi, Prof. M. P. Deve, Prof. K. S. Trivedi, Prof. Saiyad Zilani, Mr. Kanaiyalal Desai, and Dr. K. H. Vora took part on both days. The public of Surat evinced great interest in the celebrations. Diwan Bahadur C. M. Gandhi was the chairman of

the local celebration committee and Mr. C. A. Mehta acted as Secretary.

AHMEDABAD

The celebration of the Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna was held in August last. It continued for about a week. On the first day an inter-religious conference was held, Principal A. B. Dhruba, retired Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Benares Hindn University, presiding, at which exponents of different faiths, spoke on their respective religious view-points. On the 2nd day another public meeting was held which was presided over by Swami Vishwananda. Mandoleswar Swami Jayendrapuriji presided over the third day's meeting at which speeches were made by different speakers on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. On the fourth day, a largely attended ladies' meeting was held under the presidency of Lady Vidyagouri.

A meeting of the Harijans was held at Britampara at which Prof. Athavle gave a very illuminating lecture on the ideal of Hinduism.

SRI RAMKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS

REPORT FOR 1935

The Institution stepped into the 31st year of its existence in 1935. Besides the Home proper, the Institution runs two High Schools and an Industrial School.

The Home Proper: At the end of the year under review there were 165 students in the Home, of whom 18 enjoyed government scholarships, 27, school and college concessions and 23, other special scholarships. Two students on the completion of their course in Mechanical Engineering have joined workshop apprenticeship elsewhere. One student of the Home was selected by the Government of India as a stipendiary apprentice in the Gun and Shell Factory in Cossipore. One ex-student became successful in the last I.C.S. examination in London.

The Home imparts an all-round training to the inmates by providing for games, physical exercises, gardening, moral and religious instruction. It maintains a good library and a Reading Room and conducts a musical class for those who have a talent for it.

The Residential High School: Besides its residential character, other special features are the employment of the verna-

cular as the medium of instruction, teaching of Sanskrit up to the Form V and an obligatory course of manual training including carpentry, weaving and rattan work. In addition, it carries on several extra-curricular activities in the shape of excursions to places of interest, conducting a library, a boys' union and three magazines for boys and maintaining a voluntary corps for looking after sanitation.

The Mambalam Branch High School: The strength of the school was about 750 at the end of the year. Sanskrit is taught as a compulsory subject up to Form III. The medium of instruction for the teaching of non-language subjects in the lower Forms is the vernacular of the pupils. Provisions have been made for games and physical exercise. There are also a library, a laboratory and a museum. It runs a hostel on the lines of the Home proper. Its strength rose to 30 in 1935.

The Industrial School: It had 38 boys on its rolls at the end of the year. It trains student for the diploma in automobile engineering approved by the Government in 1934. The course extends for five years, of which the last year is spent in the Jubilee Workshop which is run on commercial lines.

Finance: The total receipt during the year amounted to Rs. 40,851-15-3 while the total disbursements came up to Rs. 46,469-10-3 resulting in a deficit of Rs. 5,617-11-0 which was met from the Revenue Reserve. The rapid development of the industrial side and the consequent increase in the strength of the Home account for the deficit, and the necessity to stabilize the income so as to meet the growing needs of the Institution is becoming more and more imperative. Generous patrons and well-wishers can place it above all pecuniary embarrassment by adding richly to the Endowment Fund.

REPORT OF THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION, CEYLON BRANCH

FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE, 1935

The activities of the Colombo Branch of the Mission are twofold, general and educational. During the year under report it carried on weekly discourses on the *Gîtâ*, occasional discourses on the lives of saints and also conducted two other religious classes outside the Ashrama in the town. Instructions on meditation, on the *Upanishads* and the Saiva Siddhanta works were given to a

few select persons. A class on Yoga physical culture was also held from time to time. Besides, the Swamis of the Mission delivered a number of lectures both in Tamil and English in and outside the city of Colombo. The Ashrama maintains a fairly equipped library and a reading room which were well utilized by the public during the year.

The educational activities of the Mission comprise the management of 12 schools, of which 3 are English and the running of an orphanage. The total number of pupils attending the schools was 2,285 and the total number of teachers 74. The strength of the orphanage was 42 at the end of the year. Great attention is paid to the health of the inmates of the orphanage.

The present needs of the Ashrama are (1) a Temple, a Lecture Hall, and a Building for the accommodation of monks and guests, (2) Funds for the maintenance of the Ashrama, (3) Funds for educational work.

Contributions will be received by the Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission (Ceylon Branch), Colombo.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA GURUKUL AND VIDYA MANDIR, THE VILANGANS, TRICHUR

REPORT FROM JANUARY, 1933, TO 31ST MARCH,
1935

Quite unobtrusively the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Trichur, Cochin State, has been carrying on extremely valuable work among the depressed classes of the locality. The real constructive nature of the work which the Ashrama is carrying on for the down-trodden villagers will be apparent from a short account of the different kinds of its activity. The educational activities were conducted during the period under report through the following institutions :

(1) *The Gurukul.* It is a residential institution for boys. It began seven years ago with only one boy on its rolls, but its strength gradually rose to 38 at the close of the academic year ending 31st March, 1935. The institution is mainly intended for the Harijans although a few poor pupils of the higher castes are also admitted so as to give the Harijans the benefit of association.

(2) *The Matri Mandir.* It is a residential section for girls and is mainly intended for the Harijans. There were 12 girls on its rolls at the close of the academic year ending in March, 1935.

(3) *The Vidya Mandir.* It is the school where boys and girls, residential as well as day scholars, receive their instruction. The work of the Vidya Mandir is carried under the following main heads: cultural, industrial, agricultural, commercial, civic and spiritual. Among the special features of the education imparted in the Vidya Mandir are, (i) the special attention paid to the culture of the mother-tongue, (ii) the teaching of Sanskrit, (iii) the imparting of a working knowledge of Hindi, (iv) supplementary industrial and vocational training, (v) regular religious classes, (vi) training in fine arts such as music and folk dance, (vii) teaching of History, Geography and Civics in a manner conducive to the growth of patriotic sentiment, (viii) encouragement of indigenous rural games and physical culture, and (ix) instruction in practical sciences useful in everyday life. The Cultural Section consists of the Vernacular Primary School and the English Lower Secondary School. The Industrial Section consists of two departments: the Industrial School recognized by the Government and the Vocational Section. The Industrial School trains students in cloth-weaving, mat-weaving, drawing, needlework, music and folk dances, and coaches them for the Government Industrial Examinations. During the period under report there were 21 boys and 6 girls in the school of which 16 were Harijans. The Vocational Section teaches a variety of domestic arts and crafts such as cooking, house-keeping, laundering, hand-milling, fencing, thatching, etc. The Agricultural Section provides part-time training in gardening and agriculture along with general education. The Commercial Section includes the Harijan Co-operative Stores dealing in provisions and school requisites and run by the school children under the guidance of the teachers. The Ashrama also conducts a Sunday class in the Central Jail at Viyyur for the benefit of the Hindu prisoners.

(4) *The Reading Room and Library.*—The Gurukul library contains a fair collection of books in English, Sanskrit, Hindi, Malayalam and Tamil dealing with different subjects.

Besides these activities the Ashrama takes measures to enforce the observance of personal cleanliness by the Harijan boys. It has also secured a plot of land from the Government for the purpose of a healthy Harijan colony. It also affords economic relief to the needy Harijans and has started an Employment Bureau for securing jobs for

the poor Harijans. The needs for the Gurukul are buildings for boys and workers, girls and workers, for holding classes for dispensary and also educational, vocational equipment etc. Funds are also needed for the maintenance of poor boys and girls.

Total receipts and disbursements during the period under report were Rs. 19,661-10-8 and Rs. 19,324-10-6 respectively.

THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON

REPORT FOR 1935

The Ramkrishna Mission Sevashrama, Rangoon, has been rendering most useful service to the citizens of Rangoon for the last fifteen years. The phenomenal rise of the Institution from obscure and humble beginnings to its present important position in Burma reflects the great usefulness of the service which it is rendering. The figure of the different kinds of patients treated will give some idea of the extensive nature of its work. During the year under report, the total number of new cases treated was 83,194. These patients did not belong exclusively to the city of Rangoon, a considerable number of them coming from the suburbs and from some remote districts of Burma. The number of patients admitted in the Indoor Department during the year was 2,673 men, 926 women, and 147 children. The aggregate of the daily totals of attendance came up to 82,120 men, 7,665 women, and 1,265 children; the average daily attendance being 88 men, 21 women and 3 children. The average period of stay in the Hospital in each case was ten days. Some chronic cases had to be kept for months. At the Out-patients' Department the total number of attendance came up to 1,95,751 including repeated cases. The average daily attendance was 348 men, 112 women, and 76 children, i.e. a total of 536.

The year under report was a record year in the history of the Sevashrama. There was not only an all-round increase in the number of indoor and outdoor patients but also a number of major improvements were carried out. The chief among the improvements were the opening of George V Silver Jubilee Ward by Sir Arthur Page, the late Chief Justice of Burma, and of the R. M. Das Laboratory by Sir H. L. Stephenson, K.C.S.I., the late Governor of Burma.

The total receipts and disbursements during the year were Rs. 59,968-0-7 and

Rs. 50,594-0-10 respectively, thus leaving a balance of Rs. 9,368-15-9.

The present needs of the Sevashrama are: (1) A building for X-ray treatment, the estimated approximate cost being Rs. 4,000-0-0; (2) X-ray apparatus and fittings costing about Rs. 12,000; (3) a separate kitchen for patients, cost being Rs. 4,000; (4) Workers' quarters, cost being Rs. 5,000; (5) a small steam laundry for washing hospital clothes, costing about Rs. 5,000. Donors may perpetuate the names of the departed ones by giving the full cost of any of the above requirements.

THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAMA, SHYAMALA TAL, HIMALAYAS

REPORT FOR 1935

The Sevashrama was started in 1914 in the Vivekananda Ashrama, Shyamala Tal. It is situated at a height of 4,944 feet above sea-level, and at a distance of 12 miles from the nearest Railway Station of Tanakpur. Nestled in the deep Himalayan forests interspersed with groups of hamlets here and there, the Sevashrama has been the only source of medical relief to the helpless sufferers over a range of thirty miles. Many people often undertake a whole day's journey to receive the benefit of treatment in the Sevashrama. Moreover, the Sevashrama being located on the trade-route between Tibet and the plains, many Bhutias and members of other communities falling ill in the jungles and at Tanakpur and finding themselves helpless in a strange country go to the Sevashrama for treatment. Its usefulness in such an out of the way place where medical relief is otherwise not available can easily be imagined. A distinctive feature of the Ashrama is the treatment of some sorts of cattle diseases. The Dispensary has also accommodation for 6 indoor patients, though beds have still to be provided for.

The total number of patients treated during the year under report is 2,968 of which 2,956 were outdoor and 12 indoor. The total receipts and disbursements were Rs. 9,485-2-3 and 9,068-11-11 respectively.

The needs of the Dispensary are: (1) a Permanent Fund of not less Rs. 10,000 for placing the Institution on a sure footing. There is a nucleus of the Permanent Fund in the shape of Rs. 2,100. Endowment of beds may be made to perpetuate the memory of the departed ones. The endowment of a

bed costs only Rs. 800. (2) Funds for the upkeep of the Sevashrama.

VEDĀNTA WORK IN CENTRAL EUROPE REPORT FOR NOVEMBER, 1933—JANUARY, 1935

Swami Yatiswarananda writes from Switzerland:—

I came to Europe early in November 1933. After my stay for more than two years, I can now definitely say that the scope of our service for spreading the message of Vedānta is steadily increasing, though the progress is naturally very slow owing to many difficulties that stand in the way. New people are being drawn towards the movement. With them and those who have become already interested, study circles are being formed at some places, and the ideas are being carried to much wider circles by those who are being spiritually benefited and are coming to look upon the Movement as their own.

During the first year I spent three-fourths of the period at Wiesbaden having intensive studies, at first, with one group and then with two, usually having as much as ten classes or more a week. A very good nucleus has been formed there, and I have been fortunate in getting two or three highly gifted and spiritually minded devotees who have identified themselves with the cause, and who conduct the classes and carry on the work during my absence.

About the middle of August, 1934, I visited Switzerland and early in September I went to Vienna, the capital of Austria, and from there to Poland where I spent nearly two months. The lectures delivered by me in Ascona in Switzerland and in Cracow in Poland came to be translated in the German and Polish languages respectively and thus reached a much larger number of people than those who listened to me.

In the course of the year I was able to establish points of contact with many scholars and devotees in Germany, Switzerland and Poland, some of whom have already been and some others are going to be greatly helpful to our cause in those countries and elsewhere.

Of the second year beginning with November, 1934, I spent altogether some three months at Wiesbaden, working with the two old groups and also with one newly formed, and thus consolidated the work there. During the remaining nine months I have stayed mostly in Switzerland which

I am trying to make the basis for our work in Central Europe.

In January, 1935, I was able to start regular readings at St. Moritz and elsewhere, and conducted a number of classes every week for three months without any break. A small group of devotees became greatly interested and the most earnest of them continued the readings even when I was away.

In April, 1935, I visited Geneva and gave talks to large and small groups regularly, and also spoke to the members of the Society of Friends and Bahai International Bureau there. Beginnings of a permanent group were formed during my seven weeks' stay there. After I had left Geneva a friend wrote to me, "I feel you have made an excellent beginning in Geneva. After you had left, several people have asked me to lend them books, which I did, and I believe that when you come again, a small nucleus will have formed."

Here at Geneva I was fortunate in making the acquaintance of a lover of our cause,—Mon. Jean Herbert who has very nobly taken up the task of translating some of our literature into French and bringing the message to the doors of the French and French-reading people.

During my stay at Geneva, I visited the great savant Mon. Romain Rolland and his sister, to whom we owe a deep debt of gratitude for the great good they have done to our cause and to the world at large by bringing out the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel. In writing the works it was the object of Mon. Rolland to bring to Europe "the fruit of a new autumn, a new message of the Soul, the Symphony of India, bearing the name of Ramakrishna", and by so doing he wished to wet, as he says, "the lips of fever-stricken Europe with the blood of Immortality." So the great idealist was mightily pleased to know that, not to a small extent due to his great works, an ever-growing number of people in the West are becoming eager to get the universal teachings of the Vedānta and the message of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda in their "undiluted form" from the accredited representatives of the Order. With a great interest he and his sister inquired about the progress of our movement in the West as well as in India and other countries.

From Geneva I went to Wiesbaden for the third time about the second half of June,

1935. The stay was for a comparatively short period of three weeks. I gave a number of discourses and a number of talks to the members of the study circle and also learnt to my great delight that group studies were regularly held, and one by one new people are becoming interested and drawn towards the message through the instrumentality of the devotees.

From Wiesbaden I went to Campfer again during the second week of July and stayed there till the third week of October. As before I took up the classes at St. Moritz and Campfer, having usually three readings a week at each place. A few devotees came from other parts of Switzerland and also from Germany. Altogether some 15-20 people profited by these classes and also by the talks and interviews they had with me. During this period Swami Avyaktananda of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Vedânta Society, London, visited the Engadine, and we stayed together for three weeks. The Swami met the members of the group at St. Moritz and gave them a talk which was greatly appreciated.

Towards the end of October I came to Zürich for meeting Miss MacLeod—the great American friend of Swami Vivekananda and also of the movement bearing the name of the Master. The translation of some of the lectures etc. of Swami Vivekananda into German was long begun as a labour of love by two consecrated souls—Mrs. von Keller and Mrs. von Pelet who have translated and brought out a nice edition of the Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna in German. Miss MacLeod has very generously given the funds necessary for publishing the lectures of Swami Vivekananda, including the four *Yogas* and the *Inspired Talks*, etc. She has also made a decent contribution towards the bringing out of the above books in French, and the work has already been begun by Mon. Herbert with the help of one or two devoted friends.

It is fortunate that during the year of Sri Ramakrishna Centenary the first instalments of the publications in German and French are making their appearance, and the message is reaching a large circle of readers in all the countries of Europe where these two languages are more or less understood.

At Zürich I stayed for seven weeks and came to know quite a number of persons in various walks of life. I met some intellectuals including a few professors of the Uni-

versity and had interesting discussions with them on comparative religion and the universal message of Vedânta. I was fortunate in establishing points of contact also with some devotees who have become interested in our ideas and ideals through literature. Many of them want to learn of the methods of mind-control and meditation for which they are coming to have an increasing interest, but which, as they complained, were practically unknown alike to the teachers and followers of institutional religions. In the near future it is proposed to start study-circles with these spiritual-minded souls at Zürich and elsewhere.

Along with my attempts at sharing my ideas with the spiritual aspirants in Europe, I am also trying to study comparative mysticism and also analytical psychology in the light of Yoga. At Zürich I availed myself of the opportunity of listening to the renowned Prof. Jung. I have been reading some of his books in English and had the pleasure of meeting him more than a year back in Switzerland. He has read some of our literature, and felt, as he said, "particularly interested in my paper on 'Hindu Symbology.'" We had prolonged talks and discussions on Hindu spiritual topics—on the relationship between religion and philosophy, the different systems of Vedânta and the practical application of the Vedântic ideals as embodied in the life of Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda and the movement founded by them.

I was filled with admiration to see how the great doctor keeps himself open to Truth and is ready to receive it from all sources through which it may come. This is a great lesson that all true seekers should always bear in mind and try to practise in actual life. There should be, of course, as Prof. Dr. Jung very rightly advocates, a sympathetic and yet critical and intelligent understanding of an idea before it can be accepted and assimilated in the truest sense.

From Zürich I went to Wiesbaden towards the end of December, 1935, and spent happily my third Christmas with the friends there who in 1933 invited me to Germany and were thus instrumental in starting the regular Vedânta Work for the first time in Europe.

After Christmas I started the usual classes and had 6 readings a week, besides giving interviews to old and new devotees. In one month we were able to do two months' work, making substantial progress in our studies. As before the notes were taken down and

typed copies distributed to each member of the group. One of the prominent devotees here is conducting a new class in German for the benefit of those who have become interested recently.

The message of Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda is being propagated in German-speaking countries through the medium of a German Monthly to which the devotees of our cause are contributing many articles and are rendering help in other ways.

Through correspondence I am in touch also with the devotees in Poland, who are going on satisfactorily with their work and are all increasing in strength. Thus the Vedânta message in Central Europe is progressing slowly and steadily through the grace of the Divine.

The expenses of my stay in Europe are being borne mostly by two or three of the devotees who with their limited resources are doing so in a spirit of great sacrifice and devotion. The whole of Central Europe is passing through a crisis. And there was a time when, after I had begun my work in Switzerland, I had to go through great financial uncertainties. We are deeply grateful to H. H. the Maharaja of Mysore for the generous help he has given in this hour of need to the cause.

In the near future, besides devoting some time at each of the different places where I have begun work already, I propose to visit Paris and other cities where also some interest has already been created and devotees are thinking of beginning some work of a permanent nature during this year of the centenary of the Master. Up till now I am doing only the pioneering work. A few devoted and highly gifted souls have fully identified themselves with the cause and some of them are giving all their available time and energy to it and are preparing themselves for greater service in future. Nuclei of libraries are being formed at different places. The number of those who are coming within the sphere of the influence of the movement and are being helped by it through literature, correspondence and personal contact is steadily growing and will greatly increase after all the proposed books are published in German, French, and other languages. So, as the trend of events clearly indicates, the Vedânta Movement inaugurated by Ramakrishna-Vivekananda has come to stay in Europe.

FLOOD AND FAMINE RELIEF

RAMKRISHNA MISSION'S ACTIVITIES

Swami Madhavananda of Ramkrishna Mission has issued the following:

Reports from our various centres in the famine-stricken areas of Bengal show that distress is still extremely acute. Recently we have greatly increased our relief measures to meet the situation. During the first week of October the Mission has helped 7,988 men and women from the different centres with 381 mds. 6 srs. of rice, besides old and new cloths. Of this amount Gagura, Jhapa and Nakipur centres of the Khulna district distributed 191 mds. 7 srs. amongst 8,698 recipients. From the Joyrambati centre of the Bankura district 1,246 persons were helped with 46 mds. 18 srs. Several villages of the Hooghly district are included in this area. The Lakshminbati centre of the Birbhum district and the Mashra centre of the same district, comprising a number of villages of the Sonthal Parganas, distributed 45 mds. 34 srs. and 44 mds. 18 srs. respectively amongst 917 and 889 recipients.

The Chaulkhola centre of the Midnapur district run by our Tamuk branch helped 273 persons with 20 mds. 21 srs. Relief amounting to 17 mds. 28 srs. and 15 mds. 5 srs. respectively was also given to 461 and 449 persons from the Barjora and Pakhanna centres of the Bankura district managed by our Bankura branch during the period.

The flood relief work in Malda has been closed, but that in Arakan is continuing. In famine areas of Bengal the Mission is spending about Rs. 1,200/- per week at present.

The work will have to be continued for some weeks more in most of the above areas, particularly in the Khulna district, till the harvest brings in better conditions.

Our funds have almost exhausted, but the situation is still very grave and thousands need help to be saved from starvation and death. We therefore appeal again to the generous public to contribute to our funds. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged at any of the following addresses:—

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